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Usage of Cooperative Teaching Method in Visual Arts Education

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ABSTRACT

In this article, the usage of cooperative learning in visual arts education is handled and the works that have been done are scrutinized and the advantages and disadvantages of using this method in fine arts education are evaluated. The studies in the field of visual arts show that big-sized works, collage, wall pictures, museum works and other similar applications may be beneficial for applying cooperative teaching. However, there isn't enough work for its use in different subject area. So, this may let us think that in visual arts lesson, not every subject is suitable for using cooperative teaching method. Hence, it is necessary that the teaching methods that are to be used in visual arts lesson should be structured according to the subject areas.

Keywords: Visual arts education, cooperative teaching, art education, teaching methods.

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1. Introduction

The aim of this study is to determine the advantages and disadvantages of using cooperative teaching method in visual arts lesson education.

Education develops longtime and terminal behaviours so reaching the results of education activities can take a long time. To evaluate this long process well, the quality of education is being increased with the activities that are done. It can be thought that with traditional and teacher centered methods, creativity won't develop much and the learning won't be very effective and these methods won't promote students to learn (Akengin & Başbuğ, 2019). One of the important points in art education is not only learning of a certain subject but also contributing to the creativity of students. Because, according to Kırıçoğlu (2002); "Art education is the effort to develop sense of aesthetics and maturing creativity in spiritual and physical wholeness."

Learning is the gain of a person in various environments and it includes a long period between the birth and the death. School manages learning with certain methods and techniques with the guidance of a teacher. When learning domains and influence areas of every lesson and branch are considered, the methods that are used vary and different results may come out. The cooperative learning lets a lot of studies in different disciplines so its efficiency on the visual arts education should be studied. Because studies in different fields show that cooperative learning has successful results as for student access, behavioral development, self expression and permanence. But as for the visual arts

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education, it is necessary to analyze that the result of the studies are positive or negative. Visual arts education can be thought as an area where the individuality is supported. So it is important to analyze the use of cooperative learning in visual arts education. Another important point in the study is to determine to what extent the cooperative learning is beneficial for visual arts education.

In the visual arts lesson, it is necessary to go beyond traditional teaching methods, and let students have fun and have no concern while learning and supply them with activities that can develop their artistic abilities. It can be said that teaching visual arts lesson can be successful by paying attention to students's thoughts (Uyan, 2006: 9). In a cooperative learning environment, attaching importance to students's ideas can be beneficial for positive behavioral development.

According to Johnson and his friends, cooperative learning is educational usage of little groups where students work together in order to enhance their own learning and others' learning (Avcı & Fer from Herrel, 2004). The cooperative teaching method that dates back to old times is one of the teaching methods that are frequently used in our country. But in visual arts education, it can be seen that there is not enough study. So this causes a question: is individuality in visual arts more important than the advantages of cooperation?

Cooperative learning supports group interaction that stimulates creative thinking in different visual arts works such as various colorful picture techniques, easy autography, collage works, works with waste material, works with doughing materials such as clay, paper mache and play dough, plaster works, works with paper and cardboard, and various technique works with natura lor concrete materials (Yılmaz, 2007: 751). In this context, it can be thought that in visual arts education especially the works based on materials support cooperative teaching.

Yılmaz –Mamur's work (2015) is significant within the context of cooperative learning. In the study, in the context of two dimensional art studio, interior of a pre-school educational institution is planned as an art project by a working group of forty art students with the guidance of four visual arts teachers including the researcher. In this society based art project it is aimed that the school is illustrated and the project is conducted based on cooperative learning. As a result of the study, it is seen that cooperative learning process activates students's imaginations and helps them visualize their childhood experiences and develop creative behavior. In this context, it can be said that cooperative learning environment is efficient for the students to develop their artistic creativity (Yılmaz- Mamur; 2015). It can be said that wall painting works can be source for cooperative teaching. However, it can be difficult to say to what extent it stimulates the students' creativity.

2. Method

In the research titled "usage of cooperative teaching in visual arts lesson", visual arts and the studies on visual arts are analyzed and the effects of cooperative teaching on students's creativity are analyzed including the determination of advantages and disadvantages as for the lesson's goals.

In this research, literature review is benefited and descriptive analysis, one of the qualitative research types, is used. Descriptive analysis is a type of analysis that includes the summary and interpretation of the data acquired with various data collection techniques. The main goal is to present the acquired data to the reader in a summarized and interpreted form (Yıldırım & Şimşek: 2003). The collected data is analyzed critically and reaching the result is aimed with the discussions.

3. Cooperative learning

Cooperative learning can be interpreted as a term that is used to describe a teaching method that in which students work together in small groups and are rewarded when they work together (Özer narrating from Baykara, 2005). Cooperative learning is the terminal behaviour to learn in an interactive way in small groups for a common goal. Cooperative teaching is not a new thing; in fact it is said to be as old as humanity. Talmut said that "A person needs another person to learn." Lancaster and Bell first applied cooperative learning method in small groups intensely. In USA, cooperative teaching started in a private school in 1806 and it became common with Colonel Parker's evoking admiration in order to spread freedom and democracy in state schools and at the end of the 19th century, cooperative teaching methods were taken as basis in American education (Büyükkaragöz & Çivi, 1997:132-133).

Via cooperative teaching method, students concentrate on a subject, a problem or an application not individually but as a group. It lets students search information about a theme or a work of art analysis and associate with different subjects and learn in a communicative way (Özkan & Girgin, 2014).

Cooperative teaching method can be thought as a modern method that can be applied in a classroom. When we consider that teaching environment is usually limited to classroom, it is normal that the methods in which teachers are active are used more. However, in the cooperative teaching method, students play an active role in the learning process since they socialise, become responsible of each other and support each other in different subjects. It may not be true to name every group work as a cooperative teaching method.

There are differences between simple group works and the group that are formed according to the cooperative learning method. In cooperative learning, students' efforts are awarded in the name of the group. When student groups prepare an assignment, if one student does the all work and works without getting help from others, it can not be named as a cooperative group. In cooperative groups, the meaning of personal responsibility is that the materials that are prepared by all group members are for the success of the whole group (Sezer & Tokcan narrating from Johnson & Johnson, 2003).

Cooperative learning method has some techniques such as learning together, team-game-tournament, puzzle, searching as a group, team aided individualisation and student teams success departments. In this learning method, learning together technique is taken as a basis. In this technique, 4- 5 person groups work on the assignments they are given. Groups determine every work themselves according to the goals that are wanted be reached. There is no competition among the groups or among the people in the same group. In the learning together technique, group members discuss the topics with each other before they get help from their teachers (Slavin, 1994; Sünbül, 1996; Gümüş & Buluç narrating from Gömleksiz, 2007).

3.1. Cooperative learning in visual arts education

Visual arts education lesson is conducted within the frame of a teaching programme where the individuality is given particular importance in a classroom or in a workshop environment. A painting based teaching programme is applied to the students and it is aimed that their creativity bursts on a surface where they can exhibit their abilities. From this point of view, it is important that the methods that are to be applied in the classroom should be examined in terms of visual arts lesson.

It can be useful to enrich the art education with an environment based on cooperative learning. If these benefits show parallelism with the goals of visual arts lesson, they can be thought as activities that can turn into advantage. Visual arts lesson is thought as a lesson that takes part in every grade of teaching and that can be thought with different techniques.

The aesthetical goals of visual arts lesson are put in order this way:

1. To enable students to understand that art and works of art are values that must always be given importance.
2. To enable students gain consciousness of relishing the works of art that are inherited from past so they become aware of the importance of protecting them and being proud of them.
3. To enable students love visual arts and let them reflect this love in every part of their lives and make this a way of behaviour.
4. To raise consciousness of students so that they can evaluate the objects that they choose from nature or the hand made objects by using their aesthetical background.
5. To enable students to gain the ability to make use of aesthetic values in expressing themselves (Pekmezci, 2010). To make these goals real, the method the teacher uses may serve as a guide. Because the method used in the lesson may change the flow of the lesson completely. When the cooperative learning is examined for visual arts education, usage of the methods whose conceptual framework is determined may create positive results for the students.

With this method, the students concentrate on a subject, a problem or an application not individually but as a group. It lets students search information about a theme or a work of art analysis and associate with different subjects and learn in a communicative way. According to some art educators, this method is not considered suitable since individual work is more important in the

application part of art. However; according to some researchers, working together or cooperation paves the way for creating collectively in art (Kırıçoğlu, 2009).

In Yılmaz's article "cooperative learning in visual arts lesson" (2007), when we look at the visual arts education works until today, it is seen that the teachers don't attach enough importance to group works and the lessons are based on individual works. Cooperative learning that is student centered and suitable for structuralism develops students' artistic ability of expressing, makes learning easier, reduces anxiety. It also develops self confidence and helps develop we –feeling instead of I – feeling; it develops social abilities and humane qualifications such as helping, sharing, taking responsibility and cooperating. It is a modern education model that helps students love the school and it is efficient on students' cognitive and affective growings.

For an effective art education, only developing the programmes or organizing the places are not enough; the teachers that are to apply these things should have the necessary information and the qualification. In this process, an art educator should know the growing characteristic of the individual that they will teach for a specific goal (Özkan & Girgin, 2014).

The art educator who knows the growing characteristics of the students well should also know which activities will be applied to which age group and which method he or she will apply. Visual arts lesson contains individuality by its nature so it may not be true to make every lesson based on a cooperative approach. Thus teacher should have full knowledge of the subject and should determine the subjects which will be based on cooperative teaching in advance.

In Kurtuluş's article, he compiled search results in different art disciplines about "cooperative learning in art education". The research results that were compiled showed that cooperative learning method supports students' cognitive, affective and kinetic developments and enhances their motivation, self confidence, attitudes and communication skills. But in the quotation that Kurtuluş made from Schiller, Schiller says that in the art education collective activities come out in various styles but cooperative learning, which is one of the effective methods, attracts a little attention in the plastic arts education lessons and this situation is related to the fact that teachers think that individual effort is more important in the creative process. In spite of this tendency, in plastic arts education, wall painting works and other big projects are thought to be come out by many people's creative performance (Kurtuluş, 2001).

According to the data that Akengin reached in his doctorate thesis whose title is "in the visual arts lesson in 6th grades in elementary schools, the effect of museum based cooperative teaching on students' learning outcomes"; between the points of the experimental group students who were applied museum based cooperative teaching and points of the control group students who worked with the method the teacher applied, a meaningful difference was seen on behalf of the experimental group. Besides, according to the lesson and the activities that were conducted with museum based cooperative learning, the opinions of the experimental group students were positive (Akengin, 2011). In the visual arts education, the museum environment which will be a suitable place for group works, can be thought as an important factor for students to reach success in cooperative learning.

The most important characteristic of cooperative learning to supply an effective learning is that it enhances students' motivation. Motivated students know each other better via learning groups, so they don't feel lonely and isolated; they develop positive thoughts, they become more self confident and more social. They became aware of their individual differences after the discussions that are made. Thanks to this method, school and the teacher become more important. The attendance to school becomes higher. The students develop positive attitudes towards the school (Özer, 2005). These positive effects can be thought to come out more in the elementary and the secondary schools. Because, motivation, love for school and love for teacher are the things that must develop in the first years of school.

In Digler's doctorate thesis titled "in visual arts lesson in the 7th grades of elementary school, the effect of teaching perspective based on the cooperative and traditional method on students' attitudes and success"; it is seen that compared to traditional method, cooperative method is better in that it makes students more active in learning so it enhances students' success. Moreover, students stated that they were glad to watch the film and animations shown during the application and they like to prepare for the visual arts lesson together with their friends. Students also expressed that in visual

arts lesson it is enjoyable to do different activities and they hoped to see the applied teaching in the next visual arts lessons.

An art education based on a cooperative teaching, can be defined with not its difference from other disciplines but with its ability to internalize other applications typical to other disciplines. For this reason, art and art education in a cooperative environments includes the application in which group members tell their opinions in the working place and express themselves differently. For these applications, in the working environment where the cooperative teaching will take place, some certain Standard rules should be determined. However, if there is an interference to performing art, the potential to create a work of art may be badly effected (Richardson, 2010). This shows that in art education every subject can not be handled in a cooperative approach. In the situations which require individual creativity, students' ability to express themselves should be supported.

In Vurucu's master thesis titled "the evaluation of elementary school second grade students' opinions about cooperative learning in visual arts education" (2010); it is seen that cooperative learning has a positive impact on the students' view of the lesson, their courage and their enjoyment of the artistic works.

In Tarlakazan's doctorate thesis (2010) titled "the effect of teaching the visual arts lesson in elementary school 6th grades with cooperative learning activities on students' access"; there were two groups one of which is the experimental group that was applied the multi fielded art education management (MFAEM) and cooperative learning and the other one is the control group that was applied traditional method. Their level of access to the unit "poster" exhibited a meaningful difference on behalf of the experimental group. During the activities of cooperative learning method, in addition to the 6th grade acquisitions, it was seen that the students had other acquisitions like helping, sharing and aesthetic thinking.

In Cuya's master thesis (2016) titled "the effect of cooperative learning in portrait paintings done with collage technique"; there was a comparison between the experimental and control group and the experimental group students were more successful than the control group students in productivity, creativity and organisation.

It can be said that the students works that are acquired from the cooperative teaching method which lets students work interactively, can show important and productive results. However, to teach the determined subjects based on cooperative teaching method, they should match with the goals of the lesson. The works that are done based on cooperation shouldn't take precedence over individual creativity. For this reason, along with the collage work, it can be thought that big sized works and wall painting works can be conducted efficiently in a cooperative environment.

In the visual arts lesson for cooperative teaching method, Graham and Townsend's (1993) "the marriage of history and art: a cooperative learning activity" work can be a useful example while teaching subject such as art history. In the study, it is suggested that an auction room be set in the school environment and students join this environment with tasks. Students become groups and some groups organize the auction and the others become buyers. To teach the important works of art in art history, the information on the cards that are prepared is thought as offer. The student who gives the highest offer, that is; the student who presents the information most, has the reproduction of the work of art (Graham & Townsend, 1993). In this learning environment, students will have fun and learn at the same time and they will also work with their friends cooperatively. So it can be thought as a good example of works that can be applied in cooperative teaching.

4. Conclusion

The studies that have been made on visual arts education have shown that; in an education environment based on cooperation, it may be seen as a different method in terms of adaptation and socialising and effective learning. Most of the studies about visual arts teaching based on cooperation include elementary and secondary level students. It shows that positive results have been reached in visual arts lesson in elementary and secondary schools.

It can be said that cooperative teaching helps eliminate about individuals' socialising and adaptation. Especially in the first weeks when adaptation problem can be seen, it can be thought as a useful method since it helps students socialise and act as a group.

This method enhances individuals' artistic expressing abilities in especially big sized wall painting works, collage works and in teaching art history it makes the learning enjoyable, lessens anxiety, feeds self confidence, develops the feeling for group success and also it develops the skills to work as a group such as taking responsibility and cooperation.

Besides positive sides of cooperative teaching method which were mentioned above, there are also restrictive sides considering visual arts education. In the teaching environment, trust problems among students are seen frequently. Leading these students to work with the group may take a long time or they may be isolated by the group members. Especially in younger age groups, being effected from the friends or doing like other may be seen. When the students who can express themselves well and the ones who can't work in the same group, the students who feel inadequate may abstain in the group. There may be problems in having a balance between the groups that include students whose individual ability stand out and the other groups in the classroom.

Cooperative teaching in visual arts education may be useful for the students to love the lesson and develop positive behavior.

5. Suggestions

It is necessary that the teacher determines and organizes the subjects that are thought to be suitable for cooperative learning.

The students who have adjustment problem should be encouraged during the works that make use of cooperative teaching method. Their interaction between their peers should be observed by the teacher.

Student creativity should not be ignored. Especially in small age groups, the applications in visual arts lessons should not be questioned whether or not they are qualitative or beautiful. The criteria that are important for cooperation should be prioritized.

Visual arts is a special area where the feelings are expressed and it can be thought that this expression may be limited in a cooperative environment. So in visual arts education all subjects may not be suitable for cooperative teaching method. Especially in the application based works, there may be a possibility of students to get effected by each other and lose their authenticity. This can be thought as a disadvantage of cooperative teaching in visual arts education. For this reason, in visual arts education, for an applicable method, teachers should plan the preparations well and determine the subjects suitable to cooperative teaching and should revise the subjects in line with the requirements. Because like Hauser stated (1991) "attendance is important in art but individual is more important".

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