Full Length Research Paper

Teaching local history using social studies models for Turkish middle school students

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Local history teaching provides students the opportunity to gain first-hand experience by improving awareness of history. Students having active communication with their neighbourhood are given the opportunity to learn about themselves and their past, words and concepts about the past and they can make easier connection between history and other disciplines. The students perceive differences in approaching information presented to them in a positive way with pluralistic perspective. In this study, the effects of local history teaching with the model in social studies on students' awareness about local history has been determined. Case study design in the context of qualitative research approach was used in the research. The research took place in a middle school in the Northen west part of Turkey. Research was endured for two weeks and 20 students were asked open-ended questions covering the research process. It has been observed that local history teaching with models in social studies creates a positive outlook towards the history and local history points gain awareness for students. In addition, it contributes to the development of historical empathy ability of students as they are able to recognize the place they live in, more closely.

Key words: Social ıssues, local history, model, historical empathy.

INTRODUCTION

History with the memory of social life includes conditions which prevent or which lead to the formation of the ideology guiding changes experienced by society, developments and events. History is belongs to people and people have to understand it because it remains with them and continues to exist with them. The work area of the history of science is that past which holds the strings of our daily lives, and which can also show the way to our future lives, is an understandable and explainable way (Özbaran, 2005). There are unending dialogue between the past and the present (Carr, 1996). This dialogue emphasizes that history is indispensable and whether we know it or not it is located within all areas of life from personal to political relationships . History interpreting social and individual experiences with time perspective implies that it shall continue today and in the future elements of our past experiences (Tosh, 2005).

Teaching history topics to students has been a major dilemma to teachers (Erdoğan, 2003). Students regard history lesson as a lesson learned by rote and they describe it as pointless, boring and time-consuming (Safran, 2006). The customary style of teaching history

takes place as a trio between teachers, students, textbooks and this constitutes a communication tipped off to the student (Safran, 2002). The development of historical consciousness of students, the historical knowledge, the skills, the attitudes all emerge in the process of learning prediction and is thus made with the continuity of the dialogue between the current reality and historical reality (Ata, 2002). The teaching of history should not be book based such as reading, hearing and memorizing the information from books. Its courses should be student-centered and activity based.

Teaching history in Turkey is as Social studies in elementary; however in secondary education, it is carried out by history lessons. The purpose of this course is to provide culture to the students and develop students' higher mental skills (Şimşek, 2011). The concept of local history used in social studies and history lessons define the historical development of unique nature of a region and historical traces of the development in this region (Işık, 2002). Lifestyles and developments of a society including the areas of social, cultural, economical and political, for those people which lived and were living at definite time in history history are all included in logical time (Danacıoğlu, 2012). While Preston believes logical history is the key to making history interesting for children, Playmouth describes the main point of understanding local history by comparing history to observing trees in a forest (Aslan, 2000). Local history is the history which individuals have experienced and will continue to experience in near environment. It provides learning history of the environment which individuals and families can live in and understand its effects on past lives and memory (MEB, 2005). On teaching local history, teachers can use books and written sources, maps, geological and geographical items, names, buildings, archives, pictures and other images, industrial institutions and television and radio programs as sources (Douch, 1972; Mays, 1974; Pluckrose, 1995; Griffin and Lomas, 1997; as cited in Demircioğlu, 2005).

While teachers teach the subjects in social studies program on teaching local history in Turkey, they are encouraged to visit local history museums, bridges, monuments, combatareas, historical buildings, fountains and caravansaries (MEB, 2005). Teaching local history appeals to all emotions of the students whereby historical information, sources and events that took place allow students to envision the events just as in real life. According to Calkin, students used to ask " Why should I learn history which does not give any local information?". It is necessary to teach local history (Akçalı and Aslan, 2007). Teachers have an important role to teach history. Teachers should have qualifications concerning the use of techniques, methods and strategies which students will be effective on implementing and planning teaching and educational activities (Taşkaya and Bal, 2009). Preparing the activities related to teaching local history takes a sufficient amount of time for teachers and they should

know the borders of historical information (Demircioğlu, 2005). However taking local history into the class with various materials will provide more time and visual for the students.

Materials used in the training environment make learning more durable and increases student's achievement. Materials describing the course information in theoretical and practical terms are referred to as course material. The purpose of the information is to provide the knowledge solidifying materials to be permanent (Demirkuş, 1999). Training materials from the concrete to the abstract; real tools, models, television programs, motion pictures, animated films, radio programs, visual symbols, written symbols, are listed as verbal symbols. In this context, the models have an important place in educational activities. Engaging students in the classroom models results in bringing life to the class. Moreover, this method minimizes the time spent in learning research and gives students a sense of curiosity. Models make the elements, which cannot be brought to class, to be seen as real in class (Doğdu and Armstrong, 1993). The models brought to the classroom ensure students' knowledge about the structure and economic social, political, historical environment in which they live and the link between the school environment helps to better understand the outside world. Learning by doing increases students's sense of wonder and discovery skills in order to gain first-hand experience and historical heritage protection awareness. History students who appreciate local history are provided with a better understanding of the increased sense of belonging (Aktekin, 2010). The activities carried out are reflected positively on education. Students show a significant psychological change in behavior related to their education about history (Demircioğlu, 2005).

Also, archaeological investigations, tours to local historical areas, maps, drawings, plans, picture collections, exhibitions, family history are among the techniques used in local history teaching (Aslan, 2000). The activities in teaching local history are; gathering story, anecdote, folklore, songs, dresses, pictures, maps; wiriting about the situation of the people around the neighborhood, copying the writing on monuments, headstones, inscription, historical pictures; listing of historical buildings, preparing tables showing the development of industry, expansion and contraction of an area; enaction of historical stories; if possible recording the local songs and plays (Işık, 2008). On the other hand, some of these techniques are too difficult to attain or apply. At this point, if models that are suitable for the subjects were brought to the leaning environment, it would be very beneficial for teaching and also easy to attain. Teaching history with models helps students to see both abstract and concrete history together.

According to research by Tunçbilek (2005) students want teachers of social studies courses to use the visual material and they want them to make environmental field

Table 1. Personal information of the students in the working group.

Name of the student	Gender	Age
S1, S3, S5, S6, S7, S10, S12, S13 S15 S17 S19 S20	Female	13
S2, S4, S8, S9, S11, S14, S16, S18	Male	13

trips. Teaching with models helps teachers to make the lesson and learning ability for students more concrete. Moreover, with the help of this model social studies becomes student centered rather then teacher centered. The importance of research can be better understood with use of this method. The purpose of this research is that students with models of local history teaching in social studies can determine the impact of the awareness of local history. For this purpose, students were asked the following questions within the scope of the research:

1. What are the perceptions of the students who are associated with the model available at the local history education?
2. How do the students view the local history teaching application with the paper affect?
3. How do students visualize models affecting them at the end of the process of teaching local history with models?

METHOD

Searching model

In this research, the case studies pattern used in qualitative research methods tradition was used to learn participants' individual perceptions directly, their experiences and perspectives, in order to understand and explain the current situation by gathering detailed data (Büyüköztürk et al., 2009). In the case studies, researcher examines the impact of phenomenon, event or condition on individuals or groups in depth in an unbiased manner (Ekiz, 2009). In case study method, a single situation or event is analyzed in depth instead of following certain rules, or examining limited variables. Factors related to a case in method are studied by discussing in a holistic approach. It focuses on how factors affect case study and how they are affected by the regarding situation (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006). In the study, the students' views about the local history teaching practice with model were unprejudicely examined in depth. Detailed data on the experiences and perspectives of students for practice were collected.

The reason for using this technique is not only to gain first hand information through observation but, behavior which occurs.

Working group

The working group of the research constitutes 20 students, 12 girls and 8 boys, studying in the 7th grade in town Y, city X, Turkey Black Sea Region. There are 20 students in the classroom. Because the students are under 18, the consents are obtained from their parents. Transcripts are provided to their families (Table 1).

The maximum variation sampling of the sampling method was used for the determination of the students who participated in the study. Purpose on selecting the maximum variation sampling related to the same case, is required to be taken of the views of different stakeholders (Hatch, 2002). It is also to create a relatively small sample, to reflect problems studied in sample which are part of the individual diversity in the maximum degree and to find similarities and partnerships between diverse situations (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). When selecting students in the working group, choosing the students of whom achievement levels showed changes was carried out with consideration of gender in different socio-economic levels.

Data collection tools

Semi-structured interview form was used in line with the qualitative research in this research that determine the effects of local history teaching with models in social studies on the awareness of local history of students. The reason for using this technique is suitable for the purpose of the research requested in order to ensure a negotiation process that allows the students who attended the meeting to put forward the opinions in a realistic and integrated manner (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006; Karadeniz and Ata, 2013).

Literature related to the local history teaching in social studies education with models was conducted in order to improve the internal validity of the research. The conceptual framework was constituted and questions which were identified in the interview form and which were intended to be asked to the students were established. In order to provide an assessment of the questions in terms of meaning, purpose and domain coverage experts, two faculty members and three branch teachers were interviewed. Teachers have 5-15 years of professional experience. 2 out of 5 questions which were prepared in result of interviews are extracted from the negotiations fin accordance with experts. Adjustments on any one question are made in accordance with experts. After the necessary changes are made, "Interview form related to the effects of the local history teaching with the Models School on Students' Awareness about Local History" with 3 questions is finalized. The interviews were recorded and transcripted for the approval of students to confirm the validity of the data collected.. The statements where students are unsure or not clear on were eliminated from the study.

Application process

Application process of this work lasts two weeks including the goals such as "Through the city views, they show related evidence to change and continuity about Turkish culture, arts and aesthetics." In the first semester of the 2013-2014 academic year, in "Journey to the Turkish History" unit and "They recognize the interaction of culture, art and aesthetics within the framework of the Ottoman-European relations." The application was performed six hours in total to be 3 hours a week for study group. According to the course of the current curriculum, research was applied by social studies teachers and the researcher participated in the course as an observer. Before the application, the disclosures, which were required, were made by the researcher to the Social Studie teacher. Twenty students were interviewed. Each interview took approximately ten minutes.

In this course, to teach local history, 37 models were used. The models were prepared based on the goals of the lesson. While

Table 2. A sample data analyse.

Theme	Direct views of the students	f
	I know the unknown places	9
	I am aware of the city in which I live	3
Awareness about the city	I have learnt where historical artifacts and where they are done	1

preparing the models, the views of two experts of the area were taken into consideration. After the preparation, some necessary changes were made according to experts views. Also, after the changes the experts approved the models then the models were used to teach the goals. We put emphasis on all the applied models reflecting the local history of the city. These models were introduced to the students by subject teachers in scope of the fifth goal, "Through the city views, they show related to evidence of change and continuity about Turkish culture, arts and aesthetics.", of "Journey of Turkish History" unit in seventh grade and the sixth goal, "They recognize the interaction of Culture, art and aesthetics within the framework of the Ottoman-European relations." Model or models being appropriate to the subject matter were presented to the students in course duration for the whole class to see. While teaching the gains during instructional time, a period of time will be given in order that students can examine models from time to time, appropriate models were benefited and the visualize of local history model was supported with oral or written narrative technique. The purpose during the course is to increase the students' awareness about local history and to demonstrate the results of this application in accordance with the opinions of the students. In the process of handling the issue, questions which were asked about the courses for the purpose that students can repeat the topics covered in the course, and at the end of processing the students were also requested to draw the picture of one of the models. At the end of application process, "Awareness of the Effects of Model-Oriented Teaching Students with Local History Local History Interview" was applied for the working group.

Data analysis

The evaluation of the content analysis of the data obtained in the research technique is used. The main purpose of content analysis is to reach and grasp the relationship which could explain the data obtained. While interpreting descriptive analysis summariz the data, it is subjected to a deeper processing of data from a content analysis. Concepts and themes are explored which can not be reaslised with the descriptive approach. Brought together under certain concepts and themes similar to one another in the content, analysis of the data is interpreted in a manner understood by the reader (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006). The interpretation of data obtained by the frequency and content analysis is used repeatedly (Büyüköztürk et al., 2009).

In the data analysis stage, "Models with Local History Awareness of the Effects of the interview form for the local history of the Student Teaching" of the respondent students were given a code number (P1, P2, ...) and descriptions are made. In this respect, the answers given by the students in the survey were coded for the purposes of research. Categories were created with the data obtained from motion, code similarities, differences and relation-ships; furthermore the students views were considered and placed in this category as well. Analysis unit was used as sentences. Each occurrence of a category which is often frequency, that is, qualitative data were digitized. A sample table about data analyse is

shown in Table 2.

As it is seen in Table 1, when the students's views are analysed, it is detected that nine students stated that "I know the unknown places". Three students stated that " I am aware of the city in which I live." One student stated "I have learnt where historical artifacts and where they are done." It is detected that these three different views increased students' awareness about the city. Therefore, these views took place in the theme of "Awareness about the city".

The purpose of quantification of qualitative data is to reduce bias by increasing the reliability and provide the opportunity to make comparisons between categories (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006). This direction of research in each category which is often repeated (frequency) has been found and displayed in tables. Different views of some of the students evaluated the same frequency; none of the students have been created on the basis of discourse. Analysis of the data based on expert opinion created for categories after analyzing data from a reliability paper was conducted.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings and comments for first sub-problem

What are the perceptions of students, associated with the model available at the local history education?

Students participating in the implementation of local history teaching with model were asked what their opinion were on the usage of model for local history teaching. The analysis on students' answers about the question is shown in Table 3.

Students have both a positive and a negative opinion on the local history teaching with models. However, it is observed that the positive opinions are more dominant than negative opinions in the distribution of student opinion. While Positive opinions are collected under the category, "awareness about the city, knowing the aware-ness about history and culture"; negative opinions are collected in the category, physical image of the model.

When the obtained data are viewed in general, mostly in the opinion of local history with the model for teaching students, students of historical places who do not care or do not realise that they live in the region appear to have noticed. This is clearly seen in the statements of P1 and P5. P1 said ""*I see the places, in which I live, I do not know. I knew my district better. Maybe I have gone to places I can not go on for ever."* and this opinion is agreed by P5 who said *"I have learned better some historical monuments in which I live. I have figured out that there are a lot more sightseeing attractions."* In

Table 3. Views of students on local history teaching with models.

	Theme	Direct views of the students	f
Positive opinions	Awareness about the city Awareness about the history Introduction culture	I know the unknown places	9
		I am aware of the city in which I live	3
		I know historical places	6
		I learn about our culture	2
		It provides us to learn by seeing	4
		I have learnt where historical artifacts are found	1
		It has increased my interests in history	1
		The course is getting interesting	3
Negative opinions	Physical image	It would be better in more detailed	1
		Some models aren't good.	1

Table 4. Impact of the implementation of local history teaching with models on students' opinions about local history.

Theme	Direct views of the students	f
Historical Awareness-Historical Empathy	I did not know before that, there are so much historical places in my district	4
	I saw that the city where I live is a beautiful one	3
	I did not know that it has so much historical heritage	4
	My knowledge about the city where I live has increased.	6
	My knowledge towards the historical monuments has increased.	2
	I noticed that historical monuments are valuable.	2
	I wandered in history.	1
	I can illustrate the historical places in my memory better.	2
	I understood how people lived in the past.	1

addition, ıt can be said that an increased interest in the history lesson was made and the students gain an awareness of the historical monuments and this is supported with the answer of P16 who said *"History lesson is more excited to me, I started to like history."* This situation might be used as an important material in the form of courses in local history teaching with model. In this context, Harrison (2001) stated that models encouraged the students to research real theme rather than remembering knowledge. Likewise, according to the study done by Yağcı (2010), powerful absolute changes were detected on the performance of the students after the instruction with concrete models and also most of the students had positive views about the effects of the instruction on their mental processes such as; problem solving, understanding, learning and remembering the subject. In addition to that, most of the students who participated in the study thought that the models had positive effects on their views in terms of developing positive beliefs against concrete models and probability of the lessons.

Findings and comments for second sub-problem

How does the local history teaching application with paper affect view of students about local history?

Students, who participated in the implementation of local history teaching by models were asked how the implementation of local history teaching with models affects their opinions of local history. Answers relating to question are analyzed and shown in Table 3.

As it is shown in Table 4, at the distribution of students' opinions about how the implementation of local history teaching with models affects students' opinions of local history, "My knowledge about the city where I live has increased" (6) the statement seems to be the mentioned most. Respectively these statements are followed: "I did not know before that, there are so much historical places in my district." (4), "I did not know that it has so much historical heritage." (4), "I saw that the city where I live is a beautiful one." (3), "My knowledge towards the historical monuments has increased." (2), "I noticed that historical monuments are valuable." (2), "I can illustrate the historical places in my memory better." (2), "I wandered in history." (1), "I understood how people lived in the past." (1).

When the findings are analyzed in general, it can be said that by means of the local history teaching with models, students notice the local history (P9), different

Figure 1. Student 7's drawing.

Figure 2. The original model.

dimensions of habitat and historical features (P13, P20). This is detected in the statement of P9 who said "*Before seeing the models I was unaware of the some historical places in my district. By means of models I learned where historical monument are located in my district. Now, I have more information about my local history.*" Moreover, when P13 said "*I did not have much knowledge about the city I live in. I was listening to my social studies teacher with pleasure while he was giving information. But, after seeing these models I have a better understanding and I can tell the parts I know while our teacher is teaching.*" and P20 said ""*I did not mind and I value the historical monuments so much. I was not knowledgeable about the city I live in. But I am aware that they are apart of our heritage and valuable.*" It was detected that using models increased their awareness. Students' historical empathy skills have increased which can be seen in the saying of P14 who said "*I nearly travelled in time. Everything seems alive. It is good to touch models.*" Students realised the chronology better. Students who saw the historical monuments in historical places developed a strong conscious of history. This is supported with the statement of P10 who said "*I understood the past better. I noticed how people lived and what they did in the past.*" It can be precipitated in general that models constituted a positive point of view towards history among students.

Furthermore, it created an awareness in the sense of local history. In this context, according to Piaget, in traditional instruction environments, children are not active and this situation is not appropriate for their cognitive growth. Whereas, students-centered environments the students should not be restricted. The learning environments should give opportunities to children for interacting with objects and models (Senemoğlu, 2005).

Findings and comments for third sub-problem

The students participating in the practice of teaching the local history with models were asked to portray a sample drawing and analysis. Those drawings are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

The picture of the student who is coded as 7 belongs to a history building. There are similarities between the student's drawings and the historical structure. Student had the structure configured as a three-storey in his drawing; he gave place for some details. When viewing these details, there are remarkable similarities for example between the drawing of the windows and the entrance section of the house and original painting. Students designed a different drawing from the original painting in some areas. Despite being seen as a five-window models, student drew four windows for the top floor windows. Although the painting is three-dimensional, students drew the picture as one-dimensional. When we looked at the student's picture, we observed that in a historical sense, he has the static imagination. Because the student tried to portray what he saw, he did not provide a new contribution for his own picture. Fines (2002) refers to this situation as static imagination. P7 answered the question why did you draw such a picture in such an answer*: "I liked it beacuse the building which I observed in the picture was beautiful. Its shape and image is very beautiful, I thought it would be very nice if I had such a house, so I drew such a picture."* The evidence of historical change has not been included in the student's answer. Students could demonstrate the difference between the old buildings and the current

Figure 3. Student 11's drawing.

Figure 5. Student 15's drawing.

Figure 4. The original model.

Figure 6. The original model.

buildings; however, students could not express the changes in the historical process, that is, he used the static imagination (Figures 3 and 4).

The picture of the student who is coded as 11 belongs to a model ship. Students were able to draw together the details of the model ship. It has also been drawn in accordance with the rules of perspective images. Full details of the ship have been involved in the student's drawing. P11 answered the question why you drew such a picture in such an answer: "*We live near the beach, I see a lot of ships like this ship, and I wanted to draw such a ship.*" Students tried to establish parallels between the objects which there are in the environment that he lives in and the objects he saw during the course. Environmental factors affect students' learning positively. Students carry the objects that they see around them to their learning environment (Vygotsky, 1998). From the student's drawing it is understood that it contributes positively for the students to configure new information when environmental factors are used in the field of teaching (Figures 5-6).

The picture of the student who is coded as 15 belongs to a historical mansion. Student drawing was missing a floor of the pavilion. P15 answered the question why you drew such a picture in such an answer: "*I did not know*
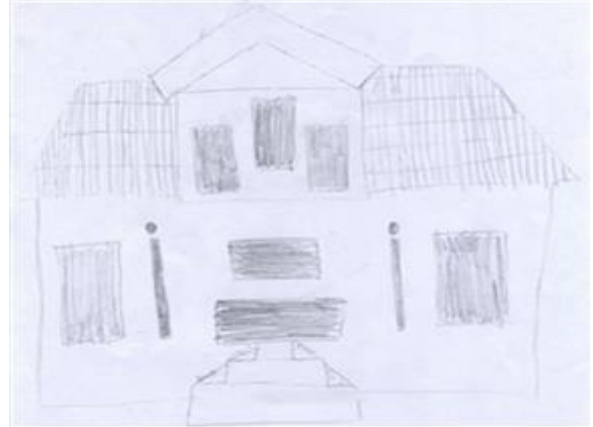
that there is such a historic building in our city. Old houses were more beautiful than today's houses,.. I think the past environment which people lived in was much better than today's environment, and old houses were much broader than today's houses." When the student's drawings and answers are examined, it is observed that student compares the present with the past. Student realizes that there is a change from the past to present in the historical process, and is revealed with his discourse. With Fines (2002)'s expression, students perceive differences and changes. From the student's discourses, it is understood that he has the dynamic imagination.

Dynamic imagination is composed of three stages. The students who are in the first stage s can make assessment of the drawing they made. They can make simple comparisons between the past and the present. From 15's comments about his pictures which he made, it is understood that the student is in the first stage of the dynamic imagination. In the second stage of the dynamic imagination, the students can explain the definition which students make based on the references (Fines, 2002).

They can further express the similarities between the original image and their own pictures. The students who are in the third stage of the dynamic imagination explain the definition based on the references, make representations and decide with clear statements.

The appropriate findings could not be reached in accordance with the definitions in the second and third stage of the dynamic imagination. But, it has not been reflected in the width drawing of the students' discourses. From the students' discourses, it can be expected that he give more place to the changes in the historical process and the details on the model.

Conclusıon

It has been noticed by the opinion of the students about local history teaching with models, that most students do not show interest nor are they aware of the historical places in the region in which they live. In addition, it can be said that the students gain an awareness of the historical monuments and they have an increased interest in the history lesson. In general term, it can be concluded that usage of the model in social studies brings students awareness in local history and a positive outlook towards the history.

When the related literature is viewed, Yeşilbursa (2011) indicates that working in the use of historic places in teaching social studies, students stated that the arrival help to realize the nation's cultural values. Aktekin (2010) and Şahin (2011) say that in order to provide interesting local history lessons, the scope and the method should be identified correctly. They also mention that students find local history implications amusing. As a result their awareness towards local history has increased. Akçalı and Aslan (2007)'s local history education of the students is a key in developing a positive attitude towards the course. Işık (2002) states that the students have opportunity to learn the history of their own region with local history practices in social studies.Likewise, Grosslight et al. (1991) reach the conclusion that many students described models as a copy of reality in his research. Morover, many researchers put forward the teaching with concrete models before abstract instruction (Yağcı, 2010).

Also, in scope with third sub-problem, Dilek (2009) and Kaya (2008) presented in their papers that some of the secondary schools students use static imagination. These findings are in line with the findings of the survey results.

In the light of the results obtained, the recommendations developed for researchers and practitioners have been materialized as follows.

1. Teachers can be encouraged for the usage of model related to local history as educational materials in social studies.

2. In the course the students can be more active in the process by making models relate to local history.
3. Given that this research was carried out among students in the secondary school level, it is necessary to investigate whether it would be useful at the level of secondary school and university students.
4. In order to shed light on the current work, in the various courses school and classroom, new research related to the regulation of the "Teaching of model" activity, should be done.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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