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A STUDY ON THE FICTIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC WRITING ABILITIES OF CHILDREN OF SEASONAL MIGRANT AGRICULTURAL WORKER FAMILIES

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ABSTRACT

The children of seasonal agricultural workers migrate with their families to different regions during certain periods of the year and live in difficult conditions. These children, who are considered disadvantaged and at risk in the literature, often interrupt their education during this migration, which coincides with the school year. Due to the interruption in their education, they lack certain basic skills that can be developed at school. One of these is writing skills, which is a language skill that directly affects academic achievement. Writing skills are the ability to express one's feelings and thoughts clearly, coherently, and effectively in writing. It is incorrect to limit writing skills solely to language and literature or Turkish language education. Students are expected to express their thoughts fluently in writing in fields such as science, social sciences, and even mathematics. Therefore, writing skills are recognized as a common academic skill across all disciplines. Studies determined the writing skills and levels of children from agricultural families are limited. This study investigated the writing skills of children who migrate with their families and do not have a regular education.

Keywords: Seasonal Agricultural Worker, Mobile Agricultural Worker, Disadvantage, Children At Risk, Writing Skills.

1. INTRODUCTION

Seasonal agricultural workers, also called migrant agricultural workers, are part of a pattern of human mobility that arises when demand for labor rises during the maintenance and harvest periods of certain crops, and they play an important role in carrying out and sustaining agricultural activities. In the literature, the term refers to low-income, semi-nomadic workers who are employed in the agricultural sector during certain periods of the year and who generally do not own land to cultivate, as well as to the labor activity they perform (Görücü & Akbıyık, 2010; Koruk, 2010; Karaman & Yılmaz, 2011;

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Karaman & Taşcıoğlu, 2020; Mertol et al., 2021). According to Egemen (2015), seasonal worker migration, one of the most significant population movements in Türkiye today, is the term used for the temporary migration of some unemployed people living in rural areas to large cities where agriculture and industry are more developed. Agricultural workers in Türkiye play an active role in sustaining agricultural production and account for a large share of the internal migration that occurs within the country each year. They often have to take their children with them to the regions where they work. Seasonal agricultural workers are especially prominent in the harvesting of naturally delicate crops such as olives and cotton[1], and in areas such as tea and hazelnut[2] regions, where geographic conditions limit the use of machinery (Yılmaz & Yıldırım İşler, 2020).

When seasonal agricultural worker families and their children are considered from a sociological perspective, their most prominent characteristics are that the majority lack property ownership, that their education levels are low, that women and children in particular are deprived of education (Menemencioğlu, 2012, p. 73), and that they have large families and face a risk of poverty (Şen & Altın, 2018). A review of studies on seasonal agricultural work shows that, although research has been conducted in various fields on the difficulties and adverse conditions that agricultural worker families face, most of these studies are descriptive in nature. The literature includes studies on traffic accidents experienced by seasonal agricultural workers (Benek & Ökten, 2011; Yıldırım, 2016); on common health problems and the lack of hygiene resulting from difficult working conditions and environments (Koruk & Şimşek, 2010; Şimşek et al., 2015; Kaya & Özgülnar, 2015; Sütoluk et al.; Koruk & Koruk, 2018); on communication difficulties caused by language barriers (Tatoğlu, 2019); and on inadequate housing conditions, their improvement, and security problems (Özbekmezci & Sahil, 2004; Egemen, 2015; Arslan, 2016; Akalın, 2018). In addition, studies have examined their nutritional status (Fereli et al., 2016), their social security rights (Demir, 2015), the geriatric problems that older individuals experience as a result of seasonal and continuous migration (Özkan Boyraz & Çağlar, 2023), and the social exclusion and othering that migrants face socially and economically in the regions they move to (Geçgin, 2009). Other studies address child labor and the physical exploitation of children of developmental age (Self & Grabovski, 2009; Gülçubuk, 2012; Havlioğlu & Koruk, 2013; Lordoğlu & Etiler, 2014; Taş & Abbasigil, 2017; Dedeoğlu et al., 2019; Karadeniz et al., 2021; Ağyar & Atış, 2022), emotional problems (Çevlik, 2022, et al.), and the reading and writing skills of their children at the primary education level (Yekeler Gökmen & Altunbay, 2025). Overall, it appears that studies in this area vary according to the activities that seasonal agricultural workers carry out and the problems they encounter.

According to Güneş (2017, p. 136), seasonal agricultural work is becoming increasingly common, both worldwide and in Türkiye, as a way of earning income. According to the "Labor Force Statistics" published by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) in December 2016, 20.5 percent of total employment nationwide is in agricultural work. In other words, approximately 5.4 million people are employed in agriculture. It is not known exactly what proportion of the total agricultural workforce consists of seasonal agricultural workers. However, it is known that children play a large part in these activities and that migrating with their families brings a number of problems. First of all, the continuity of education and instruction is interrupted, and children's cognitive and affective

[1] To minimize the damage that machines might cause and to prevent a decline in yield, these crops are generally harvested by hand in Türkiye.

[2] Tea and hazelnuts are grown in the Eastern Black Sea region of Türkiye. This region is mountainous, with ranges running parallel to the sea and steep slopes dominating the landscape. For this reason, it is unsuitable for mechanized farming and requires human labor.

development is negatively affected. This is because agricultural work occupies a significant part of the year, and the harvest of some crops coincides with the months in which the school year is in session.

The working period of seasonal agricultural workers in agricultural production is limited to the harvest times of crops, and the length of the harvest varies from crop to crop (Dedeoğlu, 2018, p. 55). However, the situation is somewhat different for families who earn their living from agricultural work. For families whose main source of income is agricultural labor, this process covers a long period of time. Because they migrate within the country for each crop harvested at a different time of the year, such as tea, hazelnuts, cotton, and olives, their children's education is seriously disrupted. Studies on children's education in the literature mostly focus on low school enrollment rates and school dropout (Uysal et al., 2016; İş & Özkan, 2024; Avcı & Ekici, 2023; Özbek Kansu, 2025). According to Orhan (2017, p. 66), education is one of the most fundamental problems of seasonal and migrant agricultural workers, and even the literacy rate among older adults is quite low. Children are now at an advantage in this respect because of the recent introduction of compulsory education. However, enrollment rates remain low, especially among girls, and school is abandoned entirely once they reach an age at which they can work in the fields. For this reason, most of these children have only completed primary school or have dropped out of it. Moreover, even during the period when they are enrolled in school, they cannot attend classes regularly throughout the year. In particular, they are forced to miss school at the beginning and end of the school year, which coincides with April through October[3], when agricultural activity intensifies and migration is constant. This makes it harder for them to receive a good-quality education and to pursue other occupations, and it pushes them to become seasonal agricultural workers like their parents.

The disruptions and interruptions in education, and the problems that follow from them, directly affect children's lives, leading to many negative outcomes in every area, from career choice to psychological development, from physical development to daily life. The continuity of agricultural activities across the country and the ongoing need for labor draw into agricultural work a significant number of young people who should still be in school. "According to the 2022 results of the Household Labor Force Survey in TÜİK data, the labor force participation rate of children aged 15–17 was 18.7%. When the distribution of the labor force participation rate by gender is examined, it is reported to be 27.0% for boys and 10.0% for girls" (İş & Özkan, 2024, p. 64). Consequently, a significant percentage of children, particularly those of middle school age, continue their school-age years in seasonal agricultural work, which requires no skilled labor and offers no path to acquiring a profession.

In 2024, the Ministry of National Education, General Directorate of Basic Education, issued a circular titled *Access to Education for Children of Seasonal Agricultural Workers and Migrant and Semi-Migrant Families*, which addresses the steps to be taken to improve the education of children whose families work as seasonal agricultural workers. In this context, it sets out the Ministry's goals for this group, the work to be carried out, the committees that will operate in this area, and the duties of these committees (MEB Genelge.pdf). According to the circular, a four-stage action plan consisting of prevention, identification, follow-up, and compensation has been put into effect. The prevention stage provides accommodation in boarding facilities, as defined in the relevant legislation, so that children can continue their education in the province where they reside. The identification stage is a joint effort

[3] In Türkiye, the school year begins in September and ends in June. However, the harvest of some crops begins in April or May and continues until October or November, and agricultural worker families migrate to different regions to harvest more than one crop. This situation negatively affects the continuity of education.

carried out together in both the sending and receiving provinces. In its first step, students are registered and their information is entered into the electronic system (e-Okul, e-METİP). In its second step, students are registered in the place where they have gone with their families, and preparations are made for the following stages. The follow-up stage involves monitoring students in the places where they go with their families to ensure that they have access to educational opportunities (courses, transfers, and the like). It continues, once they return to their permanent residence at the end of the work season, with the necessary monitoring and support provided by their schools. The compensation stage involves monitoring students through their schools once they return to their permanent residence with their families at the end of the season and ensuring that they attend school. After measuring their language development and their learning gaps and losses, these deficiencies are addressed through an educational program prepared for that purpose. Compensatory education is delivered at schools and through public education centers within the framework of support programs prepared by the General Directorate of Lifelong Learning (MEB Genelge.pdf).

Research shows that students from agricultural worker families struggle to adapt to school, class, and lessons because they cannot attend school regularly. Because they are not present in the instructional process often enough, they fail to acquire much of the knowledge and many of the skills they are expected to gain, and they experience substantial learning loss (Uysal et al., 2016; Baş, 2019; Uzun & Şahan, 2021; Er & Gürbüz, 2022). Although the literature contains limited research on the educational problems of children from agricultural worker families, only one study, by Yekeler Gökmen and Altunbay (2025), was found on writing skills in particular. As is well known, writing, which is part of the language skill of expression, is one of the most fundamental competencies that individuals need to acquire during their education. Güneş (2016, p. 156) notes that writing, like speaking, is a production-based skill in which various letters, words, and sentences are written during the production process. However, acquiring writing skills requires not only writing letters, words, or sentences, but also making them related, coherent, and semantically unified. These aspects of writing instruction are generally taught through formal education. According to Uslu Üstten (2014, p. 234), writing, as a part of language skills, requires a sound knowledge of sentence structure, adherence to spelling and punctuation rules, and the ability to express one's feelings and thoughts in an original way. In addition, writing depends on the ability to understand words in all their dimensions of meaning and to use them correctly in context. However, even when students know the technical rules, their writing skills may vary depending on the type of text they write. For this reason, two different text types were selected in this study, and students were asked to write both a fictional and a scientific text, because the vocabulary used in scientific texts and the word types and sentence structures used in fictional texts may differ. Measuring writing skills in both text types will provide an idea of the writing skills of children from seasonal agricultural worker families.

The main purpose of this study is to examine the fictional and scientific text writing skills of children from seasonal agricultural worker families who attend middle school. The study sought answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the level of scientific text writing skills among middle school-aged children from seasonal agricultural worker families?

2. What is the level of fictional text writing skills among middle school-aged children from seasonal agricultural worker families?

3. What are the main spelling and writing errors that middle school-aged children from seasonal agricultural worker families make in their written expression?

2. METHOD

This study, which was conducted to examine the fictional and scientific text writing skills of children from agricultural worker families, is a qualitative study designed with a survey model. In the literature, the survey model is defined as "research that aims to describe the opinions and characteristics of large groups" (Büyüköztürk, 2015, p. 177). It is a method that allows in-depth information to be obtained on a subject and is used to determine existing information about a current situation at a particular time. The survey model was preferred in this study because the current state of written expression skills, one of the basic language skills, among students whose education is interrupted by internal migration with their agricultural worker families at certain times of the year can only be determined through a survey model.

2.1. Study Group

The sample of the study consists of children attending school who came to the province of Ordu in the summer of 2023 with their families from other geographic regions of Türkiye to work as seasonal agricultural workers (to pick hazelnuts). For this reason, purposive sampling was used in the study. Purposive sampling "allows for in-depth research on information-rich cases, depending on the purpose of the study. It is preferred when one wants to study one or more special cases that meet certain criteria or have certain characteristics" (Büyüköztürk, 2015, p. 90). In this study, the sample consists of children from seasonal agricultural worker families who have irregular educational lives. These children are more often studied in sociological research but have not received enough attention in educational research. General information about the students is presented in Table 1 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Information About the Study Group

Grade	Number of students	Female	Male
6	9	5	4
7	8	6	2
Total	17	11	6

As Table 1 shows, the sample group consists of 17 voluntary participants in the 6th and 7th grades, 11 girls and 6 boys. The mean age of the students was 11.8, and all of them stated that they were continuing their education. Although the sample group is not generalizable, it should be considered adequate given the number of families who came to the region as agricultural workers and could be reached.

2.2. Data Collection Instrument and Data Collection Process

Because students may differ in their writing skills depending on the text type, one topic was selected for each type in order to measure both fictional and scientific text writing skills. For the scientific text, "environmental pollution" was chosen as a topic about which every student could generate and write ideas, and the students were asked, "What should be/can be done to prevent environmental pollution?" Before writing, the students were shown images related to the topic and were helped to generate ideas about it; a guided writing method was used in the study. The students were then asked to write a scientific text describing their proposed solutions to the problem of environmental pollution.

After the scientific text was written, the students were asked to complete a fictional text. A creative writing activity was carried out in which they wrote the ending of a fable they were given. The fictional and scientific texts were not written back to back but on different days, and the students were given general information about the rules of writing beforehand. No intervention was made in the students' written expression or language proficiency, and the data of the students who participated voluntarily were used. Because fictional and scientific text types are included in the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades of the Turkish Language Curriculum (2019), there was no obstacle preventing the students from writing texts in these types. Two experts, one in classroom teaching and the other in Turkish language education, were consulted in determining the topics and text types, and the suitability of the selected topics to the developmental, grade, and age levels of the participants was ensured through expert opinion. To collect the research data, ethical approval was obtained first, and then consent was obtained from the families who came to the Perşembe district of Ordu province as agricultural workers in the summer of 2023. The data were collected on different days from the children who came to the district with their agricultural worker families, during a project carried out by the Giresun University Children's Rights Research Center.

2.3. Data Analysis

In this study, the Analytic Rubric for Written Expression developed by Bilican Demir and Yıldırım (2019) was used. This rubric evaluates texts written on the topics presented to students in the following subdimensions: content, discourse management, comprehensibility, context-appropriate language use, spelling rules, and grammar. It produces a total score and a mean score. The lowest possible score in each subdimension is 1 and the highest is 4. The lowest possible total score on the rubric is 6 and the highest is 24. Accordingly, the students' written expression skills were analyzed for both text types, and the spelling errors they made were examined separately. Frequency analysis was used to analyze the data, and all data on the written expression skills of the children from agricultural worker families are presented in the findings section.

Within the scope of the study, each student's paper was scored independently by two raters, one an academic specializing in primary school Turkish language teaching and the other a person with an undergraduate degree. The results were then summarized through frequency analysis.

2.4. Validity and Reliability

In the data analysis, the use of the Analytic Rubric for Written Expression (Bilican Demir & Yıldırım, 2019) minimized the subjective judgments that might have arisen when interpreting the findings. In cases of uncertainty, the opinion of an academic specializing in literacy education was sought. The fact that the participants came from different grade levels may be considered a disadvantage for the validity and reliability of the study. However, in this study, this variation can be explained by the students' lack of regular education, in other words, by the fact that they could not be selected from the

same grade level because they belong to the group of "children of seasonal agricultural worker families." In short, because the number of students who could be reached was limited due to the particular sociological group to which they belong, it became necessary to conduct a general evaluation across all levels.

3. FINDINGS

In this study, the findings are presented in tables in order to provide more concrete data.

3.1. Findings for the First Research Question

Based on the question "What is the level of scientific text writing skills among middle school-aged children from seasonal agricultural worker families?", the data on the subdimension scores and the overall rubric scores (total and mean) obtained from the analysis of the students' scientific texts are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Total and Mean Scores for the Subdimensions and the Overall Rubric Based on the Evaluation of Scientific Texts

	Content	Discourse Management	Comprehensibility	Context-Appropriate Language Use	Spelling Rules	Grammar	Total
Total score	26	26	27	27	21	23	150
Mean score	1.53	1.53	1.59	1.59	1.24	1.35	8.82

For all areas used in the analysis of the scientific texts (Content, Discourse Management, Comprehensibility, Context-Appropriate Language Use, Spelling Rules, and Grammar), the lowest possible score was set at 1 and the highest at 4.

Table 2 shows the total scores that the 17 students received in each subdimension. A detailed analysis of these subdimensions is as follows.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Content Subdimension

The mean score of the 17 participating students in the content subdimension was 1.53. In light of these data, it can be concluded that the students are slightly above the beginning level in content, but that considerable work is still needed for them to reach even the "needs improvement" level. Given the participants' current performance, what they wrote in terms of content (the words, sentences, idioms, examples, etc. they chose) is unrelated to the given topic or event, and the elements do not support one another. Almost everything written in the specified contexts is incorrect and inadequate for conveying the message.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Discourse Management Subdimension

The mean score of the 17 students in the discourse management subdimension was 1.53. At this stage, the participants' texts were found to lack the connectors, linguistic expressions, and elaborations that would enrich their writing.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Comprehensibility Subdimension

The mean score of the 17 students in the comprehensibility subdimension is 1.59. This mean score is higher than the mean scores for content, discourse management, spelling rules, and grammar, and equal to the mean score for context-appropriate language use. In light of the data, the students are above the beginning level in comprehensibility. Even so, repetition of words and ideas and expression errors were found in every part of their writing.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Context-Appropriate Language Use Subdimension

The mean score of the 17 students in the context-appropriate language use subdimension is 1.59. An examination of the scientific texts shows that, in almost all of the specified contexts, the students were unable to use language appropriate to the given task.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Spelling Rules Subdimension

The mean score of the 17 students in the spelling rules subdimension is 1.24. This mean score is lower than the mean scores for content, discourse management, comprehensibility, context-appropriate language use, and grammar. In this subdimension, the students paid no attention at all to spelling and punctuation rules or to the spelling of individual words.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Grammar Subdimension

The mean score of the 17 students in the grammar subdimension was 1.35. The students are at the beginning level in grammar, and almost all of the sentences they constructed, although appropriate to their grade level, contain grammatical errors.

Evaluation of the Overall Rubric

The lowest possible total score on the rubric for evaluating written expression is 6 and the highest is 24. The mean overall rubric score of the 17 students was 8.82, which corresponds to approximately 37% of the maximum possible score. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the students' written expression skills are at the "needs improvement" level.

3.2. Findings for the Second Research Question

Based on the question "What is the level of fictional text writing skills among middle school-aged children from seasonal agricultural worker families?", the data on the subdimension scores and the overall rubric scores (total and mean) obtained from the analysis of the students' fictional texts are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Data on the Fictional Text Writing Skills of Middle School-Aged Children From Seasonal Agricultural Worker Families

	Content	Discourse Management	Comprehensibility	Context-Appropriate Language Use	Spelling Rules	Grammar	Total
Total score	30	30	32	30	24	29	175
Mean score	1.76	1.76	1.88	1.76	1.41	1.71	10.29

For all areas used in the analysis of the fictional texts (Content, Discourse Management, Comprehensibility, Context-Appropriate Language Use, Spelling Rules, and Grammar), the lowest possible score was set at 1 and the highest at 4.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Content Subdimension

The mean score of the 17 students in the content subdimension is 1.76. The students are slightly above the beginning level in content. In general, however, what they wrote (the words, sentences, idioms, examples, etc. they chose) is unrelated to the given topic or event, and the elements do not support one another. Almost everything written in the specified contexts is incorrect and inadequate in terms of content.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Discourse Management Subdimension

The mean score of the 17 students in the discourse management subdimension was 1.76. In this subdimension as well, the students' writing skills were weak, and their texts lacked the connectors and linguistic expressions that would enrich them.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Comprehensibility Subdimension

The mean score of the students in the comprehensibility subdimension is 1.88. The data show that repetition of words and ideas and expression errors appear in every part of the participants' texts.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Context-Appropriate Language Use Subdimension

The mean score of the 17 students in the context-appropriate language use subdimension was 1.76. The data suggest that the students are slightly above the beginning level in this subdimension, yet they were unable to use language appropriate to the given task in their texts.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Spelling Rules Subdimension

The mean score of the 17 students in the spelling rules subdimension was 1.41. The participants' current performance shows that they paid no attention at all to spelling and punctuation rules or to the spelling of individual words.

Evaluation of the Scores in the Grammar Subdimension

The mean score of the 17 students in the grammar subdimension was 1.71. The data show that the students are slightly above the beginning level in grammar, and that almost all of the sentences they constructed in their texts contain grammatical errors.

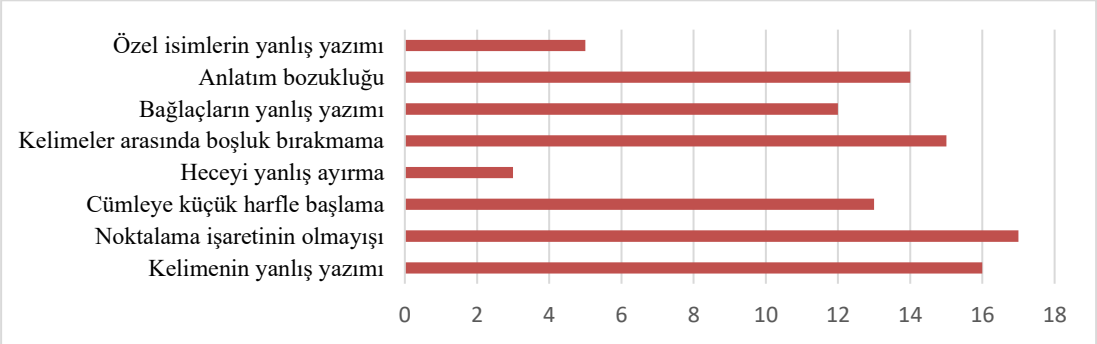
Evaluation of the Overall Rubric

The lowest possible total score on the rubric for evaluating written expression is 6 and the highest is 24. The mean overall rubric score of the 17 students was 10.29, which corresponds to approximately 42% of the maximum possible score. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the students' written expression skills are at the "needs improvement" level.

3.3. Findings for the Third Research Question

Based on the question "What are the main spelling and writing errors that middle school-aged children from seasonal agricultural worker families make in their written expression?", the data on the main spelling and writing errors identified through the analysis of the students' scientific and fictional texts are shown in Graph 1 (see Graph 1).

Graph 1. Data on the Main Spelling and Writing Errors Made by Middle School-Aged Children From Seasonal Agricultural Worker Families in Their Written Expression



The errors identified in the texts that the participants wrote in the two text types differ, as Graph 1 shows. In this section, the errors are reported on a per-student basis rather than by frequency. All 17 students used punctuation marks incorrectly in most cases or did not use them at all. Sixteen students wrote words incorrectly by omitting letters or syllables or by following regional pronunciation. Fifteen students did not leave spaces between words. Expression errors were found in the texts of 14 students. Thirteen students began sentences with lowercase letters, and 12 students misspelled conjunctions. Five students could not write proper nouns according to the rules, and three students could not divide words into syllables correctly. Considering that the sample group consisted of 6th- and 7th-grade students, it is clear that they could not correctly apply many of the spelling rules taught as early as the first grade of primary school, and that nearly all of them have very weak writing skills.

4. CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Agricultural labor refers to work whose main source of income depends on agricultural products and on the earnings from their harvest. In this context, agricultural worker families are the group most economically affected by every factor that influences agricultural production and productivity. Because agriculture is strong in Türkiye and there are many agricultural activities that require human labor, seasonal internal migration is common. Children are among those most affected by this frequent relocation. The lack of a stable school life, the inability to attend school, and forced entry into working life at an early age prevent these children from benefiting adequately from services such as health and

education. This, in turn, negatively affects language skills (especially writing), which are among the most fundamental requirements for academic success.

The results of this study can be compared with the literature on the negative consequences of migration and on the gaps created by irregular education. Although this study focused only on the writing skills of children who migrate with their families, the effect of constant relocation on this failure is considerable. For example, Boado (2010) found that immigrant students in France were academically less successful. This finding shows the importance of stability and order in education. Children who migrate to different cultural environments adapt more slowly, and this negatively affects their achievement. In a study by Forsyth and Furlong (2000), conducted in a region whose main economic activities depend on agriculture and fishing, the researchers noted that universities and colleges were very far from residential areas, which put young people living in these regions at an educational disadvantage. Therefore, in regions where agricultural production is the main source of livelihood, educational disadvantage may be more pronounced than in other regions because educational opportunities are limited.

The findings of this study show that the inadequacy of writing skills among children of seasonal agricultural worker families is closely related to the lack of continuity in their education. Because children of families who must migrate constantly cannot participate regularly in formal education, they are deprived of the opportunity to develop basic language skills such as writing (Özbek Kansu, 2025). Studies on the role of schools in ensuring social justice, in addition to educating qualified people (Patrinos & Psacharopoulos, 1995; Forsyth & Furlong, 2000; Gorard & See, 2013), also demonstrate the importance of regular education. This situation should not be seen merely as a lack of individual achievement. Rather, it points to a structural problem: the education system falls short of meeting the needs of the children of seasonal workers. A study by Kallio et al. (2016) showed that education does not only differentiate individuals in the labor market but that the education received can also lead to their exclusion. Therefore, the quality and continuity of education, and every type of activity that supports it, enable individuals to find qualified jobs in later years and to live under better conditions and with higher status in society. Vimefall (2015) emphasizes that education should not be seen only as a tool for economic growth but is also necessary for a fulfilling life. For this reason, education can be regarded as an end in itself. However, because the educational processes of agricultural worker families' children are not tracked in Türkiye, it has not been possible to determine exactly what occupations these children pursue or what their future living standards are. The data in this study show that their writing skills, one of the basic language skills, are far below the expected level, which indicates that these children are academically inadequate.

Setting aside their longing for school, the fact that children who migrate with their families cannot attend school regularly and gradually drift away from it leads them to see "agricultural labor" as their only career option. Both girls and boys in this group are classified as disadvantaged and at-risk children in education; they cannot benefit adequately from education and fail to acquire certain basic competencies (Guler Gumus & Wingenbach, 2016). According to the findings of this study, the children's scientific text writing skills are very weak, and an examination of the texts shows that all of them are at the beginning level in all of the areas of content, discourse management, comprehensibility, context-appropriate language use, spelling rules, and grammar. Factors such as not reading books regularly, lack of follow-up on coursework, the absence of a continuous educational program, weak socialization, and distance from school prevent the development of writing, one of the

most fundamental competencies. Similar results apply to the fictional texts, and they overlap with the results for scientific text writing.

Looking at the students' fictional text writing skills, all of the students' texts were found to be unsuccessful in all of the areas of content, discourse management, comprehensibility, context-appropriate language use, spelling rules, and grammar. The two text types differ from each other in both sentence structure and vocabulary. Scientific texts require a more academic and standard language, whereas fictional texts are subjective. Even the sentences and the number of words in them differ between scientific and fictional texts. Therefore, the students' failure in different text types and their inability to apply the most basic rules in their writing can be seen as a consequence of gaps in their education. In addition, the most frequent errors show that almost every student used punctuation marks incorrectly or not at all, misspelled words, made expression errors, began sentences with lowercase letters, and misspelled conjunctions. However, according to the Turkish Language Curriculum (2019), these are the most basic rules of the language and are taught from the first grade of primary school. It appears that, because children who are removed from school cannot participate in classroom activities in person and on a continuing basis, their writing skills do not develop and they cannot internalize the rules of the language. Writing is extremely important for an individual's academic success as well as for their capacity to think and express themselves. Failing to develop this skill adequately negatively affects not only children's education but also their long-term professional and social development. Weaknesses in written expression often bring other problems, such as low academic self-confidence, difficulty communicating in class, and disengagement from school. Therefore, the educational gaps of children from agricultural worker families, which result from their way of life, cannot be overcome through individual effort alone. At this point, state policies must come into play, and alternative practices such as support and compensatory education for these students, mobile classrooms, and programs supported by distance education should be expanded.

The weakness observed in the students' writing skills makes it necessary to carry out prevention, identification, follow-up, and compensation activities in line with the guidelines prepared by the Ministry of National Education, and to keep records of them. Improvement efforts in the children's academic careers can begin with adjustment activities for affective development and then continue with language skills such as reading and writing. This is because a study by Machin (2006) reported that children from disadvantaged backgrounds do not gain enough from their schooling and perform poorly in terms of the educational levels reached internationally. For this reason, children of agricultural worker families should be monitored regularly throughout the year during the school term to make the process effective. Equal opportunity in education can be achieved only through such holistic, field-specific, and sustainable solutions. Otherwise, children who are part of seasonal agricultural labor with their families will not be able to escape the socioeconomic cycle they are in, and they will not have the chance to reveal their true potential through education. In this context, every study and policy recommendation will strengthen not only the education system but also the principle of social justice.

This study is limited to children in the 6th and 7th grades from seasonal agricultural worker families who came to Ordu province from other regions to pick hazelnuts, and its results do not cover the writing skills of all at-risk or disadvantaged children. However, it is important in that it offers a general idea and includes a sample from a group whose middle school writing skills have not been studied before. A comprehensive study of all children whose education is interrupted because they migrate with their families to harvest other crops in Türkiye, such as cotton, tea, and olives, would

yield more generalizable results in this field. While contributing to the literature, particularly to studies in the field of education, the results of this study show that all institutions must work in coordination to improve the living standards of seasonal agricultural workers and the children affected by this work. In addition, the education of agricultural worker families' children should be monitored regularly in the education system to minimize possible learning loss.

4.1. Recommendations Based on the Study Results

The following recommendations can be made based on the results of this study:

- Remote access and internet connectivity can be provided so that students can study with supplementary lesson videos or e-content in the regions where they go.
- Children of agricultural worker families can be offered boarding in dormitory schools in the regions where they work seasonally, and additional work can be done to close their educational gaps.
- Legal measures can be taken and inspections increased to prevent child labor in agriculture.
- Mobile schools or classrooms can be opened so that students can be taught in their temporary residences.
- Through meetings with agricultural worker families, these families can be encouraged to guide their children toward education.
- Local governments and nongovernmental organizations can build study spaces for children and help cover their educational expenses.

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