

## Pre-test the Effect of Teaching Social Studies Course through Performing Arts on the Students' Academic Achievement and Permanence of their Knowledge<sup>#</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify the effect of social studies teaching through performing arts on the academic achievement and permanence of knowledge of performing arts and students. The participants of this research consisted of 250 6th grade students studying at five secondary schools located in different educational regions within boundaries of the central Elazığ Province (from Turkey) in the 2015 and 2016 spring term. The study was conducted on 5 experimental (n = 125) and 5 control (n = 125) groups randomly selected. A mixed method involving qualitative and quantitative methods were used. Academic achievement test and an interview consisting of open-ended questions were used. On quantitative dimension of the study, pretest-posttest control group quasi-experimental design was used. On qualitative dimension, students were interviewed. During the study, while social studies course teaching was carried out with the experimental groups through performing arts, in the control groups, teaching activities stipulated by the current syllabus were carried out. The application period of the study lasted for eight weeks in total with three hours of teaching weekly in both groups. The statistical program (SPSS, version 21) was used analyzing the quantitative data obtained from the study. The N-VIVO-9 program was used for the analysis of qualitative data. As a result of the study, it was found that social studies teaching activities performed through performing arts were more successful in increasing student achievement than the activities stipulated by the current syllabus. However, as a result of the interviews, the results regarding the positive and negative aspects of the teaching activities performed in the experimental groups were obtained. It was found that the data obtained concerning the qualitative dimension of the study supported the data obtained concerning the quantitative dimension.

**Key words:** Performing Arts, Social Studies, Success, Entertaining, Permanence

### INTRODUCTION

The main objective of the syllabus prepared based on the concept of constructivist education approach since the beginning of the 2000s has been, by placing the student at the center of the process, to create a student profile researching, questioning and reproducing the knowledge obtained through experience. The effort of the students to get rid of the habit of consuming the ready knowledge and go on an adventure of acquiring new knowledge with the guidance of the teacher has pushed the teachers one of the chief architects of the education into the necessity of using, developing new methods and techniques in the process or integrating them into the process of experimenting with them. For this purpose, many strategies, methods and techniques were developed which would help students to be active in the lesson and aimed to associate the knowledge and information with daily life by making sure that the knowledge and information

offered to the students would be permanent. One of the ways of teaching methods thought to be appropriate for this understanding is the performing arts.

**Concept of Stage:** For this field of art work whose material is human, Nutku (2002, p. 130) stated that "The stage is a playground that reveals the universe of the actor and provides or exhibits the creativity and imagination of the director in line with the unlimited power of expression". In other words, the stage is a special area that is built at a certain height from the ground in order to enable the audience to see the ongoing performance easily (Kara & Baş, 2016, p. 442).

**Concept of Art:** Art can be defined as all kinds of methods used in expressing thoughts, opinions or beauty etc., or extraordinary and superior creativity resulting from this expression (Web 1: <http://www.tdk.gov.tr>). According to another definition, art was expressed as the objective realities in nature and their aesthetic relationship with human being

(Ersoy, 2002, p. 6). According to Ashkar (2011, p. 2), on the other hand, art was defined as blending the data that the individual acquired from the society, from the culture and from the nature subconsciously at consciousness level and bringing them together with aesthetic values. To sum up, art can be defined as human beings' efforts to research for the beauty through creativity and productivity in the light of the aesthetical concerns in accordance with the impressions acquired both from the culture one was brought up and nature (Kara & Baş, 2016, p. 441).

**Performing Arts:** It can be defined as the general name of the art branches such as Public Storytelling, Light Comedy, Ballet, Dance, Theater and so on based on performance displayed in front of a certain and conscious community or group. It is divided into two categories: Traditional and Contemporary performing arts Its shown in Figure 1.

**Traditional Performing Arts:** When the historical development and structure of traditional Turkish theater are examined, it is seen that it is grouped under two headings.

- 1) Plays performed on the stage: Public Storytelling, Light Comedy, Village Plays and Puppetry
- 2) Games played on screen: Karagöz (Shadow Play) (Yalçın, & Aytaş, 2002, p. 115).

**Karagöz (Shadow Play):** Karagöz, also known as Hayal-i Zill (Shadow Play), is actually a shadow play. This art, which is very attention-grabbing with its unique characters, form of performance and dialogues based on conflict, is also regarded as having great importance as it possesses very important nuances about the culture Anatolian people. Karagöz, shadow play in other words, confronts as an area with different ideas in terms of their origins (Coşkun, 2010; Çolakoğlu, 2006; Töre, 2009). The ideas introduced in this regard are as follows: The origin of the Karagöz play extends along to India, Central Asia, China and Japan, and it is said that the story of its origin goes to China where it was born and later performed by the Mongol Turks (Çolakoğlu, 2006, p. 544). Apart from the controversial issues, it is undeniable that Karagöz shadow play is always an event of interest in terms of the stories that are well known and told in Anatolia. In these narratives in which Karagöz represents the rude common person and Hacivat the educated university type of person, the laughter-centered dialogues and the stories between Karagöz and Hacivat confront us as an organization that conveys the message with a lesson to be learnt to the audience and closes the curtain with a happy ending.

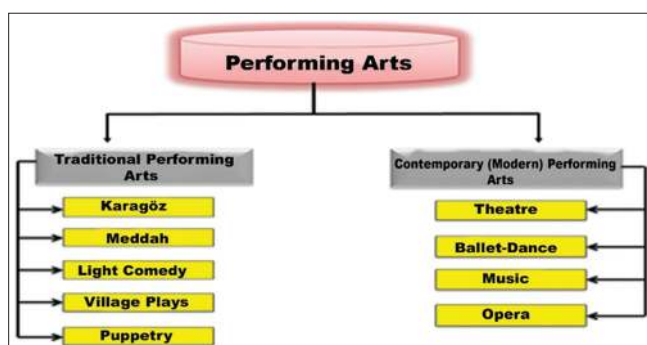


Figure 1. Performing Arts (Kara and Baş, 2016, p. 443)

**Meddah (Public Storytelling):** The word “Meddah”, which means very praiseworthy and very complimentary, is one of the oldest products of Traditional Turkish Theater. Meddah is a genre based on the fact that an artist narrates the reality in which s/he takes part as a play. The person called Meddah (Public Storyteller) can show various gestures and facial expressions and perform imitations or change the tone of his/her voice based on the events and situations, heroes s/he tells about. A Meddah can tell various stories on many subjects from metropolitan life to fairy tales and folk tales (Tülücü, 2005, p. 3). This group of narrators, who are known with different names in different geographies, stays in the places they travel to; they appear before the people in open spaces, in traditional coffeehouses, and in places where collective gathering is possible, and exhibit the aforementioned skills. Meddah differs from other genres, in addition including emotional, heroic and epic issues, in terms of establishing an emotional connection with the audience religious, (Canlı & Altun, 2016, p. 418). A Meddah has to have different abilities and skills from a well-equipped performer in terms of the qualities that s/he should have. These qualities are speaking and voice skills, singing, humorous speech, mimicking the sounds of objects, the speech forms of different people, accents and the sounds of various living things, memorizing many stories and events, improvisation, etc. (Sekmen, 2010, p. 30). The basis of plays and contemporary theater genres known as “Talk Show” today is based on meddah public storytelling (Töre, 2009, p. 2189).

**Light Comedy:** It is an example of a traditional folk theater that is performed in the middle of the audience, based on improvisation, which also makes use of elements such as music, dance and imitation. Since it is performed with living actors, despite the fact that there is a fundamental difference from the shadow play Karagöz, there are significant similarities between the two types of plays in terms of play repertoire, laughing methods, people and structure (Konur, 1995, p. 47). The satire known as “the moral of a story” constitutes the basic line of this play (İçyar, 2011, p. 12). It is seen in the historic records that this play received a lot of interest during the Mahmud II. Period (Konur, 1995, p. 48). The players in the light comedy perform their play within their best ability without depending on a certain text. Light comedy met the important need of the Turkish audience during the period when modern theater was not yet developed (Yalçın & Aytaş, 2002, p. 130).

**Village Plays and Puppetry:** In terms of its dramatic structure, this genre, which emerged by being nurtured by the local culture and was updated timely or kept alive in some places as it was transferred, is comprised of the plays performed in the villages in accordance with the cultural codes of the region where it originally emerged. In addition to entertainment activities such as wedding and circumcision ceremonies, it is commonly known that this genre of plays are performed in certain or designated houses accompanied by various treats in cold winter nights.

Based on the name of the village plays, the association between the play performed and the village in which it was

performed should not be ignored. Each play became a play with the characteristics of the context in which it was created. The village audience, that is, the creator of the play performed, is a mirror of the cultural richness of that village audience and is one of the most important sources in terms of folklore. It will cause changes in the play in many ways when it is performed in front of another audience and location (Karadağ, 1978, p. 4). Blood feuds, events of girl abduction, birth, nature-human relationships, animal impersonations, courage, etc. are among the main topics of village plays (Töre, 2009, p. 2187). As there are the ritual-related plays in the village play, there are also those based on humor. It is not wrong to say that the topics mentioned above are planned in both ways and tried to create a double effect (Duyamaz & Şahin, 2010, p. 172).

**Puppetry:** Puppetry, one of the Central Asian performing arts, was known as *Kolkoçak* (Hand puppet) and *Çadır-Hayal* (Tent-Dream) in the ancient Turkish life. This performance art came to Anatolia in the time of Seljuks. There is information about this play in the Sultan Veled's collected poems in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the word "Kukla" (Puppet) was used explicitly by Nizami of Edirne. In the travel book of Evliya Çelebi, the Traveler, the term of "Puppetist" was mentioned. It is known that giant puppets paraded through the streets during the Ottoman period (Töre, 2009, p. 2189). Puppetry is a one-man show performed by dolls made up of a variety of materials. The puppeteer undertakes the characteristics of all characters by himself. The art of puppetry has more than one genre with names such as western puppet, chair puppet, hand puppet, and rope puppet. It is known that certain typecasting is mentioned in this art of puppetry. They are as the young lover and his sweetheart, Momzilla (Mother of the bride), Fatma (wife of İbiş, the servant girl), Tirana (Bad person) and other types: the Satan, the Flatterer, the Swashbuckler (Efe), the Jew, the Arab, the Laz and some others.

### Contemporary (Modern) Performing Arts

#### Theater: Concept of theater,

1. The venue where literary genres such as drama, comedy, vaudeville are performed.
2. The group that performs these genres on stage in front of an audience.
3. The art of writing plays.
4. They can be defined as all the plays written for staging (TLA: Great Turkish Dictionary, 2011, p. 3578).

Nutku (1983) defined theater as the unified state of all arts. The theater, which started with religious rituals and then developed accompanying the actions of faith in its visuality over time, has reached the present day with the practices we observed in the Ancient Greece and in the later periods in Rome at the festivities. In the ceremonies in which shamanic beliefs were held with the Central Asian Turks, the Shamans wore holy dresses in religious rituals and again performed a show playing the drum as a sacred accessory (Mömin, 2013, p. 87). Even though every ritual was a show that was decorated with music, dance and discourse and the dialogues, monologues, sym-

bolic expressions, where narratives were involved and that emerged with the accumulations of societies, it was in a solo show based on hocus-pocus and hokey-pokey with gestures and mimics. The audience would watch the solo shows which were in accordance with the dramatic structure, but not a repetitive of one another and with a different internal as performance with certain integrity (Labecka Koecherowa, 1995, p. 78). We can list the theater genres under the titles of Tragedy, Comedy, Drama and Contemporary Theater. The contemporary theater hosts within itself such genres as Expressionist Theater, Surrealist Theater, Existentialist (Existentialist) Theater, Absurd Theater, Epic Theater, Boulevard Theater, and Grotesque Theater. These genres of theater are acknowledged in the world and the rules about staging plays in them have been formed in time (Nutku, 1976, p. 2002).

**Ballet – Dance:** Ballet can be defined as a type of show based on the act of taking steps in line with certain figures, stage-setting, dance and music (Web 4: <http://www.tdk.gov.tr>). Another way to define it is that "Ballet" is a show performed for the artistic purpose, accompanied by music, depending on a choreographic structure. Dance, on the other hand, can be defined as regular body movements made in accordance with the music rhythm of the body and performed for an aesthetic purpose. It is commonly known that Ballet was first seen performed in Italy, and that this period coincided roughly with the Renaissance period.

**Music:** While music can be defined as the form of sound that has gained meaningful vibrations, it can also be defined as the art of talking about their social, individual, etc. needs through sounds (Web 4: <http://www.tdk.gov.tr>). Confucius, on the other hand, described music as an art that originated from the harmony of the earth and the sky.

**Opera:** Opera, in general, can be defined as a piece of theatrical production that takes its subject from history or current events and, a certain part or the whole of it is performed in the accompaniment of music (Web 1: <http://www.tdk.gov.tr>). The homeland of the opera is Italy. Florence, one of the important centers of the Renaissance, is also known as the cradle of musical performances staged today. According to previous researches, it is understood that the idea of opera was born when some musicians and poets in the city of Florence came together to write works similar to the ancient Greek plays (Kara & Baş, 2016, p.462).

### Performing Arts and Social Studies

In today's world where the skills of producing knowledge, using the knowledge produced, criticizing and evaluating are emphasized, it is possible to achieve these qualities only through developing or educating versatile individuals. People today are expected to have an intellectual personality, academic knowledge and share it with the world. It is because one-way information doesn't help anyone. Many of the arts that can be carried beyond an unlimited imagination (theater, etc.) undertake an important task in the realization of many achievements in education, in gaining and enriching the basic language skills and in changing the perspective of life of individuals (Altunbay, 2012, pp. 748-



750). One of the aims of art other than the aesthetic concern is that it is educational and didactic. With his statement "Teachers are for children; poets are for young people", Aristophanes tried to explicate that young generations had a lot to learn through art and poetry. Aristotle and Plato are also the thinkers who advocated similar views. The educational mission of art is to show people different type of life experiences and enable people to relate their experiences with the real life experiences. It is because art allows the individual to hear, see things and experience the things that are not possible to experience in their own lives (Gürten, 2009, p. 55). However, the power of art to reveal the potential hidden forces of the future cannot be denied. For example, Fatih Akın, an internationally renowned film director, was discovered thanks to a simple film he shot for the visual communication course in the second grade of high school (Behrens, Töteberg, 2013, p. 30). Moreover, the main duty of a teacher is to help the students to discover their hidden powers and help the student to bring them out. The students find the testimony that s/he needs as much as vitamins, minerals and proteins in the values that the teacher gives him that s/he cannot find in his/her home, his/her neighbors and in the neighborhood where s/he lives (Cüceloğlu & Erdoğan, 2016, p. 100).

In the case of events of staging plays in schools, it is the Turkish grammar or literary teachers who are usually commissioned for this task. Teachers face a lot of problems when trying to fulfill this task within their own interest and abilities. Finding or preparing the text of the play to be performed, adjusting the rehearsal hours, the physical conditions of the venue to be rehearsed, the condition of the stage to be used etc. are only some of these problems (Kuyumcu, 2010, p. 157). Nevertheless, such tasks and duties should not be limited to the above-mentioned branch teachers. One of the first branches to come to mind in the face of such activities should be the social studies teachers. It is because introducing the theater works in the relation of event, person, place and time in the realization of many goals and behaviors in social studies teaching can be a very suitable teaching tool for this course. Especially in promoting important personalities in history, it massively facilitates the learning of political, social and social events (Öztürk, Keskin & Otluoğlu, 2012, p. 150). The course titled "Oral and Written Literary Analyses in Social Studies" taught at Education Faculties in the field of teaching social studies was introduced in order to help the students understand and grasp many scientific facts through literary works. Apart from this, if we do not take into account some of the improvisation activities in the drama courses, the teaching of social studies through performing arts currently is not an approach that has been applied or thought in education (Kara & Baş, 2016, p. 465). Consequently, since there are almost no studies in the relevant field of research on how to adapt the performing arts in the learning and teaching environments, more specifically on how to put it in practice in relation to the teaching of social studies, there is seriously a need for experimental studies (Kara & Baş, 2016, pp. 466-467). It is thought that this study will make a significantly relevant contribution to the field in question.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the effect of teaching in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade social studies courses through performing arts on the academic achievement and permanence of knowledge of students and reveal the assessments of students regarding the teaching applications. For this purpose, answers were sought to the following questions:

- 1) Is there a statistically significant difference between the changes in the academic achievement mean scores (Pre-Post-Permanent Test) of the students in the experimental groups in which social studies teaching was carried out through performing arts and those of the students in the control groups whose activities were based on the current syllabus?
- 2) What are the assessments of the students in the experimental groups about the practices performed through performing arts?

### METHOD

#### The Research Model

Model of the research, in its simplest form, can be expressed as the collection of necessary data for the purpose of the study within an economic process and the organization of the conditions required for the analysis of these data within a plan (Karasar, 2000, p. 34).

In the present study, the mixed research method, which includes both quantitative and qualitative research methods, has been used. In the mixed research model, the qualitative and quantitative research methods are used together (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). The mixed method research aims to reveal independent and original new results bringing together the numbers by taking advantage of quantitative methods, and the words by utilizing the qualitative methods (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011; Punch, 2005). However, one of the most important features of the mixed method research is that the data collected with different methods provide supportive and reinforcing results. This increases the reliability of the study in addition to enabling the results of the study to be more scientific, robust and convincing (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, pp. 351-352). Furthermore, the Nested (Embedded) pattern, one of the mixed research methods was used in the present study.

In the quantitative part of this study, a quasi-experimental pattern with pretest-posttest control group, in line with the purpose of research, was used. In the qualitative part of the study, on the other hand, the interview method was used in order to get the assessments of teachers and students about the social studies teaching performed through performing arts applied in the experimental group. Through the interviews, we try to understand the experiences, thoughts, comments, perceptions and reactions of people on a subject, in short the features which cannot be easily observed (Gökçe, 2006; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 148). In both groups, both pre- and post-experiment measurements were performed. All the applications conducted in both groups for eight weeks are summarized in the Figure 2 below.

Experimental Group	Control Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pretest (Academic Achievement Test)</li> <li>• Teaching through Performing Arts</li> <li>• Posttest (Academic Achievement Test)</li> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• Permenancy Test</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pretest (Academic Achievement Test)</li> <li>• Teaching based on the current syllabus</li> <li>• Posttest (Academic Achievement Test)</li> <li>• Permenance Test</li> </ul>

Figure 2. Experimental Pattern Design of the Study

Table 1. The schools selected according to the education regions and distribution of the experimental groups and the control groups by gender

No	Education region	School	Group	Gender		Number of students	
				Female	Male	Total	Grand total
1	Hazar	Mustafa Kemal Secondary School	Exp. Group (6-A)	13	8	21	42
			Control Group (6-B)	10	11	21	
2	Harput	Mezre Secondary School	Exp. Group (6-B)	10	20	30	62
			Control Group (6-A)	10	22	32	
3	Karşıyaka	Arif Nihat Asya Secondary School	Exp. Group (6-E)	9	13	22	42
			Control Group (6-D)	9	11	20	
4	Fırat	Elazığ Secondary School	Exp. Group (6-D)	10	14	24	47
			Control Group (6-C)	12	11	23	
5	Bahçelievler	Hilalkent Secondary School	Exp. Group (6-B)	13	15	28	57
			Control Group (6-D)	15	14	29	
						Total	250

### The Study Group

The study group of this study is composed of a total 250 6<sup>th</sup> grade students studying at the Mezre, Mustafa Kemal, Arif Nihat Asya, Elazığ and Hilalkent secondary schools located in five different education regions of Central Elazığ (Bahçelievler, Fırat, Hazar, Harput, Karşıyaka) in the 2015-2016 spring academic year (Table 1). Within the scope of the study, a total of 5 experimental and 5 control groups were formed in each school. While teaching social studies through performing arts in the experimental groups, teaching in line with the current social sciences course program was carried out in the control groups.

### Data Collection Tool

This section includes the measurement tools used in data collection process. Accordingly, the questions below were used as the data collection tool:

- The “Academic Achievement Test” prepared by the researcher in accordance with the objectives and acquirements of the “Resources of our Country” in the sixth grade social studies program and expert opinion
- The Open-ended Interview Questions1 prepared by the researcher in accordance with the expert opinion in order to determine the assessments of students about social studies teaching through performing arts.

While preparing the questions related to the academic achievement test, the cognitive domain classification of the Bloom Taxonomy was taken into consideration. In the test, care was taken to include questions regarding each of the steps of knowledge, comprehension, practice, analysis and evaluation of the cognitive domain and table of specifications were prepared accordingly. The academic achievement test, consisting of 50 questions, was prepared in such a way that it consisted of different question structures (Multiple Choice, Gap-Filling, True/False, and Matching). In order to determine the scope and appearance validity of the questions prepared, clarify the eloquence of the test, clarify the explanandum, determine the accuracy level of the knowledge and determine whether it is appropriate to the student level, expert opinion was consulted (2 Social Studies Education Lecturers; 2 Educational Sciences Lecturers; 5 Social Studies Teachers; 1 Turkish Language Teacher; 2 Graduate Students). However, item difficulty (Pj) and item discrimination (rjx) indices of the academic achievement test were examined. It was found that while the item difficulty (Pj) index was 56.9, item discriminant (rjx) index was between 0.21 and 0.76. Furthermore, KR-20 (Kuder Richardson-20) was calculated to determine the reliability and consistency of the test. The KR-20 calculation is a value between 0 and 1. While the consistency of the test items with each other

decreases as the value approaches to 0, the consistency of the test items with each other, that is, the reliability of the test increases as the value approaches to 1. The KR-20 value of the achievement test prepared within the scope of this study was found to be 0.87. Therefore, it is possible to say that the academic achievement test prepared by the researcher had high reliability and consistency.

In order to ensure validity and reliability of the qualitative dimension of the study, expert opinion was consulted at the stage of preparing the interview questions and direct quotations were used about the answers given by the students.

## Application of the Study

### Experiment group application

In the experimental group, the applications lasted for 8 weeks, three hours per week. Before starting the applications, the teachers of the course were interviewed with on the applications. However, the rehearsals of the plays to be performed were done in the company of a specialist team. Comprehensive explanations about the plays to be performed were made to the teachers of social studies and they were informed about the stages of applications. And then, the sample pre-application practices were conducted with the teacher of the course. After introducing the activities to be realized to the teacher, the social studies achievement test was applied to the students in the experimental group as a pretest.

The texts of the plays related to the subject to be covered in the lessons were prepared by taking into consideration the scope validity and subject integrity in line with the expert opinion (*Müjdat Gezen Theater Center Specialist: 1; Specialist Actor: 2; Academic Staff on Social Studies: 2; Academic Staff on Education Programs: 1; Social Studies Teacher: 5, Turkish Language Teacher: 1*) (Table 2).

In the first 20-30 minutes of each lesson (time varies by subject and play), the plays were performed by the researcher and her team, and in the remaining time, the questions were answered by the social studies teacher of the class with the students who were asked about the subjects of the plays or messages intended to be given in them. At the beginning of each lesson, the questions prepared in advance by the

researcher about the subject to be taught in the experimental group were given as material to the teacher of the course. After the plays were performed in each lesson, the class management was given back to the social studies course teacher to answer the questions. Since the plays to be performed were performed simultaneously in all schools during the same week, no serious problems were experienced in the process. In order to ensure that all equipment and documents required for the plays are available on-site and on-time, the researcher and her team exerted a lot of efforts to be present at the school where the play would be performed with the necessary equipment and materials about half an hour before the start of the lessons. In order to avoid conflicts between the schools before the start of the activities, all school administrations were contacted and the necessary measures were taken.

### Karagöz and Hacivat Shadow Play (Agriculture and Animal Breeding, Forestry, Mining, Our Water Sources, Industry) Sample Application

Before the start of the lesson, the necessary preparations were made by the researcher and her team during the lesson breaks between the plays. These preparations were as follows in Figure 3:

- Darkening the class with black curtains,
- Setting up the stage
- Setting up the technical equipment to illuminate the stage.

The play started to be performed by the teacher bell; in the meantime, the play and the plot, the subjects, and the messages were followed carefully by the teachers and students. Karagöz and Hacivat communicated with the class from time to time during the play. The character of Karagöz, who was a loyal, well-meaning, uneducated, plain spoken, but at the same time honest and brave man, and had difficulty in answering the Wiseman Hacivat's questions, appealed to the knowledge of the students in the classroom, and received the help from the students about the things he learnt from them, or about the things knew of, but needed students' reinforcement. Consequently, both Karagöz himself and the students in the classroom become informed. Furthermore, the unexpected guests of Karagöz and Hacivat frequently breathed new life into the play. Bebe Ruhi, the wife of Karagöz, the miner who worked in the Elazığ copper mine and provided information about the mines extracted in Elazığ to the class, and the fireman who was responsible for extinguishing fires are just the few of the characters in the shadow play.

**Table 2.** Distribution of the plays by themes and course hours

No	Theme	Play	Course Hour
1	Sources of our Country and Economic Activities	Karagöz and Hacivat	6
2	Solar Energy	Storytelling	3
3	My Tax comes back to me	Puppetry	2
4	Natural Resources and Consciousness	Village Play	3
5	Qualified Manpower	Theatre	3



**Figure 3.** Karagöz and Hacivat Shadow Play

In the following weeks the courses were taught through different plays (Storytelling, Puppetry, Village Play, and Theater Plays) and the "Resources of our Country" unit was completed. After the unit was completely taught, the students were given an academic achievement test as a final test and the study was then terminated.

### Control Group Application

The courses in the control group were taught for eight weeks according to the methods and techniques required by the syllabus. Before start of the study, the academic achievement test was applied to the students as the pretest. The way the courses were taught in the control group was not interfered with at all; the courses were taught through the tools and equipment envisaged by the current syllabus utilizing the existing textbook, the student's workbook and the teacher guidebook. After the completion of the subjects of a unit, the academic achievement test was applied to the students as a posttest and the study in the control group were terminated.

### Data Analysis

The data obtained from the study were analyzed by using the appropriate statistics. Since the mixed method was used in the study, the data analysis process was evaluated under two headings of quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

### Analysis of Quantitative Data

Data regarding the quantitative dimension of the study were analyzed using the SPSS 21.00 statistical package program. Parametric tests were used to analyze the findings. In relation to the information of students, percentage, frequency, arithmetic mean and standard deviation values were used. In order to be able to make accurate analyses on the findings obtained in the study, homogeneity of the variances was examined; in order to check whether the findings showed a normal distribution, with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) normality tests, skewness and kurtosis values of the data were taken into account. In order to be able to observe the general situation as a result of the three (pre-post, permanence) measurements of the achievement test, the Profile Analysis was performed by looking at the results of "inter-group and intra-group mixed variance analysis" *Repeated Measure ANOVA*. The main purpose of this analysis was to compare the reflection of the independent variables, which were thought to have an impact on the process with the measurements to be made at the beginning and at the end of the application and reveal the difference (Can, 2014). A significance level of .05 was taken into consideration in the evaluation of statistical data.

### Analysis of Qualitative Data

The N-VIVO 9 program was used in the analysis of the qualitative data obtained in the study. 5 open-ended questions were asked to 15 students (in the experimental groups). While determining the students to be interviewed, it was

decided that extreme students of the class (*Successful, Intermediately Successful and Less Successful*) were selected and interviewed with. To be precise, regarding the qualitative dimension, in the selection of the students to be interviewed, the maximum diversity one of the purposeful sampling methods was utilized.

At the end of the study, the qualitative data obtained from the students (Interviews) were transferred onto the Word document program by the researcher for each student individually, firstly taking into account the number and order of the question. These Word documents were then transferred to the N-VIVO-9 program. The concepts and statements which were similar in the assessments of the students were brought together and themes were formed. No assessments were placed on the appropriate theme, without excluding any of them. In order to determine the reliability of the study, expert opinions were consulted during the process of creating themes and placing assessments within the themes. After that, the frequency values of the assessments were determined and the main themes and sub-themes related to them were presented with the schemes created by the data analysis program. For the themes created, sample assessments were given and interpreted accordingly. While transferring the sample data obtained from the interview forms, explanatory statements consisting of the abbreviations "S-1 (M)" (Student-Order-Gender) were given for the students.

## RESULTS

### Quantitative Results

In this dimension of the study, the findings obtained from the academic achievement test applied in the schools where the study was implemented and the relevant comments made are included in this section.

### Homogeneity of Variances

The Levene test was used to check whether the pre - and post - test variance of the experimental and control groups were equal. According to the findings, it was concluded that variances were equal in both pretests and post-tests and retention tests ( $p = 0.881, 220, 339; p > 0.05$ ).

### Descriptive Statistics

In the table given below, information was provided regarding the descriptive statistics of the research question and the number of students in the group, and mean and standard deviation.

When we look at Table 3, we see the mean score of pre-test-post-test-permanence test academic achievement of the students in the experimental and control groups. According to these data, it was observed that the pretest academic achievement mean score ( $M = 58$ ) of the students in the experimental group and pretest academic achievement mean score ( $M = 54$ ) of the students in the control group were close to each other. However, when the post-test and permanence test academic achievement mean scores are examined,



it is seen that the results of the experimental group (74.22 – 74.74) and the control group (62.45 – 60.96) differed statistically in favor of the experimental group. In Table 4 explained in Repeated Measures ANOVA, or so-called profile analysis, was considered as appropriate to be utilized to determine the level of statistical significance of this difference.

According to the Repeated Measure ANOVA results, it is seen that there was a statistically significant difference between the academic achievement scores of the experimental group where the teaching of social studies was carried out by performing arts and the control group students where the teaching of social studies was carried out through the methods and techniques prescribed by the current syllabus. according to the results of mixed variance analysis obtained from three-stage academic achievement (Pre-End-Permanence) tests performed on groups, it was found that the Group effect was [F (21, 483),  $p = .000$ ], the measurement effect

[F (234,485),  $p = .000$ ], and group \* measurement effect [F (28, 163),  $p = .000$ ], and it was observed that the academic achievement changes of these results statistically differed according to the groups.

The result of where this difference is present in terms of the group and the measurements is given in the Mean Score Change Figure 4 below.

As shown in Figure 4, the group mean scores that were close to each other in the first measurement (pretest) (*Experimental group = 58.00; Control group = 54.58*), was (*Posttest: Experiment group = 74.22; Control group 62.45*) in the second measurement and (*permanence test: Experimental group = 74.74; Control group = 60,96*) in the third measurement. Based to these findings, it is possible to say that the effect power had a large effect size [ $\eta^2 = .102$ ].

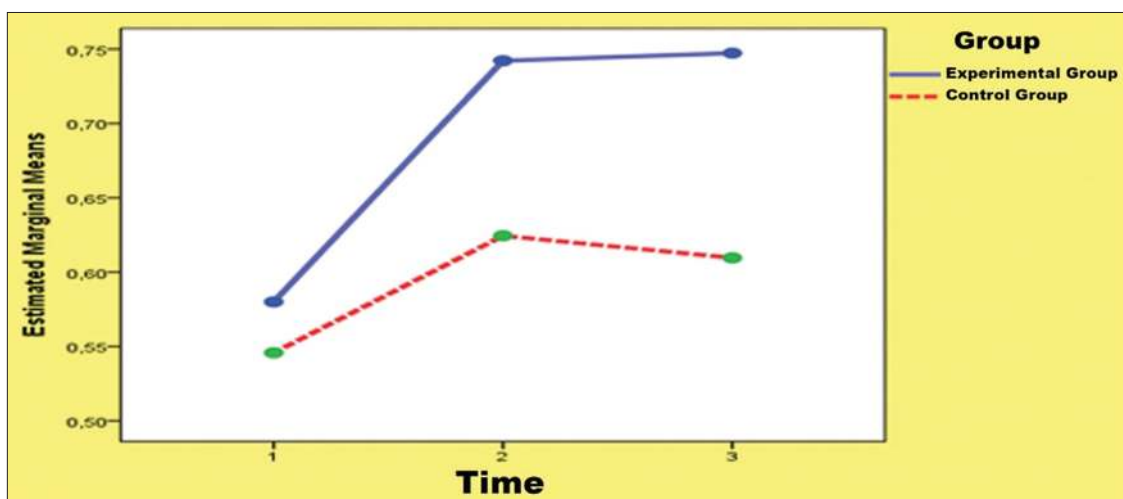
In other words, even though the academic achievement mean scores of the experimental and control groups were

**Table 3.** Descriptive statistics results of the pre and post-permanence test findings of the students in the experimental and control groups

Group	Pretest			Posttest			Permanence test		
	N	M	SS	N	M	SS	N	M	SS
Experimental Group	125	58.00	0.15976	125	74.22	0.15879	125	74.74	0.15688
Control Group	125	54.58	0.15391	125	62.45	0.17627	125	60.96	0.17187

**Table 4.** Repeated Measures ANOVA results of the experimental and control groups according to the Pre/Post permanence test academic achievement mean score

Source of the Variance	Total of squares	SD	Mean squares	F	p	Partial Eta squared
Intergroup	19.017					
Group (Individual/Group)	1.516	1	1.516	21.483	0.000	0.080
Error	17.501	248	0.071			
Intragroup	5.269					
Measurement (Pre-Post- Permanence)	2.419	1.000	2.419	234.415	0.000	0.102
Group* Measurement	0.291	1.000	0.291	28.163	0.000	
Error	2.559	248.000	0.010			



**Figure 4.** Experiment and Control Group Pre - Post - Permanence Test Academic Achievement Mean Score Change Chart



close to each other at the beginning, this situation changed in the following period. There was an increase in the mean scores of the pretests of both groups compared to their pre-test mean scores. However, this increase was more noticeable in the experimental group than in the control group.

In the experimental group, the students' level of knowledge was checked again by the permanence test performed four weeks after the last test. When we look at the permanence test results, it was seen that there was no statistically significant difference according to the post-test. In the control group, it is possible to say that the post tests were more successful than the pretests. However, it is clear that this increase was lower than the experimental group. When we look at the permanence test of the control group, it is seen that there is no statistically significant difference according to the post test. In other words, it can be said that the permanence test of control group was similar to their posttest.

When evaluated in general terms, it is possible to say that the teaching activities applied in the experimental group were more effective on the students.

### Analysis of Qualitative Data

In this section where qualitative data of the study were analyzed, 5 open-ended questions were asked to 15 students in the experimental groups.

**Question 2:** As the second question, the students were asked the following: "What attracted your attention the most or what were you affected by the most amongst the subjects that were told or the messages that were intended performed in the plays through performing arts?" and the assessments of the students about this question were obtained. Accordingly, the main themes, sub-themes and frequency values related to the main themes were given Figure 5 below.

When we look at the answers to the question "what attracted your attention the most or what were you affected by the most amongst the subjects that were told or the mes-

sages that were intended performed in the plays through performing arts?", it was seen that the assessments of the students were collected under the themes of *Agriculture and Animal Breeding* ( $f = 5$ ), *Taxation* ( $f = 4$ ), *Mining* ( $f = 4$ ), *Occupations* ( $f = 3$ ), *Entrepreneurship* ( $f = 2$ ). While the subject of "Agriculture and Animal Breeding" in particular attracted the attention of students in terms of growing crops and crop-region matching in our country, it is possible to say that the subject of "Taxation" attracted students' attention in terms of aim and awareness. While the subject of "Mining" left a permanent mark on students' minds, especially with the example of Uzun Memet discovering the hard coal in the Province of Zonguldak, it can be stated that in terms of "occupations and professions", the idea of "not every person can perform any profession and that there is a set of rules that must be followed in the selection of a profession" ensured a permanent place in the minds of students. The following are some examples of student assessments on the relevant topic or message. One of the students tried to explain in detail with examples with his sentences below;

**S-3.(M)** *The subject of "Agriculture and Animal Breeding" attracted my attention the most. For instance, I learned in this subject in which cities which crops are grown and what kind of crops and products a city stands out for. In the past, when we went somewhere, they would ask us "What are you going to bring for us as a present from your hometown?" I didn't know which city was famous for what, but now I know now what is famous in many cities. For instance, my uncle lives in Bursa. If I go to Bursa, I will bring peaches to my parents. Haa (Interjection)!!! Also there are a lot of silkworms in Bursa. Silkworm rearing, as a livestock breeding is carried out in the Marmara region in our country, and specifically in the Province of Bursa. (He touches his hair with its hand), clearly, Bursa is located in the Marmara Region... I also learned about the tax types while learning about the subject of tax... I didn't know there were many types of taxes.*

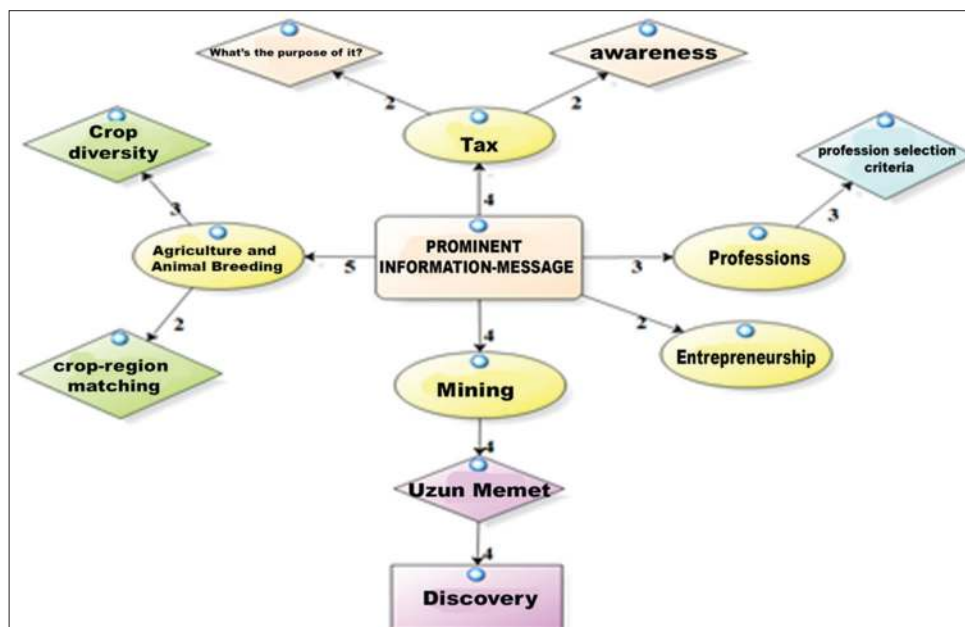


Figure 5. Student Assessments about the Most Noticeable or Emphasized Message

And the term “VAT” on the bills always caught my attention. I always wondered what it was. I was even asked my elder sister, but she didn’t know it either. I eventually learned what it was. I satisfied my curiosity this way. That’s it. (He smiles).

**S-7.(M)** This student summed up his assessments with the statement below; “It was noticeable that the information that Uzun Memet was the first person to discover the coal mine in the Province of Zonguldak attracted my attention. It is because I think that the feeling of discovering something for the first time must be very different.” Similarly, one of the students reflected her assessments in the statement below;

**S-13.(F)** “The subjects of professions and mining attracted my attention the most. In particular, I have learned important tips about one’s career choice and how important it is to choose a profession in a human’s life. Regarding the occupation of mining, I found the story of Uzun Memet very interesting. His success and discovery made me more ambitious.”

**Question 3:** As the third question, the students were asked the question “What character/characters did you like most in the plays performed through performing arts? Why?” and the assessments of the students about this question were obtained. Accordingly, the main themes, sub-themes and frequency values related to the main themes were given Figure 6 below.

When the answers given to the question of the characters/characters admired the most were examined, it was seen that the students stated that the characters they admired the most were Karagöz ( $f = 10$ ), Hacivat ( $f = 6$ ), Zeliş-İbiş ( $f = 4$ ), Miner from Elazığ ( $f = 3$ ), and Kadi (Muslim judge) ( $f = 2$ ). Among these themes, it is possible to say that the character of Karagöz ( $f = 10$ ) was the most emphasized one. The reason why Karagöz’s character was repeatedly emphasized was due to the fact that he was a funny, sympathizer and well-meaning person. Another most frequently repeated character was Hacivat ( $f = 6$ ). This stemmed from the fact that he was a respected wise man. Zeliş and ibis ( $f = 4$ )

were the pair character that were frequently mentioned by the students. The reason for this pair character to be emphasized frequently was that they had funny, sympathizer and informative roles in the play. Another character that came to the fore with his characteristics of being funny, sympathizer, entertaining and well-intentioned was the miner from Elazığ ( $f = 3$ ). Finally, the character repeated most frequently by the students was Kadi (Muslim judge) ( $f = 2$ ). The character of Kadi was also a prominent figure in the sense of being a wise man respected by the society, just like the character of Hacivat. Sample sentences related to student assessments on both plays and character/characters were given below. While one of the students expressed her assessments with the following sentences;

**S-5.(F)** “I liked the characters of Karagöz and Hacivat the most. It is because, Karagöz was kind-hearted, funny, sympathizer, and Hacivat was a very cultured person. He knew about everything. I especially liked the information Hacivat gave about our regions. For instance, we learned as a class that Bananas were grown in the Mediterranean Region, spas were generally found on fault lines or in areas close to it, many objects were made from copper mine, and copper, zinc, sour cherry color marble mine were extracted in the Province of Elazığ.”, another student detailed his assessments with the following explanations;

**S-9.(M)** “I liked the character of Hacivat and Kadi (Muslim judge). It is because Hacivat went to school, he was an educated person, but Karagöz didn’t go to school, he was illiterate. For instance, Karagöz did not know the forestry and agricultural products grown. Hacivat taught them both to me and to Karagöz. Kadi, on the other hand, told us about the damages we caused to the environment. (The researcher asks a question: “What were they? Is there anything you remember?”) Yes, there is Sir! For instance, the industrialist opened factories everywhere, but did do ant filtration. Also Sir, one of them was struck by another ship as the ship tried to sail away carelessly at sea. There was also (trying to remember with a bitter expression on his face) oil on his

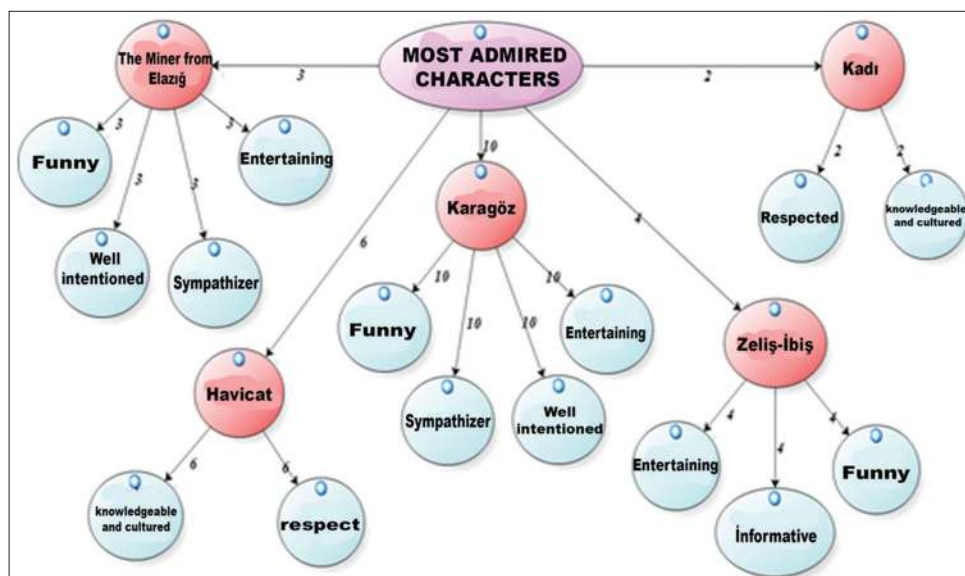


Figure 6. Student Assessments about Character Admired the Most

ship. During this collision, the oil on the ship spilled and polluted the sea. There was also a forester. The forester also cut the forests that were under the auspices of the state without permission. The citizen spat on the ground and was up to different naughty things. So Kadi (Muslim judge) told us about the damages that we caused to the environment. Kadi made us more aware."

**Question 4:** The students were asked the question "When we consider the resources unit of our country, taught through performing arts, did the subjects explicated and the messages intended to be given here lead to any change in your life or behavior or make you more aware? For instance, was there any change in your behavior or thought where you said to yourself "I used to do this, but from now on, I'll be more careful and try not to do it?" and the assessments of the students about this question were obtained. Accordingly, the main themes, sub-themes and frequency values related to the main themes were given Figure 7 below.

When the students' assessments on this question are examined, it is clearly seen that the following themes were mentioned frequently: *Spitting onto the ground* ( $f = 14$ ), *protecting the natural beauties of our country* ( $f = 10$ ), *the benefits of solar energy* ( $f = 8$ ), *the choice of profession* ( $f = 7$ ), *keeping the picnic areas clean and tidy* ( $f = 5$ ), *polluting the water sources* ( $f = 5$ )  $f = 4$ , *Disposal of garbage* ( $f = 3$ ). Considering the assessments of the students, it was concluded that the students emphasized the themes of "*Spitting onto the ground and protecting the natural beauties of*

*our country*". According to these results, it is possible to say that the students reached a serious level of awareness about the themes that "one should not be spit onto the ground in the streets and everyone should be fully aware of the value of the beauties that our country had". Examples of students' assessments about the state of awareness were given below. While one of the students expressed her assessments with the following sentences;

**S-2.(F)** "Yes, there was. For instance, I learned a lot about qualified people. My skills were different, but I was interested in a different profession. In other words, the profession that I was interested was not compatible with my skills. After learning this, I decided that it would be right for me to choose the profession which was compatible with my existing skills.", another student tried to sum up her current assessment about the issue with the following statement;

**S-5.(F)** "Yeah, I used to have a habit of spitting onto the ground. But I don't do it anymore. I do not throw away any garbage now". Similarly, one of the students reflected his assessments in the statement below;

**S-12.(M)** "Yes, there was. Sir, for instance, I used to go to the Lake Hazar or Keban Dam, I chucked the biscuits, chocolate packs in the water. But after I learned about this, I decided not to throw trash into the water. I won't pollute our water."

**Question 5:** Finally, the students were asked the question "Would you want other courses to be taught this way as well? Which courses do you think these courses should be or

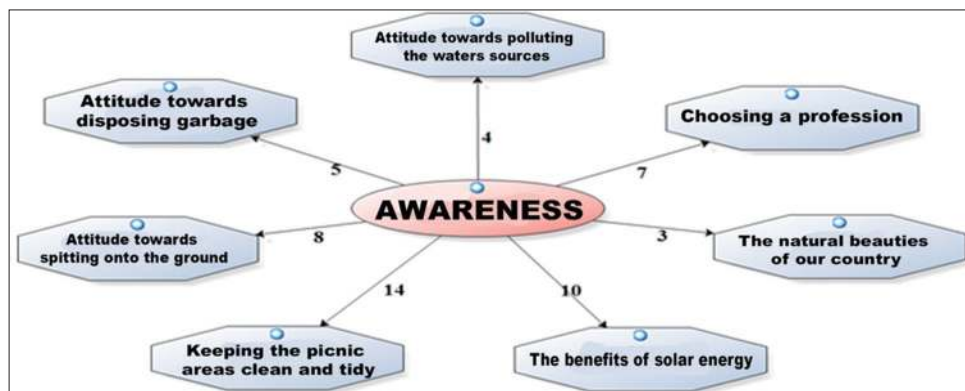


Figure 7. Student Assessments about their state of awareness

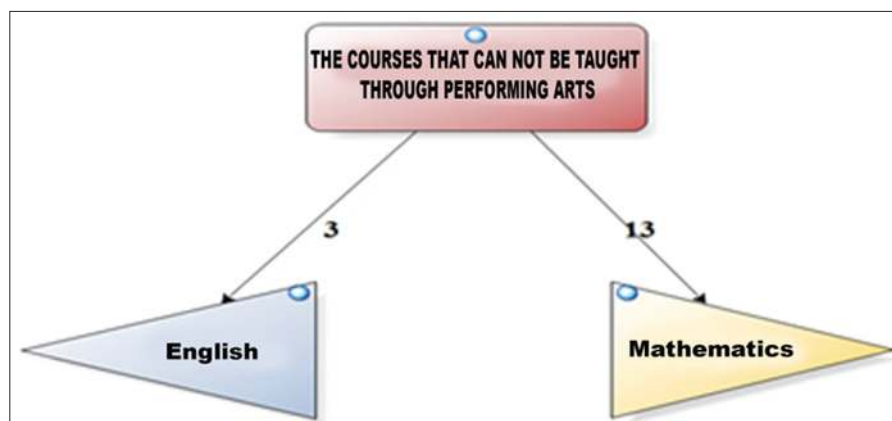
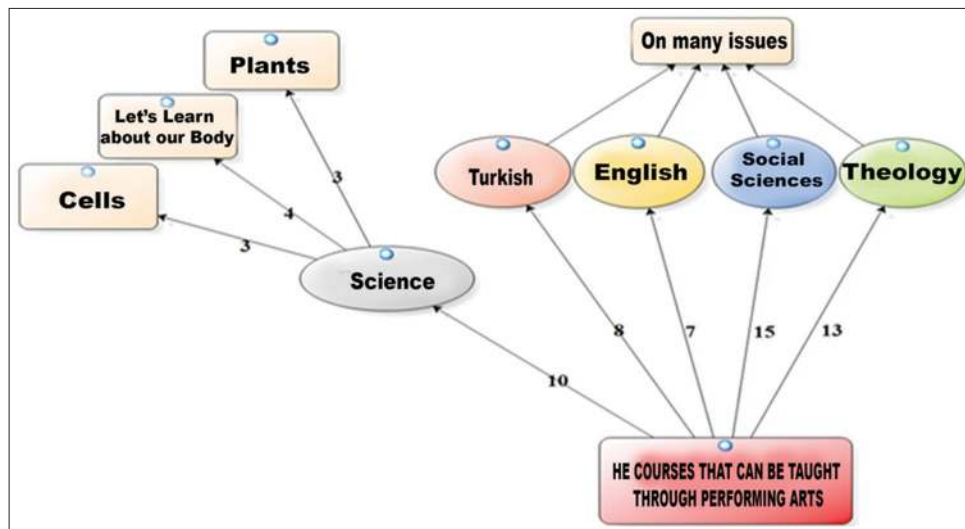


Figure 8. Student Assessments about the courses that cannot be taught through performing arts method





**Figure 9.** Student Assessments about the courses that can be taught through performing arts method

should not be? Why?” and the assessments of the students about this question were obtained. Accordingly, the main themes, sub-themes and frequency values related to the main themes were given Figure 8 and 9 below.

When the answers of the students to this question are examined, it is seen that the students stated that Mathematics ( $f=13$ ) was the course that could not be taught through performing arts method. However, it was stated by some other students ( $f=3$ ) that it was not appropriate to teach English language lessons through performing arts method. Considering the assessments of the students about the courses that were appropriate to be taught through performing arts method, the courses of Social Studies ( $f=15$ ), Theology ( $f=13$ ), Science ( $f=10$ ), Turkish Language ( $f=8$ ), English Language ( $f=7$ ) emerged as the themes emphasized the most by the students. Based on these data obtained from the students, it is possible to state that it was possible to teach many subjects of Turkish, Social Studies, Theology and English courses through performing arts method. It was stated that certain subjects of Science course [Let's Learn Our Body ( $f=4$ ), Plants ( $f=3$ ), Cells ( $f=3$ )] were appropriate to be taught through performing arts method. The sample statements related to the assessments of the students about the courses that were appropriate to be taught through performing arts method and the courses that were not suitable for processing were given below. While one of the students summed up her assessments about this theme in the statement below;

**S-6.(M)** “Yes, they should be taught this way. The social studies course should definitely continue to be taught this way. The Theology, Turkish and Science courses can also be taught this way. But not every subject in the course of science. For instance, it cannot be applied in the subjects of **Support and Motion or Light and Reflection**. But it would be nice to use this method in the unit **Let's Learn Our Body**. For instance, Hacivat Karagöz can teach this to us very well. For instance, the subject of **Striated Muscle, Straight Muscles or Cells** can be taught in this way.”, another student expressed her assessments as below;

**S-11.(M)** “Yes, it should be taught this way. The social studies course should continue to be taught this way. It is because the subjects of Social Studies are also very appropriate for this method. The science course can also be taught this way. The subject of **Plants** can be taught this way; the subjects of **Crown Leaf, Body, Color or Cells** can be taught this way. Besides, this method can be used in Turkish and Theology courses as well. But it can never be used in the math course.” another student expressed his assessment about the subject as follows;

**S-15.(M)** “Yes, other courses should be taught this way too. It is because the lessons are a lot of fun and enjoyable and the knowledge becomes permanent. The Science, Social Studies, English, Turkish and theology courses should be taught this way too. But it is not possible in the math course. It is because, for instance, Hacivat cannot teach us the equations without doing operations...”

When the data (sentences/statements) obtained from the interviews with the students were examined in general, it was seen that the students had positive assessments about the teaching of social studies courses through performing arts. Briefly, the practices related to the teaching syllabus through performing arts were found useful.

## DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since this study was implemented in mixed pattern model, the findings of the study were evaluated under two separate headings as quantitative and qualitative.

### Results Related to Academic Achievement Test

Before the applications, there was no statistically significant difference between the pretest academic achievement scores of the students in the experimental and control groups. Based on this result, it is possible to say that the success levels of the groups were similar to each other before the applications. When the posttests where the groups



(experimental-control) were compared were examined, it was seen that the academic achievement mean scores of the students in the experimental and control groups differed statistically in favor of the experimental group. Based on this result, it is possible to say that the teaching practices carried out through performing arts in the experimental group were more effective in increasing the student achievement compared to the practices performed in the control group. This finding is consistent with the results of similar studies conducted by Zayimoğlu (2006), Aykaç (2008), Rüzgar (2014), Saraç (2015), Ezer and Aksüt (2017). Furthermore, when the results of permanence test applied to the students 4 weeks after the end of the applications were examined, it was seen that the mean scores of the students in the experimental group and control group were statistically different in favor of the experimental group.

This finding is similar to the results of the study conducted by Saraç (2015), Ezer and Aksüt (2017). While this result may be due to the fact that the students were more interested in the course, depending on the factor of being exposed to an unusual way of teaching, it may also be due to the teacher factor. Furthermore, the fact that the unit subjects were presented to the students through the plays may have left a deep mark on the cognitive structures of the students and led the students to be able to remember the subjects better and faster through the storyline (linking the events and topics through story integrity). This situation is particularly desirable in educational activities, especially by the educators.

### Results of Student Interview Questions

The results related to the qualitative dimension of the study were identified based on the interviews with fifteen students.

- When we look at the answers given to the second question (“*what attracted your attention the most or what were you affected by the most amongst the subjects that were told or the messages that were intended performed in the plays through performing arts?*”), it is observed that the students emphasized the categories of Agriculture and Animal Breeding ( $f=5$ ), Taxation ( $f=4$ ) and Mining ( $f=4$ ). Accordingly, it can be said that the information and messages given in these subjects attracted the students’ attention. This situation can also be interpreted that the type of play in which various topics were taught was performed successfully.
- When we look at the answers given to the third question (“*What character/characters did you like most in the plays performed through performing arts? Why?*”), it was seen that the characters of *Karagöz* ( $f=10$ ), *Hacivat* ( $f=6$ ), *Zeliş* and *İbiş* ( $f=4$ ) as the most admired characters were emphasized. As a reason, it was put down to the fact that the character of *Karagöz* was funny, sympathizer, entertaining, well-intentioned; the character of *Hacivat* was wise and respected by everyone around him. This result is important in terms of the fact that the students indeed described the role model human profile they wanted to see or desired both in the educational community (teachers, administrators) and in the society.

- When we look at the answers given to the fourth question (“*When we consider the resources unit of our country, taught through performing arts, did the subjects explicated and the messages intended to be given here lead to any change in your life or behavior or make you more aware? For instance, was there any change in your behavior or thought where you said to yourself “I used to do this, but from now on, I’ll be more careful and try not to do it?”*”), it was seen that the students emphasized the categories of *spitting onto the ground* ( $f = 14$ ), *protecting the natural beauties of our country* ( $f = 10$ ), *the benefits of solar energy* ( $f=8$ ). Based on these results, it is possible to say that the students reached a serious level of awareness about the facts that they should not spit onto the ground, the beauties that our country appreciated and the benefits of solar energy utilized extensively.
- When we look at the answers given to the fifth question (“*Would you want other courses to be taught this way as well? Which courses do you think these courses should be or should not be? Why?*”) it was seen that regarding the categories of the courses that should not be taught through performing arts, the students emphasized *Mathematics* ( $f=13$ ) the most and regarding the categories of **the courses that should be or desired by the students to be** taught through performing arts, the students emphasized *Social Studies* ( $f = 15$ ), *Theology* ( $f = 13$ ), *Science* ( $f = 10$ ).

When the answers to all questions are evaluated in general, it is possible to say that the students were pleased and contented with the teaching of social studies through performing arts. This result also supported and reinforced the data obtained in the quantitative dimension. According to the experiences gained within the scope of the study, the following suggestions can be made to the researchers who will work on the subject in the future.

- Teaching through performing arts can be applied at different grade levels, in different units and in different courses.
- Every stage of the teaching activities to be conducted through performing arts should be organized very well in advance. The activities to be carried out should be conducted within the syllabus of each course. Only through this way can efficient results be obtained.
- In line with the expert opinion, the provision of materials such as equipment and technical equipment to be used in the plays in advance may further improve the quality of the study.
- Rehearsals by the people who will take part in the plays before the actual performance may increase the power and effect of the message.
- Performing the play in very crowded classes can be a challenge for teachers in managing the classroom. Therefore, performing the plays in non-crowded classrooms can make the information/knowledge or message more meaningful.
- Designing the classes in accordance with the atmosphere of the play to be performed with a few small or

remarkable decorations can increase the motivation level of the students.

- It is thought that teaching a course through performing arts is an effective method. However, its application in every course or unit can bother the student. Therefore, it may be necessary to support it by different methods and techniques from time to time (Especially the use of technology-supported shadow plays such as Karagöz-Hacivat can make the lessons more enjoyable, entertaining and informative).
- Teachers can present many subjects to the class by actively attaching the students to the lesson through various drama activities. This can help the talented students to come to the forefront highlighting their talents and eventually inspire them in this field of art.

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