

Use of Cartoons in Children's Rights Education: A Case Study*

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the knowledge, emotions and views of grade 4 elementary school students on education via cartoons. We designed the study as a case study, which is a qualitative research design. The study group included 30 elementary school students. The study used document review as the data collection technic. The study used worksheets and educational cartoons as data collection tools. In analysis of the data the study used content analysis. As a result of the study we observed that most students expressed what they saw in the cartoons correctly. In addition, the students who expressed what they had seen in the cartoons correctly also perceived the message in the cartoons correctly. Most students stated that the cartoons were about the right to education and made supportive statements. However, the students were incapable of expressing their emotions about the intended message of the cartoons. In addition, when they were asked to interpret a specific cartoon, the details did not attract them and they made rather holistic comments. Based on this result, we think that creating classroom environments supported by cartoons may develop the ability of students to analyze and perceive their rights and their skill of expressing their emotions.

Keywords: Children's Rights, Cartoon, Elementary School, Social Studies

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INTRODUCTION

Children's rights attract attention as a controversial topic in the world agenda. A significant proportion of controversions focuses on the inability of children to use the rights which they possess according to the Convention on the Rights of the Children.

The Convention on the Rights of the Children is a convention which suggests that the child as an individual has rights and aims to increase the quality of life of the world's children up to the level they deserve (UNICEF, 1992). The General Assembly of the United Nations accepted this convention in 1989. Nearly all countries of the world have approved and signed the Convention on the Rights of the Children. Turkey signed the convention in December, 1994. This agreement is paramount in terms of creating a global consensus on children and children's rights. According to the convention, children possess rights as individuals independent from their parents and the state.

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Children, all children in the world are equal. No matter where they are born or what language they speak, they cannot be discriminated and every child is supported and protected to be fully educated (UNICEF,1992). The convention pays a particular attention to education. It is possible to examine the way the convention handles children's right to education in three main sections. Firstly, children have the right to education. In accordance with item 28, children have the right to primary education and accessible secondary and higher education for free. In accordance with item 23, handicapped children have the right to care and special assistance in education as in other areas. Secondly, children have specific rights when using their right to education. Item 2 stresses children's right to not be discriminated and item 12 stresses their right to participate in educational decisions which affect them. In accordance with item 13, 14 and 15, they have the right to freedom of speech, freedom of thought and religion and the right to form association and participate in peaceful meetings within reasonable bounds. Thirdly, children have the right to learn their rights via education. In accordance with item 29 and 42, children have the right to know their rights and develop themselves in terms of human rights and fundamental freedoms (Howe and Covell, 2010, p. 93). However, in Turkey there may be situations where the convention is not applied as in the world. In particular, the inequalities that girls face in education in Turkey reveal the necessity of discussing this matter.

The grade 4 elementary school Social Studies curricula included children's rights in the "Active Citizenship" learning area during the 2018-2019 academic year. The Social Studies Lesson Curriculum (2018) attracted attention to different methods and technics with the statement "up-to-date and controversial topics related to acquisitions can be related with problem solving, critical thinking, evidence using, decision making and study skills and be brought to the classroom using different discussion technics.". Cartoons used for educational purposes are one of the visual material usage tools.

Visual reading is crucial in every era. Even the drawings on cave walls in ancient times when the humanity started show us that humans communicated with visuals and the visuals had a message. Today, visual reading maintains its importance as well as the increase in the opportunities of using, reproducing and sharing visuals with advancing technical possibilities. In the future we think that visual reading will become even more important with advancing technology and increase in the use of visuals in our daily life. Therefore in order to bring "visual reading" which was, is and will be an important skill in the past, present and in the future in students, schools are to organize visual reading activities.

Visual reading contains reading and comprehending visuals such as figures, drawings, tables, symbols, diagrams, body language, nature and social events, as well as written texts and transfer of emotions, thoughts and information to other people via visuals (Çam, 2006, p. 5). Visual literacy is a group of visual competences that an individual can develop by combining the events via experiences gained through seeing and other sense organs (Debes, 1969, p. 14). Visual literacy training to be provided in schools may aim to make education more qualified by maximizing the advantages of

visuals and help students make sense of visuals in daily life. An individual with visual literacy skill is expected to have qualities like having a critical point of view, perceiving the message given in visuals either directly or indirectly, being aware of factors affecting the comprehension and interpretation of the message and producing appropriate visuals for the message. In order to bring visual literacy skill in students, it is necessary that students face visual materials and course activities supported by visual materials be designed. One of these visual materials is cartoons.

The term cartoon which is defined in the current Turkish dictionary as “a thought-provoking and humorous drawing which portrays all kinds of events related to humans and society in an exaggerated way” (The Turkish Language Association, 2019) and is originally an Italian word, was derived from French (caricature). A variety of researchers have also defined cartoons in different ways. Heinzelmann (2004, p. 14) defined cartoons as “an expression of humor via drawings”, while Oruç (2007, p. 28) defined them as “entertaining drawings which indicate specific characteristics of an individual or an object in a humorous way”. They are also defined as “drawings exaggerating the physical properties, actions or character of an individual” (Thakur, 2015, p. 4) and “humorous drawings which add a different insight to the modern world although they are usually used for fun” (Van Wyk, 2011, p. 118).

Cartoons help to express most subjects that are hard to express with writing. In training with cartoons, a teacher can enable students to comprehend the subject more quickly. Above all, a well-chosen cartoon will contribute to the mental development and critical thinking skill of students (Özalp, 2006, p. 23) and increase their interest in the course (Şengül and Dereli 2013). Bahrani and Soltani (2011, p. 20) stated that using cartoons in the class will increase the understanding, attitude and motivation of students for learning. Cartoons as a teaching strategy provide a structure for interactions and motivate students to collaborate and solve problems. Moreover, they encourage students for different interactions and reach students who may have a variety of learning strategies (Van Wyk, 2011 p. 123). When students reflect their observations on cartoons, their humor and creativity qualities will develop. This will enable students to make criticism, comments and genuine assessments (Herdem, Aygün and Çinici, 2014). In addition, activities related to cartoons create a stress-free and comforting atmosphere and develop the teacher-student relationship (Gamage, 2019, p. 108). In this respect it is noteworthy that cartoons used for educational purposes be brought into the classroom environment and discussed.

As long as cartoons are thematic or are designed for a specific purpose, they can be used as a beneficial way of enhancing the learning atmosphere any time during education (Bahrani and Soltani, 2011, p. 1). However, trainers do not find using cartoons, which are among visual material elements in education, sympathetic enough. One of the most important reasons for this condition is that the teacher cannot find the materials related to the subject. Another reason is the traditional distrust against cartoons (Akbaba, 2015, p. 23). Cartoons lead to concerns about choosing course materials due to reasons such as usually offering humiliating and overly simplified generalizations related to a social group and complying with social traditions according to the subjects chosen by the era as an easy target. Cartoons by their nature usually exaggerate a specific aspect or situation that may help to focus on an appropriate teaching-learning point. Therefore an individual needs to be careful with using cartoons (Bahrani and Soltani, 2001 p. 20).

There are several aspects to pay attention to when using cartoons as a course material. First of all, the cartoon chosen should have an educational value. The educational method is usually chosen after establishing the learning goals. The method chosen should meet the needs of students. The same procedure applies to the cartoon choice. When an individual decides on a specific cartoon to be used, it is important to practise by using it with a student group at least once. In addition, we should not forget the general and specific purposes of the Turkish System of Education and the cultural background of people. A cartoon which is meaningful for a culture may not have any value in the Turkish culture and may not encourage people to make any inference. A trainer should be sensitive with a cartoon to be brought into the classroom and take into account this principle and such.

In individual can use visual examination technics in utilizing cartoons as a course material. First of all, students are to notice what they see in cartoons. Cartoons should primarily be examined as a whole and students should be encouraged to talk about what they see in a visual. Then the cartoon examined should be divided into four equal parts and students should be asked what they see in each part. By this way more profound examinations may be possible.

When cartoons are used in education, students should be attracted by asking questions about cartoons and be allowed to learn. Students may not fully perceive the message that is intended to be given in visual materials due to their differences such as level of visual literacy, interests and level of paying attention. Asking questions about the cartoon is the best way of establishing a communication between a student and a visual (Kılınç, 2006, p. 67). The teacher should ask students questions like “What does the cartoon tell? How is the cartoon related with?” concerning the cartoons he/she presents, in order to achieve his/her goal in making sense of the cartoon (Akkaya, 2011, p. 54). These questions will start a journey in students towards the message that is tried to be given. Students who notice that the cartoons have a message will develop a curiosity and begin to use their interpretation talents. However, an individual should pay a particular attention to determining the prior knowledge of students related to the subject and designing the course plan activities according to student readiness.

Studies on the use of cartoons in the classroom environment focus on the impact of using cartoons on the student success. The studies conducted by Ayyıldız (2010), Başarmak (2013), Demirci (2013), Durualp (2006), Kılınç (2006), Palaz (2010) and Koçoğlu (2012) revealed that use of cartoons in the class increased the course success of students. Köseoğlu (2009) and Barut (2017) stated that using cartoons in the Social Studies class affected creative thinking. The study conducted by Ersoy and Türkkkan (2010) examined the viewpoints, emotions and thoughts of students about environmental problems via the cartoons they drew and found that the students reflected their socio-economic environment on their cartoons. Van Wyk (2011) stated that use of cartoons positively developed the constructive and collaboration-based learning between peers.

Examining the studies on cartoons; it is possible to say that cartoons usually increase the course success in the Social Studies class, contribute to developing positive attitudes and develop creative thinking. In addition, researchers recommend that cartoons be used as a course material and necessary studies be conducted to reveal the thoughts of students (Karakuş, Palaz, Kılcan, Çepni (2012); Sidekli, Er, Yavaşer, Aydın (2014); Dinç, Öztemur (2016)). Accordingly, the current study is noteworthy in terms of revealing the knowledge and views of elementary school students on cartoons and children’s rights. Examining the studies conducted; we have encountered no study using cartoons related to the children’s right to education as a course material and revealing the knowledge and thoughts of students about cartoons related to the right to education. The current study is one of the exceptional studies on the use of cartoons related to the girls’ right to education in the classroom and is believed to guide further studies.

In this context the study aimed to examine the knowledge, emotions and views of grade 4 elementary school students on the right to education via cartoons. In line with this purpose the study sought to answer the following questions;

- 1) Are students able to perceive what they see in a cartoon correctly and express it in written form?
- 2) How do students feel about the incident in a cartoon?
- 3) What are the comments of students on cartoons according to the items in the Convention on the Rights of the Children?

METHOD

Study Model

The study was configured as a case study which is among qualitative research designs. Case study is an approach commonly used in qualitative research and also a study method which handles a current case within the frame of its own real life. In addition, it is a research method enabling the researcher who centers upon the questions “how” and “why”, to profoundly examine an uncontrollable case or event (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008, p. 289). The study adopted a descriptive case study method. By this way the study profoundly examined whether the students perceived the cartoons correctly or not, how they felt about the cartoons and how they interpreted the cartoons according to the Convention on the Rights of the Children.

Study Group

The study used the convenience sampling method to choose the study group. The study chose the grade 4 students receiving education as the only class in an elementary school where the second researcher worked, in order to provide convenience in terms of time and space. The study included 14 male, 16 female students and a total of 30 students from grade 4. In the study the names of the students were kept confidential. The students were coded as S1, S2, S3.

Data Collection Tool and Data Collection Process

The study collected the data via a worksheet containing three cartoons and three open-ended questions about the cartoons. Specific studies use worksheets as a data collection tool (Kutlu and Ahioğlu, 2005; Ersoy, 2010). Open-ended questions are among alternative status determination methods used as a data collection tool (Kutlu, Doğan and Karakaya, 2009). As a matter of fact, the current study also used open-ended questions to reveal the views of the students on cartoons. Following are a cartoon example included in the worksheet and questions about each cartoon;



Image 1. Cartoon 1 Used in the Study (Reference: www.hurriyet.com.tr, 2019)

- a) What do you see when you examine the cartoon?
- b) How would you feel if you were the child in the cartoon and were treated like that?

c) With which item in the Convention on the Rights of the Children does the incident in this cartoon contradict? Why?

The study received opinions from two domain experts to determine the convenience of the cartoon and questions in the worksheet for grade 4 elementary school students and their correlation with the right to education and presented these opinions to three classroom teachers. The experts and teachers stated that the worksheet was convenient for the level of the students and contained a message about the right to education. During the data collection process the second researcher primarily explained the students the purpose of the study in grade 4 that volunteered in the school within the scope of the study. Then he/she applied the worksheet to the students in one course hour (approximately 40 minutes).

Analysis of the Data

The study analyzed the data acquired via content analysis. Yıldırım and Şimşek (2008) suggest that the main purpose in content analysis is to conceptualize the data acquired, arrange them in a logical way and detect the themes explaining the data accordingly. The study analyzed the data in line with the following procedures.

- Breakdown of the answers in the worksheets was created individually according to the order of questions.
- Based on the data collected, a thematic framework was created and the themes specified were coded.
- The researchers individually conducted the coding process and determined the statuses with consensus and dissensus. The reliability was found to be 89% by calculating the reliability formula [$p = \text{Consensus} / (\text{Consensus} + \text{dissensus})$] proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). According to Miles and Huberman (1994), in order to accept a study as reliable, its reliability percentage should be above 70%.
- In line with the thematic framework created, the data was read and frequency values of the themes were obtained. These themes were grouped under main topics. Subthemes were created under the aforementioned main themes and frequency values were obtained for each answer.
- In addition, the student views were directly quoted in order to increase the reliability in the study.

FINDINGS

The study presented the findings obtained in three topics as what the students see in the cartoon, their emotions about the incident in the cartoon and their comments on the cartoon according to the Convention on the Rights of the Children. The student answers were tabularized as frequency and percentage. After interpreting the answers, the relevant student views were directly quoted.

What the Students See in the Cartoon

Table 1 demonstrates the frequency and percentage distributions of the findings related to the answers of the students to the question “*What do you see when you examine the cartoon?*”.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distributions Related to the Answers of the Students to What They Saw in the Cartoon

Student Answers	Cartoon 1		Cartoon 2		Cartoon 3	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Right	16	53	14	47	11	50
Partly right	12	40	11	36	9	17
Wrong	2	7	5	17	10	33
Total	30	100	30	100	30	100

Examining Table 1; of the 30 students who took part in the study, 53% coded the question related to what they saw in cartoon 1 to be “right”, 40% coded it to be “partly right” and 7% coded it to be “wrong”. Right answers were as follows: “The girl reaches out to grab her book but a dirty foot stops her.” (S3), “The father will send his daughter who wants to read a book to work, because she is wearing a uniform.” (S8), “A dirty foot prevents the child from grabbing the book.” (S10), “I think an old foot is hurting the girl and doesn’t want the girl to grab the book.” (S17). Partly right answers were as follows: “The father doesn’t want the girl to read a book.” (S5), “The old foot doesn’t like the girl.” (S9), “The girl tries to grab the book.” (S20). Wrong answers were as follows: “The owner of the book will not allow her to grab the book.” (S1), “The girl has committed an offense and her father is punishing her.” (S27), “The child has fallen down.” (S29).

Examining the cartoon; at first glance we see a girl who has fallen down, a book on the floor and a dirty foot. When we divide the cartoon into four parts, we see a sad girl who has fallen down, a dirty male foot with pieces of hays on it, the hand of a girl trying to reach the book and an open book. The students were able to express what they saw clearly and correctly when they were asked to write it down. Wrong answers were possible wrong statements about the cartoon and none of the students tended towards an unrelated subject.

Of the 30 students who took part in the study, 47% coded the question related to what they saw in cartoon 2 to be “right”, 36% coded it to be “partly right” and 17% coded it to be “wrong”. Right answers were as follows: “There are two workers in the cartoon. One of them is the mother and the other one is the girl. There is a school uniform at the back. The mother and the girl are working in a field.” (S10), “There is yellow grass. The mother and the girl are working. There is the girl’s school uniform at the back.” (S25). Partly right answers were as follows: “There are two people working in a field.” (S1), “The field is very big. The girl and her mother are working.” (S6), “There is a school uniform. I think it is the girl’s.” (S13), “There are two working people and a little house.” (S30). Wrong answers were as follows: “The child is picking grapes in the field.” (S2), “The mother and the child have come to the field to work for summer. We too go to our field in summer.” (S14).

Examining cartoon 2; at first glance we see a woman and a girl working in a field. When we divide the cartoon into four parts and examine it, we see a house far from the field, a girl’s school uniform hung instead of a scarecrow, a woman working in the field and a girl. Examining the views of the students on what they saw in cartoon 2; 47% were able to explain what they saw in the cartoon correctly. The students giving wrong answers did not focus on the school uniform on the scarecrow and they missed the details. In cartoon reading activities, the cartoon is primarily divided into four equal parts and each part is discussed. We believe that such a training to be organized for students will increase the cartoon reading skill and interpretation ability of students.

Of the students, 50% coded the question related to what they saw in cartoon 3 to be “right”, 17% coded it to be “partly right” and 33% coded it to be “wrong”. Right answers were as follows: “Teacher, there is a school and children are playing. Moreover, there is a bad guy trying to take a girl.” (S8), “In the cartoon there is a man taking a girl away from the school.” (S10), “There are people playing and there is a man taking the girl out of the play.” (S17), “In the cartoon there are a man, a school and six children. The girls are jumping a rope and the boys are playing football. There are lots of stars on the ground. A man is abducting a girl.” (S24). Partly right answers were as follows: “The

father is taking his daughter who wants to play from the school.” (S5), “The father doesn’t want his daughter to play.” (S13), “The school is on playtime. A man is abducting a girl.” (S25). Wrong answers were as follows: “They did drawing at school and he is taking her home.” (S2), “The child playing wants to go to a wedding.” (S22).

Examining cartoon 3; at first glance we see five children playing, a school, a schoolyard and a man trying to take a girl to a bridal car forcefully. When we divide the cartoon into four parts and examine it, we see three girls jumping a rope smiling in the schoolyard, two boys playing football happily and an ignorant-looking man in black taking a girl to a black car adorned like a bridal car. Examining the student answers; although the students understood that the bad guy was taking the girl from the school, they had different views on why he was doing that. This was because the students had no idea about the early marriage issue. However, the girl being taken from the school forcefully on which they all agreed, shows that they were aware that something was not right.

Emotions of the Students about the Incident in the Cartoon

Table 2 demonstrates the frequency and percentage distributions of the findings related to the answers of the students to the question “*How would you feel if you were the child in the cartoon and were treated like that?*”.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distributions Related to the Emotions of the Students about the Incident in the Cartoon

Student Answers	Cartoon 1		Cartoon 2		Cartoon 3	
	F	%	F	%	f	%
Sorrow and compassion	18	60	15	50	13	43
Happiness	-	-	3	10	3	10
Astonishment	4	13	-	-	-	-
Excitement	-	-	-	-	6	20
Anger	1	3	2	7	2	7
Not interested	2	7	2	7	-	-
No answer	3	10	5	17	3	10
Feeling nothing	2	7	3	10	3	10
Total	30	100	30	100	30	100

Examining Table 2; 60% of the students felt sorrow and compassion about the incident in cartoon 1, 13% felt astonishment and 3% felt anger. Of the views specified on this subject, 7% were coded to be unrelated answers and 10% were coded to be no answer. 7% of the students stated that they felt nothing about the incident in the cartoon.

The student answers on this subject were as follows: “When I first saw the cartoon I felt so sad. I used to get hurt a lot, too.” (S2), “He shouldn’t step on the girl’s hand. She must have been in a lot of pain and cried.” (S6), “It is so cruel that he is stepping on her with his dirty foot.” (S9), “I would feel upset.” (S11), “I would say ‘Why is he doing this?’.” (S12).

Of the students, 50% felt sorrow and compassion about the incident in cartoon 2 and 10% felt happiness. 17% of them expressed their emotions on this subject with no answer. Of the students, 10% stated that they felt nothing about the incident in the cartoon and 7% gave unrelated answers.

The student answers on this subject were as follows: “I felt so sad.” (S3), “I would feel sad if I didn’t go to school.” (S4), “I would be really happy with my mother.” (S14), “I would be happy to be helping.” (S21), “I would feel sad if I didn’t go to school.” (S30).

Of the students, 43% felt sorrow and compassion about the incident in cartoon 3, 20% felt excitement, 10% felt happiness and 7% felt anger. 10% of them expressed their emotions on the

incident in cartoon 3 with no answer. 10% of the students stated that they felt nothing about the incident in the cartoon.

The student answers on this subject were as follows: “I would feel sad.” (S18), “I would be mad if he took me from the play.” (S20), “It is great to play.” (S28), “I would feel sad if he took me from the school and tore me apart from my friends.” (S29).

Examining the student answers; 44% stated that they felt sad about the incident in the cartoon.

Examining the answers of the students related to their emotions about the incident in the cartoon; the students solved the emotion that was meant to be given in the cartoon and made mood descriptions accordingly. Examining the student worksheets; the students usually expressed their thoughts with just one word and there were few students writing a sentence. In addition, there were few students using an anger statement about the incident in the cartoon. Most students stated that they felt sad about the incident in the cartoon.

The Student Comments on Cartoons According to the Convention on the Rights of the Children

The Convention on the Rights of the Children is a legal text defining the rights of the children in the widest sense. Basic principles in the convention are showing no discrimination (Item 2), the best interests of the child (Item 3), the right to life and development (Item 6) and respecting the opinions of the child (Item 12). Other principles and provisions in the convention are collected under the main headings of life, development, protection and participation (Uçuş, 2009).

The current study divided and themed the student answers into four categories according to the Convention on the Rights of the Children, just like the categorization of the rights in the study conducted by Özdemir-Uluç (2008) and Akyüz (2000). These themes of rights are the right to life, development, protection and participation. The Right to Life theme includes children’s rights such as the fundamental right to health and service, the right to live in a good environment and the right to evaluate leisure and cultural activities. The Right to Development theme includes rights such as the right to family environment and alternative care, the right to social service, the right to education and quality of education and the right to teach children’s rights. The Right to Participation theme includes rights such as the right to present an opinion and express opinions, the right to freedom of religion-thought and conscience, the right to form association and the right of privacy. The Right to Protection theme includes rights such as respecting personal differences, preventing discrimination and protecting against abuse and negligence. In this context the study evaluated the right to education within the right to development theme.

Table 3 demonstrates the frequency and percentage distributions of the findings related to the answers of the students to the question “*With which item in the Convention on the Rights of the Children does the incident in this cartoon contradict? Why?*”

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distributions Related to the Student Comments on Cartoons According to the Convention on the Rights of the Children

Student Answers	Cartoon 1		Cartoon 2		Cartoon 3	
	F	%	f	%	F	%
Right to life	16	53	4	13	2	7
Right to development	8	27	13	43	7	23
Right to protection	3	10	5	17	7	23
Right to participation	-	-	2	7	6	20
Unrelated	3	10	6	20	8	27
Total	30	100	30	100	30	100

Of the student answers to the question “With which item in the Convention on the Rights of the Children does cartoon 1 contradict?”, 53% were collected under the right to life. 27% of the students mentioned the right to development and 10% mentioned the right to protection. None of the students mentioned the right to participation and 10% gave answers which were not related with children’s rights.

The student answers were as follows: “Here he destroys the right to life. The child may die.” (S7), “Every child has the right to life.” (S12), “I think the cartoon focuses on being unable to use the right to education.” (S15), “The parents have to protect the child. According to the convention, noone can harm the child.” (S28).

Of the student answers to the question “With which item in the Convention on the Rights of the Children does cartoon 2 contradict?”, 43% mentioned the right to development, 17% mentioned the right to protection, 13% mentioned the right to life and 7% mentioned the right to participation. 20% of the students gave answers which were not related with the question.

The student answers were as follows: “It’s the men who should work in the field. Children cannot be made work. There is a child here who is unable to use her right to education.” (S19), “Education is every child’s right.” (S21).

Of the student answers to the question “With which item in the Convention on the Rights of the Children does cartoon 3 contradict?”, 23% mentioned the right to development and protection, 20% mentioned the right to participation and 7% mentioned the right to life. 27% of the students gave answers which were not related with the question.

The student answers were as follows: “There is a child who can’t use her right to play. Other children can use it.” (S13), “The child can’t use her right to go to school. The man is mean. The child should be protected from bad people.” (S18), “In the cartoon there is a girl who is married off while she needs to go to school. Young children can’t just get married.” (S30).

The answers of the students to the question “With which item in the Convention on the Rights of the Children does the cartoon contradict?” revealed that the students knew the right to education. As well as the right to education, most of the students were aware that children had specific rights such as being protected from all kinds of violence and being protected by their parents. They stressed the early marriage of girls and duties of the state in protecting children’s rights.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study revealed whether the grade 4 elementary school students were able to perceive the cartoons related to the right to education correctly or not, how they felt about the incident in the cartoons and their comments on the cartoons according to the Convention on the Rights of the Children.

The first question in the worksheet aimed to measure whether the students were able to perceive what they saw in the cartoon correctly or not. This question was an important phase for analyzing the incident in the cartoon accurately. Unless the incident in a cartoon is understood correctly, the message that is intended to be given in the cartoon may not be perceived correctly. As a matter of fact the study result also demonstrated that the students reading the cartoon correctly also interpreted it correctly. The study conducted by Yüksel and Adıgüzel (2012) revealed that the students were able to analyze the incident, phenomenon and case in cartoons healthily as long as they understood the cartoons correctly. Based on this result, we think that enabling students to mingle with cartoons and creating classroom environments supported by cartoons may develop the ability of students to perceive latent messages.

When students are asked to write down what they see in a cartoon, most of them are unable to notice little details. However, latent messages given in details in visual reading are crucial. Cartoon reading lessons to be given to students should first teach them how to examine a cartoon by dividing it into four equal parts and then the strategies to see the whole. The students did not go by these strategies when writing down what they saw.

The second question in the worksheet aimed to reveal the emotions of the students about the incident in the cartoon. Ability of students to reveal their emotions about a case, an incident or a matter is a noteworthy phase for them to internalize that incident. In the current study the students behaved timidly when explaining their feelings and expressed them with fewer words. This might be related with a lack of visual reading skills in the students and their inability to perceive the message in the cartoon. It is possible that they did not know the meaning of the feeling mentioned in the question “How do you feel?” which was addressed to them related to the cartoon. In spite of the presence of many different views like even if they knew the meaning of the concept, they might be insufficient in writing down their thoughts, the aforementioned situation might be related with a lack of skill in people to express their feelings in general. As a matter of fact, Ersoy (2010) stated in his study that the students’ explanation of their feelings in different ways may be related with what the concept of feeling meant to them and their misperception about the concept of feeling. However, this should not be interpreted as a negativity or deficiency in terms of use of cartoons in examining the value acquisitions of students. On the contrary cartoons may have an important function in understanding why students think wrong, their misconceptions and how they structure the knowledge.

The third question in the worksheet aimed to reveal the student comments on the cartoon according to the Convention on the Rights of the Children. Most of the students stated that the cartoons were about the right to education. However, they had quite a narrow view of the subject. Although the students knew that they had the right to education, their comments on the right to education which was not used in the cartoons were inadequate. This can also be because students seldomly conduct cartoon interpretation activities. We think that as long as students are subjected to such activities in further processes, their cartoon interpretation activities will develop better. As a matter of fact Akkaya (2011) and Koçoğlu (2012) stated in their cartoon-aided education study that self-expression and interpretation abilities of the students had developed and they expressed positive opinions about cartoon-aided education.

Examining the answers of the students to the questions in the worksheet; the answers to the third cartoon were shorter and inattentive. This might be related with the decrease of interest in the cartoons. Additionally we should pay attention to not using cartoons excessively like other teaching strategies. Otherwise their impacts may decrease. It is recommended that different visual-audial programs accompany cartoons. As a matter of fact teachers should balance between the type of the program which is intended to be taught to students and the content (Bahrani and Soltani, 2011).

When interpreting the cartoons the students added their own emotions and thoughts. From this point of view it is possible to reveal clues about the lives of the students. For example, we can examine the experiences of the students who gave answers like “Her father may be beating her.” and “How lucky she is for having her mother with her.”

As a consequence the study revealed that the elementary school students correctly understood the cartoons related to the right to education which were showed to them and used correct words in their comments. In addition, the study found that as long as cartoons are used appropriately and correctly, they can be used as a strong alternative to quantitative data collection tools. In this context the study is expected to help researchers.

Recommendations for the results of the study were as follows:

- The students noticed that the cartoons were related with the right to education, which shows that they had cartoon reading skills. However, the students did not know the

technics to use in cartoon reading and they expressed their thoughts in comments with fewer words. We believe that the cartoon reading and interpretation training to be provided to students will develop their ability to express their thoughts even further.

- Cartoon-aided studies to be conducted with students may require students to draw a cartoon on the subject. Yaman and Öztürk (2018) stated in their study that the students enjoyed the cartoon activities conducted during the implementation process and felt happy to share their cartoons with their friends. Considering the effective use and attraction of technology today; students can enrich the course content by drawing their own cartoons with the help of cartoon programs such as ToonDoo and Comica at the end of a cartoon-aided course plan.
- According to the study result, the students who took part in the study were able to explain their knowledge, emotions and thoughts about their rights in written form via cartoons. Studies can be conducted on cartoons with research designs in observation and action research form in order to reflect the classroom environment during the children's rights education process.
- The issue of children's rights has a content which can be supported by visuals with both humor and thought dimensions just like cartoons. Further studies can examine the outcomes of a cartoon-aided course teaching related to the right to education.

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