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## USING LITERARY MATERIALS IN TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES

*Research article*

Tuğba Sömen  (0000000254369300).

Kafkas University

tugbasomen@gmail.com

Biodata(s): Tuğba Sömen, PdD, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Studies Education at Kafkas University in Kars, east of Turkey. Her research interests include social studies education, teacher training and teaching approaches.

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# USING LITERARY MATERIALS IN TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES

Tuğba SÖMEN

[tugbasomen@gmail.com](mailto:tugbasomen@gmail.com)

## Abstract

In the teaching process of Social Studies course, which includes many disciplines including literature, students have chance to increase their interest in different subjects and to develop their mental skills as well. In this context, the study aimed to determine the opinions for prospective teachers and middle school students about the use of literary materials as teaching/learning materials in the Social Studies course. The research was structured via a basic qualitative study model. The participants of the study were composed of 7 fourth-year students in the Department of Social Studies Education at a state university, and 20 sixth grade students, at a public middle school in the centre of Kars province, east of Turkey. The study was conducted in the spring semester of 2019-2020 academic/school year. The data were collected using the voice recording technique based on a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher, and analysed via explanatory and inferential coding method. The results showed that, both the prospective teachers of Social Studies and the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who participated in the study were of the opinion that the use of literary materials helped a lot to increase in-class participation, and provided an enjoyable teaching/learning atmosphere.

*Keywords:* Social studies, literary materials, prospective teachers, middle school students

## 1. Introduction

Social Studies course is one of the basic courses that appeal to the social existence of students and include topics from life as its basic content. The National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) (1992) states that social studies is a holistic one aiming to develop the citizenship awareness of humanity and that the Social Studies Program works in connection with disciplines such as archaeology, geography, history, law, philosophy, political sciences, psychology, and sociology. It also states that social studies aim to develop students' ability to acquire and apply knowledge in terms of adapting to the changing conditions of real life, and emphasizes that students should be adequately informed about leadership and citizenship in order to achieve the vision of social studies. Developing the logical thinking skills of young people for a better world where cultural differences take place freely in line with social benefits is also among the objectives of social studies (Keçe & Merey, 2011).

Social studies is a curriculum that combines information and methods from social sciences and humanities in order to raise effective citizens who can make informed decisions and solve problems in almost every changing world conditions (Sever, 2016). Based on this definition, it can be said that social studies is one of the lessons in which social problems can be discussed. Especially the primary school years are the right time to raise awareness among students against social problems. Through the use of literary materials, it may be possible to give appropriate perspectives to children in order to help them think about the future of the world and therefore themselves, and find solutions to problems (Fredericks, 2007; Sills-Briegel & Camp, 2001).



Literary materials should be a valuable part of the social studies curriculum. Literary materials appropriate to students' levels can be integrated into the curriculum as a complement to traditional textbooks to make Social Studies course more interesting and effective (George & Stix, 2000). When a properly selected literary material is integrated into the social studies curriculum, it can provide learning environments that will develop children's attitudes and skills (Fredericks, 2007).

Literary materials used in social studies teaching have the potential to achieve many goals. (Beldağ & Aktaş, 2016, Fredericks, 2007; George & Stix, 2000; Kaymakçı, 2013; Krey, 1998; Savage & Savage, 1993):

- It expands students' first-hand knowledge.
- It stimulates students' emotions, like a great piece of music or a classical painting.
- It offers students more than textbooks with its details and style welcomed by students.
- It includes not only events, places, and people but also human characteristics. Thus, it gives students a different perspective.
- It provides students with the opportunity to identify with characters, events and emotions similar to their personal experiences.
- It helps children understand their cultural, ethnic and religious heritage and leads them to notice that these can be different in every society.
- It develops children's creative thinking and problem solving skills.
- It offers a fun learning environment.
- It increases students' interest and participation in the lesson.
- It helps students to connect the past with the present.
- It contributes to the development of students' empathy, creative and critical thinking skills.
- It facilitates the teaching process by concretizing abstract subjects.
- It enables students to understand change and continuity.
- It improves the imagination of students.

It is aimed to make students more knowledgeable individuals with the knowledge, skills and values gained in Social Studies course. In order to put this objective into practice more effectively and easily, teachers need to use different teaching methods/techniques or different materials. Literary materials, which are used as a course material in the education process, have recently begun to be widely used in Social Studies course. Genres such as memoir, biography, epic, legend, travel writing, diary, story, article, tale, letter, proverb, novel, politics, chansonette, folk song, nursery rhyme, anecdote, oration, poetry, and theatre can be shown among the literary products/materials that the teacher can make use of during social studies education.

In order for a Social Studies teacher to use literary products/materials effectively as a teaching material, knowledge and experience gained in undergraduate education are important before the service. For this reason, this study includes the opinions of prospective teachers of social studies and 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students about the use of literary materials as a teaching material in social studies teaching.

## 2. Research Questions

The study focused on the viewpoints of participant prospective teachers of social studies about the use of literary materials as a teaching material in the teaching process, and the perceptions of the participant middle school students of the effectiveness of the literary materials in their social studies classes. Therefore, the research questions of the study can be stated as in the following:

1. To what extent can prospective teachers of social studies benefit from literary materials as a teaching material?
2. What are the opinions of prospective teachers about the effects of using literary materials in the process of teaching social studies?
3. What are the experiences of prospective teachers of social studies in using literary materials as a teaching material?
4. What are the opinions of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students about literary materials as a teaching material in their social studies classes?

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Design of the Study

The study adopted the basic qualitative research design. In a basic qualitative study, the researcher is interested in how people articulate and interpret their experiences. (Merriam, 2002). According to Merriam (2013), researchers who conduct a basic qualitative research are concerned with how people interpret their lives, how they construct their worlds, and what meanings they add to their experiences. Basic qualitative studies reveal detailed accounts of a phenomenon, its interpretations (relationships between conceptual categories and previous researches), and new understandings (Merriam, 1998). In this study, it was, therefore, decided to use a basic qualitative study model (Altheide ve Johnson, 2011) in order to determine different views regarding the use of literary materials as a teaching material in social studies teaching through an in-depth and multi-perspective analysis.

### 2.2. Participants

The participants of the research were selected using purposeful sampling model (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2014). They were composed of 7 fourth-year students (3 females and 4 males) in the Department of Social Studies Education at a state university, and 20 sixth grade students (11 girls and 9 boys) in a public secondary school in the centre of Kars, east of Turkey in the spring semester of 2019-2020 academic/school year.

### 2.3. Data Collection

The data were collected through a semi-structured interview form allowing the interviewees to react freely (Erkuş, 2009). The data collected were about the feelings and thoughts of the participants on a certain subject (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmakçı, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2010; Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2014) and could be rearranged if deemed necessary (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2014). The interview questions were prepared clearly, understandably and without manipulation in accordance with the purpose of the study, and were finalised based on experts' opinions.

The interviews with the prospective teachers were held in the researcher's office, whereas the interviews with the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students were held in the guidance room or in the teachers' room. A special attention was paid to create a comfortable atmosphere for the participants to collect sincere answers within 10-12 minutes. During the interview, the questions that were not

understood by the prospective teachers or by the participant students were repeated. All interviews were recorded via a recording device.

## 2.4. Analysis of Data

The data obtained from the interviews via voice recording were first transcribed, and then were itemised. In the study, descriptive analysis method, which frequently includes direct quotations, was used to reflect the views of the participants in the analysis of the data collected with the help of open-ended questions in the semi-structured interview form (Yıldırım & Simşek, 2008). The answers given by the participant prospective teachers and the participant 6<sup>th</sup> grade students were examined separately by both the researcher and another expert. Explanatory and inferential codes that emerged during the analysis were used in order to explain the collected qualitative data and to establish a relationship. In order to increase the reliability, the interview analyses were coded separately by 2 different experts, and the reliability coefficient was calculated using the formula [(Reliability = Agreement / (Agreement + Disagreement))] developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The reliability of the study was determined as 85%.

The codes obtained in the study were tabulated in the findings section and presented by frequently giving the opinions of the prospective teachers and 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students. The teacher candidates were coded as PT1, PT2, PT3..., whereas the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students were coded as S1, S2, S3, ...

## 3. Findings

The findings obtained from the collected data are presented below.

### 3.1. The ability of prospective teachers of social studies to benefit from literary materials as a teaching material in the teaching process

#### 3.1.1. The points that prospective teachers of social studies pay attention to while choosing literary materials they will use as teaching materials

Table 1, which was prepared for the points that the prospective teachers of social studies took into consideration while choosing literary materials they would use as a teaching material, is presented below.

Table 1. *Points that prospective teachers of social studies pay attention to while choosing literary materials*

| Points that teachers paid attention to | f |
|--|---|
| Suitability for Acquisitions           | 6 |
| Suitability for student level          | 4 |
| Interestingness                        | 4 |
| Arousing curiosity                     | 1 |
| Emotional appeal                       | 1 |

The prospective teachers of social studies were asked to what points they paid attention while choosing the literary materials that they would use as a teaching material. According to Table 1 created in relation to the answers, most of the prospective teachers of social studies stated that they paid attention to the following points: suitability for acquisitions, suitability for student level, interestingness, arousing curiosity, and emotional appeal. The views of the prospective teachers of social studies are given below:

“Is the literary material I will use interesting or not? Is it suitable for acquisitions? Is it suitable for student level? I paid attention to these points.” (PT1)

"I paid attention to attract the attention of the students, to convey the real memories and events of the war to the students, and to be able to tell the tragedy in Çanakkale with a letter to the students." (PT3)

“I paid attention to whether it was interesting and whether it aroused curiosity. I could have used tales, jokes and memoirs; however, I thought that using letters was much better.” (PT4).

“I paid attention to suitability for acquisitions and student level (PT6)

### 3.1.2. Characteristics of literary materials used by prospective teachers of social studies

Table 2, which was prepared for the characteristics of the literary materials that the prospective teachers of social studies used, is presented below.

Table 2. *Characteristic of literary materials used by prospective teachers*

| Characteristics of literary materials | f |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Suitability for student level         | 6 |
| Interestingness                       | 4 |
| Instructiveness                       | 3 |
| Suitability for acquisitions          | 2 |
| Contribution to emotional development | 1 |
| Arousing curiosity                    | 1 |

The prospective teachers of social studies were asked what kind of characteristics the literary materials they used in the teaching process had. According to Table 2 created in relation to the answers, it is seen that suitability for student level, interestingness, instructiveness, suitability for acquisitions, contribution to emotional development, and arousing curiosity were the characteristics which were significant for the prospective teachers. The views of the prospective teachers are given below:

“It should be interesting and suitable for the subject and student level.” (PT2)

"It should be instructive and contribute to them affectively and keep their interest alive." (PT3)

"It should be interesting, intriguing, and suitable for student level." (PT4)

### 3.2. Effects of using literary materials as a teaching material on the process of social studies teaching

Table 3 below, which was prepared through the consideration of the effects of using literary materials as a teaching material on the process of social studies teaching, is presented below.

Table 3. *Effects of using literary materials on the process of social studies teaching*

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Contribution to the teaching process  | f |
| Increasing participation              | 4 |
| Making the lesson more interesting    | 3 |
| Instructiveness                       | 3 |
| Contributing to emotional development | 2 |
| Providing a fun learning environment  | 1 |
| Increasing motivation                 | 1 |
| Permanent learning                    | 1 |

The prospective teachers of social studies were asked about the effects of using literary materials on the teaching process. According to Table 3 prepared in relation to the answers, the following positive effects were in the foreground for the prospective teachers: increasing participation, making the lesson more interesting, instructiveness, contributing to emotion development, providing a fun learning environment, increasing motivation, and permanent learning. The views of the prospective teachers are given below:

"It caught the attention of the children. It enabled them to participate more and learn better." (PT1)

"The lesson was more fun. The children loved the poems. They participated the lesson more. They learned by having fun." (PT5)

"The students' interest in the lesson increased. More participation was achieved." (PT7)

### **3.3. Experiences of prospective teachers of social studies in using literary materials as a teaching material in the teaching process**

#### **3.3.1. Difficulties that prospective teachers of social studies had in the preparation stage of teaching through literary materials**

The difficulties that the prospective teachers of social studies had in the preparation stage of teaching through literary materials are given in Table 4.

Table 4. *Difficulties that prospective teachers of social studies had*

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Difficulties                                    | f |
| Planning time                                   | 3 |
| Finding the material to increase participation  | 2 |
| Finding the material suitable for student level | 1 |
| Choosing the material suitable for acquisitions | 1 |

The prospective teachers of social studies were asked about the difficulties they had in the preparation stage of teaching through literary materials. According to Table 4 prepared in relation to the answers, the following difficulties were experienced by the prospective teachers: planning time, finding the material to increase participation, finding the material suitable for student level, and choosing the material suitable for acquisitions. The views of the prospective teachers are given below:

"I can say that I had a hard time trying to find tales regarding the subject." (PT2)

"I had a hard time choosing a literary material which was suitable for student level and through which I could ensure student participation." (PT3)

"I was worried about whether I would be able to use the time correctly both while ensuring student participation and using my material." (PT5)

### 3.3.2. Situations in which prospective teachers of social studies feel successful while using literary materials

Table 5, which was prepared in relation to the situations in which the prospective teachers of social studies felt successful while using literary materials in the teaching process, is presented below.

Table 5. *Situations in which prospective teachers of social studies feel successful while using literary materials*

| Situations                           | f |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Ensuring classroom management        | 4 |
| Drawing attention                    | 4 |
| Ensuring clarity                     | 4 |
| Encouraging participation            | 3 |
| Associating with the subject         | 2 |
| Providing a fun learning environment | 1 |
| Strengthening subject knowledge      | 1 |
| Using time effectively               | 1 |

The prospective teachers of social studies were asked about the situations in which they felt successful while using literary materials. According to Table 5, which was prepared in relation to the answers of the prospective teachers, it was found out that they felt successful in terms of ensuring classroom management, drawing attention, ensuring clarity, encouraging participation and associating with the topic. In addition, they also pointed out that they felt successful in terms of providing a fun learning environment, strengthening subject knowledge and using time effectively. The views of the prospective teachers are given below:

"I was able to get the attention of the children. It was very useful in terms of ensuring participation. Since I wrote the tale myself, I made it easier to relate to the subject." (PT2)

"The poems were interesting; it was easy for me to take control of the classroom. The lesson was fun." (PT5)

"I used the time effectively. The subject became clearer with comics. The students participated in the class and I had no trouble maintaining class control." (PT6)

"I was able to associate the literary material I used to the subject. The students understood the subject better." (PT7)

### 3.4. Views of 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students about using literary materials as a teaching material in social studies teaching

#### 3.4.1. Characteristics of literary materials used in the course according to students

Table 6, which shows the characteristics of the literary materials used in Social Studies course according to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students, is presented below.



Table 6. *Characteristics of literary materials used in the course according to the students*

| Characteristics | f  |
|-----------------|----|
| Fun             | 10 |
| Memorable       | 3  |
| Instructive     | 3  |
| Interesting     | 3  |
| Clear           | 2  |

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students were asked what they thought about the literary materials (tale, story, letter, poem, comics, etc.) used in the course. According to Table 6, which was prepared in relation to the answers of the students, it was seen that the literary materials used in the course were fun, memorable, instructive, interesting, and clear. The views of the students are presented below:

"The poem was very beautiful, I listened to it with pleasure. LÖSEV (The foundation for children with leukaemia), ÇEKÜL (The foundation and promotion of the environment and cultural heritage), ... I understood them better." (S1)

"Using a story was fun for me. The events in the story drew my attention." (S8)

"The comic book was a lot of fun, it stayed in our minds. We learned interesting information." (S15)

"I loved the tale. That was so fun." (S17)

"The tale was very beautiful and instructive. It was a lot of fun." (S20)

#### 3.4.2. Effects of using literary materials on the teaching process according to students

Table 7, which shows the effects of using literary materials on the teaching process according to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students, is presented below.

Table 7. *Effects of using literary materials on the teaching process*

| Effects on the teaching process | f  |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Increasing participation        | 19 |
| A fun learning environment      | 10 |
| Instructiveness                 | 6  |
| Attractive learning environment | 4  |

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students were asked how using literary materials (tale, story, letter, poem, comics, etc.) in the course affected their learning processes. According to Table 7, which was prepared in relation to their answers, it was seen that using literary materials in the course increased participation, provided a fun learning environment, helped them learn better, and created an attractive learning environment for them. The views of the students are given below:

"Friends who normally do not participate in classes also wanted to participate. Because it was fun. We also learned more." (S2)

“There was a lot of participation in the classroom. Normally I would not be very involved either. This lesson is very boring sometimes. But I also participated in the lesson a lot, and so did my friends. The lesson was a lot of fun compared to the normal time.” (S4)

“I think it was very different, so interesting. It was better if our teacher gave the lesson and passed it. Everyone wanted to participate in the lesson.” (S14)

“We learned different countries. We learned what different people in different countries were doing. We both learned new things and had a lot of fun.” (S15)

“For the first time, a fairy tale was told in the lesson. So, it caught my attention and I think it was a lot of fun. Normally, things based on knowledge were told in this course. My friends also enjoyed such lessons. That is why almost everyone participated in the course.” (S18)

#### **4. Results and Discussion**

In this part of the study, the results, which were obtained from the findings, and the discussion are included.

##### **4.1. Results and discussion on prospective teachers of social studies’ ability to use literary materials as a teaching material in the teaching process**

###### **4.1.1. Results and discussion on points that prospective teachers of social studies pay attention to while choosing literary materials**

The prospective teachers of social studies pointed out that they paid attention to the following points: suitability for acquisitions, suitability for student level, interestingness, arousing curiosity, and emotional appeal. Using literary materials, which are instructive and suitable for acquisitions, in Social Studies course is significant. However, this is not enough. Literary materials to be used should also be interesting and suitable for student level, which should especially be taken into account to sustain a better learning atmosphere and to ensure student participation.

Krey (1998) states that while choosing literary materials to be used in the lesson, characteristics such as being interesting, suitable for children's development and giving children a new perspective should be sought. McGowan & Guzzetti (1991) similarly states that it is important to determine how literary materials that teachers will use in Social Studies course will contribute to the teaching process of the lesson and to determine its place in the social studies program or a related unit.

In his study focusing on the use of literary materials by teachers of social studies, Yıldırım (2017) points out that, while choosing literary materials they will use, teachers of social studies try to choose literary materials that are suitable for the subject, acquisitions, and student level. Beldağ & Aktaş (2016) aimed to determine the views of teachers and prospective teachers about the use of literary materials in Social Studies course. In their work, it was stated that, regarding literary materials which were/could be used in the course, prospective teachers paid attention to characteristics such as suitability for student level, acquisitions, curriculum, and national and moral values, and interestingness/attractiveness. These results show that prospective teachers of social studies and teachers of social studies prefer similar characteristics in literary materials that they will use as a learning material. Based on this argument, it can be underlined that prospective teachers of social studies prefer to use literary materials that will make the lesson more enjoyable and provide a better understanding of the subject.

#### 4.1.2. Results and discussion on characteristics of literary materials used by prospective teachers of social studies

The literary materials used by the prospective teachers of social studies have such characteristics as suitability for student level, interestingness, instructiveness, suitability for acquisitions, contribution to emotional development, and arousing curiosity.

In the studies conducted, it was stated that literary materials to be used in the teaching process should have qualities such as suitability for student level, being entertaining, interesting, informative, instructive, engrossing and simple, suitability for lesson outcomes and national-spiritual values, and ensuring student participation (Ata, 2000; Beldağ & Aktaş, 2016; Sim, 2017).

According to prospective teachers of social studies, one of the characteristics of the literary materials they use is that they contribute to the emotional development of students. Krey (1998), George & Stix (2000), Toy (2015) and Sevinç (2018) argue that literary materials used in social studies stimulate children's emotional reactions and facilitate reaching affective goals. Öztürk & Otluoğlu (2002) stated in their study that the use of literary materials in social studies teaching was effective in the acquisition of affective behavioural features in students.

#### **4.2. Results and Discussion on effects of using literary materials as a teaching material on the process of social studies teaching**

According to the prospective teachers of social studies, using literary materials in the course has the following positive contributions: increasing participation, making the lesson more interesting, instructiveness, contributing to emotional development, providing a fun learning environment, increasing motivation, and permanent learning

Mcgowan, Erickson & Neufeld (1996) stated that there was a permanent and attractive link between literature and social studies and that education provided by literary materials was an interesting option for educators. In their studies, Beldağ & Aktaş (2016) reached the conclusion that, for teachers of social studies, using literary materials would increase the permanence of the learned information, ensure student participation, make the class more interesting and fun, give students different perspectives, and enrich the teaching process. In addition to this, Öztürk & Otluoğlu (2002) found out that using literary materials in social studies teaching would help students gain effective and positive behavioural traits such as liking, realising, awareness, desire, feeling more comfortable, understanding/explaining, remembering, visualising, and connecting what they learn.

#### **4.3. Results and Discussion on experiences of prospective teachers of social studies in using literary materials as a teaching material in the teaching process**

##### 4.3.1. Results and Discussion on difficulties that prospective teachers of social studies had in the preparation stage of teaching through literary materials

The difficulties experienced by the prospective teachers include planning time, finding the material to increase participation, finding the material suitable for student level, and choosing the material suitable for acquisitions:

In different studies, it is seen that the most encountered problem on the use of literary materials as a teaching material in Social Studies course is to find the suitable material for teaching. In the study, in which the views of teachers of social studies about the use of literary materials are examined, Ünlü (2016) concludes that teachers had difficulties in obtaining literary materials. Sömen & Metin Göksu (2017) also point out that teachers of social studies have problems in finding literary materials suitable for student level in teaching history

subjects. In another study, Sevinç (2018) examines the opinions of teachers and students about the use of literary materials in Social Studies course and state that there are not enough literary materials in 5<sup>th</sup> grade social studies textbooks. Similarly, Çencen (2010), in the study examining the views of history teachers about the use of literary materials, underlines that most of the teachers stated that there were few literary materials suitable for student level.

Textbooks are essential resources for both teachers and students. For this reason, literary materials in textbooks have the feature of being easily accessible. In the literature, there are studies on the examination of literary works in social studies textbooks. For example, Kaymakçı (2013) states that the use of literary materials in social studies textbooks is significant. Açık (2014) examines literary materials used in social studies textbooks for children. In the study, he states that literary materials such as aphorisms, stories, autobiographies, proverbs, epics, poems and memoirs were included in textbooks, that these literary materials were, however, concentrated in certain units, and that some units did not even have literary materials.

It is thought that prospective teachers, using resources other than textbooks, are in search of literary materials that students have not encountered before and that will attract their attention. For this reason, it is thought that they have difficulty in finding literary materials which they plan to make use of in the teaching process, which are suitable for student level and related to the subject, and which have characteristics such as being interesting.

#### 4.3.2. Results and Discussion on situations in which prospective teachers of social studies feel successful while using literary materials

While using literary materials, the prospective teachers of social studies felt successful in terms of ensuring classroom management, drawing attention, ensuring clarity, encouraging participation and associating with the topic. In addition, some of them also pointed out that they felt successful in terms of providing a fun learning environment, strengthening subject knowledge and using time effectively.

In Yıldırım's (2017) study, which investigates teachers of social studies using literary materials in their courses, teachers who took courses for the use of literary materials in undergraduate education stated that this training contributed to them. Regarding this result, it is thought that the course taken by prospective teachers of social studies for the use of literary materials in Social Studies course in undergraduate education is considered to be beneficial.

#### 4.4. Results and Discussion on views of 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students about using literary materials as a teaching material in social studies teaching

##### 4.4.1. Results and Discussion on characteristics of literary materials used in the course according to students

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students stated that the literary materials (tale, story, letter, poem, comics, etc.) used in the course were fun, memorable, instructive, interesting, and clear. This result shows that, according to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, the characteristics of the literary materials used in social studies course overlap with those characteristics that should be found in a literary material according to the prospective teachers of social studies. In other words, the prospective teachers were able to benefit from literary materials that had the characteristics they wanted in social studies teaching.

It is of great importance that literary materials to be used in social studies teaching are parallel to the acquisition of the course and the skills and values that should be acquired by students. Also, from the student's point of view, when using literary materials, it is significant



to choose literary materials suitable for student level. In other words, literary materials should appeal to the interests and needs of the student, attract the student's attention, be appropriate to the student's level of readiness and parallel with the development period of the student, have meaning for the student, and be capable of improving the student's vocabulary (Demir & Akengin, 2012). In this sense, it can be said that the literary materials that the prospective teachers of social studies used as a teaching material in the course are of good quality.

#### 4.4.2. Results and Discussion on effects of using literary materials on the teaching process according to students

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students stated that using literary materials in the course increased participation, provided a fun learning environment, helped them learn better, and created an attractive learning environment for them. In the study which examines the teachers and students' views about the use of literary materials in Social Studies course, Sevinç (2018) makes the point that students expressed positive opinions about the use of literary materials in the lesson and stated that they understood the lesson better. Both the prospective teachers of social studies and the 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students expressed positive opinions about the use of literary works in social studies teaching. They used similar expressions about the contribution of using literary materials as a teaching material to the teaching of the course.

In the study of Dolmaz and Kaya (2018) in which they examined student views on the use of historical novels in social studies teaching, students stated that they gained more information through historical novels, which are one of the literary materials. Hannibal, Vasilev & Lin (2002) state that, when subjects such as place, human, and environmental interaction are covered with literature, both subjects will be more understandable, and the permanence of the learned will increase. In other studies, they state that literary materials used in social studies increased students' knowledge and made them understand events better, supported their learning, and increased their interest and participation in the lesson (Fredericks, 2007; George & Stix, 2000; İbret, Karasu Avcı, Karabıyık, Güleş & Demirci, 2017; Krey, 1998; McCall, 2000; Toy, 2015; Ünlü, 2016).

## 5. Suggestions

The suggestions of the study can be itemized and stated as in the following.

1. It should be paid attention that the distribution of literary materials in textbooks, which is one of the basic teaching materials, is homogeneous.
2. Prospective teachers of social studies should have more information about literary materials for children. Prospective teachers should, in this regard, be encouraged. Prospective teachers, who have more information about literary materials for children, will thus be able to easily plan which work to use on which subject in the future.
3. The “Oral and Written Literature Studies in Social Studies” course, which is taught in the department of social studies education, should be taught not only as a theoretical course but also as a theoretical and applied course.
4. In terms of gaining experience, it should be ensured that prospective teachers of social studies benefit from literary materials in teaching practice courses.
5. Since the use of literary materials as a teaching material in social studies teaching results in quite positive reactions for students, it is necessary to include literary materials frequently in the lessons.
6. Both visual and auditory aspects of students can be addressed by presenting literary materials in digital form by using smart boards.

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