

Full Length Research Paper

Analysis of narrative texts in secondary school textbooks in terms of values education

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Accepted 3 April, 2013

Texts have a crucial place in language education and probably they are the most important means of education. Students at the primary and secondary education ages mostly read narrative texts like short stories, poems and fictional books. This study attempts to assess value transfer in narrative texts at the secondary education textbooks. Our study tries to determine whether narrative texts in Turkish textbooks used in secondary education can be used in value transfer while teaching Turkish. The present study reviews the values stated in Educational Program of Social Sciences Course such as attaching importance to family unity, freedom, scientific knowledge, diligence, cooperation, sensitiveness, honesty, aesthetic, tolerance, hospitality, caring about being healthy, respect, love, responsibility, cleanness, patriotism, benevolence values. We employ the document analysis method. Our examination in the study consists of narrative texts in Turkish textbooks used at the secondary education. All of the narrative texts in students and teachers' textbooks published by the Ministry of National Education are evaluated. Our investigation show that while narrative texts in these textbooks are rich in terms of such values like diligence, sensitiveness, and love, there are lack of certain values such as peace, tolerance, fairness, freedom, cleanness and hospitality.

Key words: Value, value education, language education, text, narrative text.

INTRODUCTION

Texts have an utmost importance in mother tongue education. Texts are the most commonly used educational materials in schools. A text is either written or spoken language sequences produced by one or more than individuals in certain communication contexts (Günay, 2003). Accordingly, products of language that have communicative features make up a text.

In terms of a language, a text is a combination of sentences, which are ordered and meaningful writings. The sequences are not random; on the contrary, they are formed by the writer in a logical order in terms of linguistic categories and reasoning of the text. The text is unique by itself and it is thus different from the sum of the sentences within in each text. It is composed of

sentences but it has a meaning beyond those sentences. A text is both a product of a producer and a process through which the reader makes sense of it (Taşgüzel, 2004).

Literary texts used as educational materials in a mother tongue education have many functions in this respect. Göğüş (1978) points out these functions of literary texts by stating that "Written texts which are neat and designed whole of linguistic indicators are linguistic units that are rich in senses and that are suitable to produce or use emotions, excitement, fear or other abstract feelings appealing to a human soul".

Each text has a structure, which means how ideas in a text are organized to carry messages to the readers. A

text structure helps readers to understand ideas in a text and aids readers establish relations between the thoughts in the text and distinguishing important contents from unimportant contents (Saenz and Fuchs, 2002).

Texts cannot be independently thought from the texts written before them. That a text is written in a certain period of time is an addition to the chain formed by the texts of certain genre written in that language. A writer of every text abides by the rules of a certain genre that existed before the text s/he is writing in (Göktürk, 1997). In that case, texts are built upon the current rules of genre in which they are written.

Narrative Text

Narrative text is a type of text which has been employed since the very old times throughout the history. Even if time and cultural differences have caused various changes, narrative text genre has elements, which can be determined in a concrete manner and also people have the same expectations in terms of text structure (Coşkun, 2005).

Narrative is a fictional type of text which tells about an event (or some events) that happened to a person (or a group of people) as if a writer lives with(in) main characters. Narration need not be factual and may be written from the perspective of a character in the text. In terms of a length, narrative texts can be defined as texts "that can be read at once" (Gündüz, 2003).

Narrative text type has a unique narration, which is called as "narrative expression". While writing a story, a language is used not only as a mean of communication but also to dramatize the situation (Gündüz, 2003). Narrative expression is a form of expression that aims to sequentially tell the events within the story. A narrator wants to enliven the person whom a story is based upon. Therefore, s/he has to solve the problems of curiosity and persuasiveness to achieve her aims (Adali, 1982).

According to Bruner (1986), the narrative texts can be formed of active and serial events, emotional events or a mixture of both. Stories dealing with successive events are generally told by a third person. Story is consisted of a sequence of events and events are told according to order of happening. Protagonist's psychological structure is not emphasized on so much in such kind of stories because it is much easier to understand it (Westbay, 1999). Stories dealing with both feelings and conscience aspect of characters are more complex. Such kind of stories is written through different characters' points of view, which requires reader to understand the psychological motivation of a main character. These stories are extremely difficult to understand since it is obligatory to interpret other people's behaviors given their own purposes and perspectives (Cited in Akyol, 2006).

Students at primary school ages generally read narrative text such as short stories, poems and fictional

books (Smith, 2003). As a result of this, students have already accumulated enough experience that helps them to clarify and expand the scheme they formed regarding the structure of a story, at the first stage of their educational lives. By the time students reach the secondary level they will gather sufficient understanding on the form the narrative expression and they display intuitional knowledge regarding stories (Dodson, 2000).

According to Yalçın and Aytaş (2002), stories are important for people of all ages but they are vitally important for children. Given the fact, educating children through stories is the best strategy for enabling them to develop the desired behaviors. Besides, stories and novels enrich children's limited experience of life, give them opportunities to think upon variety of personalities via characters and contribute to the clarification of value judgments they are still developing. In this way, children's adjustment to social and cultural environment within which they live becomes a lot easier. In addition to this, stories and novels not only enable children to recognize the people in their country within the historical perspective and also provide materials on the people of other countries. Stories and novels within which children find something from themselves also enhance their reading skills (Gürel et al., 2007).

Starting from the early childhood, children books play crucial roles on developing personal values about human beings and the realities of life. Children books using narrative features of drawing and language enliven various personality features and thus different personalities. With fictions inspired from characters and their relations, children develop a wealth of experiences to explore certain concepts such as human-beings, nature and life (Sever, 2007). Then, through children books and reading texts children acquire various values, consolidate them and form new values.

The texts to be utilized in Turkish language teaching should be selected according to certain educational purposes. For example, a lesson on any language teaching is not a lesson in which only theoretical knowledge can be taught to children. In accordance with the general objectives of national education, it is aimed to get students gain various attitudes, values and behaviors. In this sense, it is highly important to use narrative texts in values development in teaching Turkish.

Character education is an important dimension of children's education because it provides children with different social and ethical lessons. Literature on children can be used effectively in character education (Tyra, 2012). The simplest method in value/character education is to teach through literature (Edgington, 2002). Values are not to be taught directly but through literature (Tighe, 1998). On the other hand, reading the children's literature works or stories does not directly lead to character development; however, read books only affect their characters. Therefore, fictional books that are read under the guidance of parents and teachers help character

education (ERIC, 2002). It is also accepted that stories play an important role in spiritual development, too. Character education through texts requires a serious teacher-preparation, open-ended questions, explanations, summarization, student contributions and reciprocal responds (Halstead and Taylor, 2000).

In value education, reading should not be considered as a passive process. According to Narvaez (2002), reading is an active process and each reader acquires different knowledge from the texts based on their accumulations of information, skills and studies. The reader might not get the information or message the author intended from the text. The messages to be given in the text are influenced by reading skills and moral development of readers. Therefore, proponents of traditional character education ought to renounce the recognition that reading stories with moral contents totally build character.

Value teaching

Value can be defined as a belief, thought or universal judgment and attitude among people regarding whether a behavior, situation, event or phenomenon is desirable or not. Every nation expects from its nationalities to acquire their own values during culturization process and then to reach universal values after adopting their own values (Karatay, 2011).

Schools are considered as places in which not only positive knowledge but also values are taught. Even if a child acquires her first education regarding values from her family, schools are the places in which a child receives their initial education on values. During the course of teaching values in schools, it is required for students to experience these values during the natural course of education.

Values education is at the center of both curricular and extra-curricular activities (Halstead and Taylor, 1996:3). The value education conducted within this framework also contributes to the development of affective level of the students. Schools and education programs that aim to teach certain values such as respecting people, serving the sacred things in life, democratic values such as the fact that there may be differences of opinion and ever person needs to be equal before law, should also support the family regarding ethical decisions and character education processes (Suh and Traiger, 1999). Because experiencing inconsistent behaviors from his family and in her school environments either prevents the value gain or slows down the process. For this reason, schools must help the families in teaching these values (Refshauge, 2004:2 cited in Yiğittir and Keleş, 2011).

During the process of teaching values, knowledge and thought dimensions are also important. People alter and reshape their judgments and preferences as they learn new things. As a result, the values are not genetically

transferred through generation. Values are learned with certain social roles and transferred to next generations. Particular values such as what should do, what should not do, and things that are respected are learned in a certain social role and there may also be sanctions. Social support and reinforcements have an important role in terms of forming values. If a particular value is approved and appreciated by people, it has an important effect on an individual. Values begin to change or become ineffective as the social support behind them decreases (Sarı, 2005).

If taught explicitly, it is assumed that the effect of a value gets weakened. For this reason, the key point is to make the values acquired through seven steps without imposing or forcing them (Simon, 1972):

Choosing

1. Making a choice freely or independently (freedom of choice)
2. Being able to choose among the alternatives after assessing many existing alternatives
3. Being able to choose after considering the possible results of each alternative

Awarding

4. Awarding and valuing the things considered as the most important and valuable
5. Being able to openly express a value that is chosen freely (independently)

Behaviors

6. Being able to behave in a manner (attitude) that is compatible with the value chosen freely (independently)
7. Being able to repeatedly exercise certain attitudes that is compatible with the chosen value.

Teacher asks open-ended questions to students and let them explain their answers (Cited in Akbaş, 2005).

Regarding the general perspective of the Turkish Language Teaching Program (MEB, 2006) the following concepts has been emphasized "It is aimed to raise individuals who understand what they read, listen to or watch; who can express their emotions, thoughts and dreams; who are able to think in a criticizing and creative manner; who are responsible; who have entrepreneurial spirits; who are in harmony with their surrounding; who get a habit out of researching, questioning, criticizing and interpreting the events, situations and information by considering their own knowledge, who have aesthetics; and who are sensitive to national values". In articles 9 and 11 of "General Purpose" heading of the program, the following statements have been written: "It aims to enable students recognize national and universal values by means of cultural and artistic works belonging to the Turkish culture and art and to those of the world " and " To have them to respect national, spiritual and ethical values and strengthen their emotions and thoughts regarding these values."

Table 1. Narrative texts examined in the study.

6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
Çocuk Kitaplığında Sabah Tartışması	Yolcu Konmaz Oteli	Kız Kalesi
En İyi Arkadaş	Bülbül ile Bağcı	Eski Ankara Evleri
Kitap Kuşum Uçuverdi	Atatürk ve Türk Tiyatrosu	Robinson Crusoe
Atatürk'ten Anılar	Bilmece	Atatürk'ten Anılar
Atatürk ve Tarihimiz	Miras Keçe	İhtiyar Çilingir
Ömür Boyu Mutluluk	Karada Yüzen Donanma	Mehmet Âkif ve Safahat'ı Okumak
Meşe ile Saz	Susayan Konya	Ergenekon Destanı
Bir Masal Ülkesinde Anadolu	Yeşil Gözlü Kardan Adam	Çığdem Der Ki...
İstanbul Liseli Küçük Hasan	Son Kuşlar	Herkesin Dostu Anton
Eskici	Emine Teyze'nin Çilek Reçeli	Bir Varmış Bir Yokmuş Televizyon Bozulmuş
Beypazarı		İki İyi İnsan
Bir Göl Nasıl Bingöl Oldu?		Martı
Kırkikindiler		Bir Başarı Öyküsü

This study aims to evaluate narrative texts in secondary level Turkish course books in terms of value transfer. The values stated in Social Studies Teaching Program (MEB, 2005) are as follows: upholding family values, justice, independence, peace, freedom, hard-working, solidarity, sensitivity, honesty, aesthetics, tolerance, hospitality, health, respect, love, responsibility, cleanness, patriotism and helpfulness.

Main purpose of the study is to assess values thoughts in mother tongue education and determine the values in narrative texts secondary school textbooks.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

In accordance with a qualitative research paradigm, our study employs the document analysis method. It involves the analysis of written materials containing information on the examined phenomenon or phenomena (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005). It is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents-both printed and electronic materials (Bowen, 2009). In the same vein, the values in the textbooks at the secondary level of education are determined.

Selected texts

In Turkey, it is mandatory for textbooks to be endorsed by the Ministry of National Education. The texts in these books are composed of informative, narrative texts and poems. Given the importance of narrative texts in the value transfer, narrative texts are analyzed in our study. In this study, all of the 36 narrative texts found in 6th, 7th and 8th grade Turkish textbooks and teacher's workbooks published by the Ministry of National Education are evaluated. These texts are shown in Table 1.

Data analysis

The list of the values used in this study is taken from Social Sciences Subject Instruction Program prepared by the Turkish

Ministry of National Education. All of the values listed in the program are examined in our study. The texts are studied to find the pre-defined list of values. Our study considers both directly and indirectly narrated values.

Examples of directly narrated values:

Hospitality: "... Both sides wanted us to be their guests. They argued about it. One could not help admiring their high hospitalities."

Aesthetic: "What we ask for is not to allow unguided urbanization without any architectural style to destruct our historical values"

Love: "Here is the unique and universal language of love. After some foreign newspapers published news on Nutuk, a large number of letters of love and gratefulness have been received for weeks and even months from many countries such as Australia, New Zealand."

Examples of indirectly narrated values:

Industriousness: "I have to share the small room with my elder sister. My elder brother also has a small room. Thus, I and my sister and brother altogether have to study in the lounge. We share the three corners of the large dinner table. Every one of us sits at one corner of the table when we do our homeworks ..."

Cooperation: "They could be able to find a nice house to rent after his, his wife's and daughter's continuous searching. They did not have to pay any payment in advance for the house. They were very extremely happy ..."

Altruism: "Teacher A. Sullivan marriage with John Macy in 1905 did not prevent them from succeeding their targets. Hellen started to live in teacher's home. Mr. and Mrs. Macy did their best to help her in her studies and activities ..."

RESULTS

Results regarding the values in narrative texts in the textbooks at the secondary schools level are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 indicates that secondary schools textbooks emphasize many values such as upholding family values, being just, independency, freedom, being scientific, hard-working solidarity, sensitivity, honesty, aesthetics, tolerance, hospitality, being healthy, respect, love,

Table 2. Values in narrative texts in Turkish textbooks.

Value	F	Percentage
Being just	3	1.19
Considering family values	6	2.38
Peace	2	0.79
Hard-working	38	15.07
Solidarity	9	3.57
Sensitivity	36	14.28
Aesthetics	13	5.15
Tolerance	2	0.79
Love	28	11.11
Respect	16	6.34
Responsibility	21	8.33
Being Healthy	4	1.58
Honesty	4	1.58
Being scientific	16	6.34
Hospitality	5	1.98
Freedom	4	1.58
Cleanness	4	1.58
Patriotism	19	7.53
Helpfulness	16	6.34
Independency	6	2.38
Total number of values	252	100

responsibility, cleanness, patriotism, helpfulness.

The values which are emphasized the most in the textbooks are “hard-working” (15.07%) and “sensitivity” (14.28%). These values are followed by “love” (11.11%), “responsibility” (8.33%), “patriotism” (7.53%), “being scientific” (6.34%), “respect” (6.34%), “helpfulness” (6.34%), “aesthetics” (5.15%), “solidarity” (3.57%), “considering family unity important (2.38%), “independency” (2.38%), “hospitality” (1.98%), “freedom” (1.58%), “honesty” (1.58%), “giving importance to being healthy” (1.58%), “cleanness” (1.58%), “being fair” (1.19%), “peace” (0.79%) and tolerance (0.79%), respectively.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Language education is generally done through reading texts. In this respect, texts as the most common means for teaching Turkish are to be chosen according to educational aims. Especially narrative texts are much suitable as means to have students develop desired attitudes, value and behaviors. Our results indicate that textbooks are full of those values considered to be important.

This study aims to determine whether narrative texts in Turkish textbooks used in secondary education can be used in value transfer while teaching Turkish. Our qualitative survey of related textbooks indicates that narrative texts in secondary education are rather rich in values like

diligence, sensitiveness and love. On the other hand, some values (such as peace, tolerance, fairness, caring about being healthy, honesty, freedom, cleanness and hospitality) do not find much place in these texts.

It is advised by Ministry of National Education in Turkey to students under the name of "100 Basic Pieces" for development of primary school students' reading skills. Similarly, when he investigates a 100 the most “Basic Works” recommended to primary school students, Şen (2007) reports that the value of love is the most common one, which is followed by sensitiveness, altruism, respect. The independency value is not mentioned in these Basic Works. Caring about being health, peace, freedom and scientific appreciation are the least common values underlined in these works. These results are found to be similar with results of this research in great extent.

Dede Korkut is one of the pieces used in education of mother tongue. Özbay and Tayşi (2011) also review the values in the 12 Dede Korkut books. They find that 190 values are counted in these stories and the most common examples are those about the value of “respect”, which is followed by love, responsibility, cooperation and patriotism. The love value is seen to be the most ranked value in all studies done.

Based on the examination of secondary school textbooks in our study, the following suggestions can be made:

- Inclusion of all values especially in newly written Turkish textbooks is imperative.
- Dominance of certain values in secondary school Turkish textbooks ought to be prevented; authors and material developers have to be more careful in the sense that all values are given equal importance in the texts.
- Proposed values ought to be included in the texts over and over again to firmly teach these values to the readers.
- They ought to have a high level of literary quality for preferred narrative texts to help students acquire certain values.

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