

## Increasing Awareness on Dede Korkut and His Stories: An Action Research

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### Abstract

The aim of this study is to increase the awareness of Dede Korkut and his stories about the fourth grade students in primary school. For this purpose, the following questions have been sought: "What is the awareness of the fourth grade students attending the research about Dede Korkut?", "How is theme-centered teaching contributing to the knowledge and recognition of Dede Korkut and his stories in primary school fourth grade students?", "What do students think about the processing of Dede Korkut and his stories with thematic teaching?", "What are the observations of the researcher during the application?" This study is a qualitative research and is designed with action research. The study group consisted of 22 students in the fourth class of a primary school. In this study, three different data collection tools were used: "Dede Korkut Awareness Form", "semi-structured interview form" and "researcher's diaries". Based on results, it is concluded that students do not know Dede Korkut and her stories which contain cultural values related to the society to which they belong, but successful results can be obtained when these works belonging to our culture are transferred to the students with appropriate methods. At the end of the interview, the students mentioned that they participated in activities related to thematic teaching and Dede Korkut and learning their stories, felt as if they had lived in that period and that they learned through these activities was permanent. In this direction, we can conclude that the theme-centered teaching method is successful in teaching Dede Korkut and his stories.

**Keywords:** Dede Korkut, Story, Theme-Centered Teaching, Folk Literature, Cultural Heritage.

### Introduction

The basic function of schools is not only to gain knowledge and skills to the individual, but also to gain common values that hold individuals together by using the language, belief, life, history and culture of each society. Literary works play an important role in the transfer of these values which hold societies together. Dede Korkut stories, which have a special place in terms of language, history and culture in our literary works, are one of the most open documents that tell the ancestors' traditions, customs, beliefs, family lives, give very important information about our history and shed light from past to present. Using Dede Korkut's stories as a cultural bearer from generation to generation by giving such important information about our history, the use of pure and clear Turkish further increases the importance of this work and makes it a masterpiece that belongs to Turkish people.

One of the most valuable and important masterpieces of the Turkish cultural world is Dede Korkut Book. Fuat Köprülü said "If you put all Turkish literature in one eye of the scale and Dede Korkut in the other, Dede Korkut outweighs" this book is one of the best works of Turkish literature (Ergin, 2018b, p.7).

In Dede Korkut Stories, traditions, beliefs, and attitudes of Oghuz Turks who started to settle in the east of Anatolia from the 12<sup>th</sup> century are studied. In the stories, the social life of the Oguz people is reflected in these stories, although there are events in the foreground and the events around them. These stories, which are included in Aktaş, (2016) and Güzel (2008) books, give information about daily life, social hierarchy, life style and saints. Although the history of transcribing the stories, which were first conveyed to the language with the help of kopuz, is not known exactly; according to Gökyay (2018), the common history adopted dates back to the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The book titled "Vatican" and

"Dresden" is written by Dede Korkut (Pehlivan, 2015, p.19), which consists of 12 stories. 3<sup>rd</sup> copy of the book was found in 2019. There are 13 stories which is called "Salur Kazan killed the Seven Headed Dragon" in this copy. According to Levis (1974), the book Dede Korkut is a collection of twelve short stories in the heroic age of the Oghuz Turks. This collection was first encountered in the inscriptions in Siberia and Mongolia in 8<sup>th</sup> century.

Dede Korkut or Korkut Ata, who is not the main hero of the stories but who names the stories, is an old and knowledgeable grandfather who is respected by all sections of society (Çatal, 2009); a saint who has the duty to name Turkish children (Banarlı, 1983); a national who came to the forefront as a narrator with his role that appeared and prayed at the end of the story (Günay, 1998); a judge who has been consulted about the troubles of the people; is a blessed and knowledgeable poet and a legendary Turkish ancestor who shows the easiest ways for Oğuz to defeat his fierce enemies and show miracles in this way (Gökyay, 2018). Dede Korkut is mentioned in the preface of the book as "Dede Korkut lived approximately the same time with Prophet Mohammed and he was obeyed by everyone, he knows the future, he was inspired by the God and he overcomes the every obstacle that Oğuz faces" (Ergin, 2018a, p.73).

One hundred percent Turkish people who carry all the lines of Turkish customs and traditions, by Sepetçioğlu (1986, p.7); Gökyay (2018) by the Creator, the author and the narrator, which is described directly as the Turkish nation itself as a saga; Ergin (2018b) by "The Turkish language and Turkish literature and the biggest monument" expressed as the book Dede Korkut, versatility, literature, language, tradition, proverbs, geography to date from many areas in terms of origin is an irreplaceable work. Dede Korkut's Stories reflect the cultural bearing character of the language and aim to provide the common values of the society. It reflects the nation-

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al life of Turkishness and shows the emotions, thoughts and culture of Turkish. The essence of the Turkish culture is the symbol of the Turkish ceremony, Turkish creativity, Turkish worthiness, human loves and family understanding (Binyazar, 1996).

In Dede Korkut's Stories, there is a very simple expression and a language of everyday expression. Away from unnecessary literary ornaments; there is a language and style consisting of metaphorically meaningful words from the common metaphors, which are used to beautify, enrich and strengthen their narratives in the daily life of the general public (Güney, 2009).

It is important to introduce Dede Korkut Stories, which contain such national values, in primary school years with children. In this way, the students, what the national and spiritual values of the community they live, how and where the customs and customs of the motherland, how the national unity and the basis of national unity, how they live in a community, how they live in a society, social life-styles, thinking and understanding of what is much better they can perceive (Özkartal, 2009).

Dede Korkut Stories are full of heroes, events and language and are full of people and events that can attract the attention of children. Especially the Dede Korkut stories have heroes which can be modeled by the children and the behaviors of these heroes. Some of the protagonists' behaviors can be shared the common values accepted by all societies at the universal level. Heroic stories can therefore be a good motivation for students (Sanchez, 1998). One of the most important reasons why Dede Korkut stories are preferred in this study is that they can be used effectively and efficiently in the education of children by benefiting from these features of the stories.

Another reason why Dede Korkut stories are preferred in the study is that the stories are still accepted in gaining Turkish cultural values such as customs and traditions, social lifestyle, thought and social cohesion. As a matter of fact, UNESCO unanimously accepted the stories of Dede Korkut, one of the most important works of Turkish history and literature, on the World Intangible Cultural Heritage List. The purpose of the Convention on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage is to protect national values against the mass culture and to pass on to future generations (Oğuz, 2009). UNESCO, Dede Korkut stories, the World Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative List given to the following statements are included: "...Dede Qorqud appears in each story as a legendary figure and wise individual, a sage of minstrels whose words, music and expressions of wisdom relate to traditions of birth, marriage and death... The element encompasses social, cultural and moral values such as heroism, dialogue, physical and spiritual wellness and unity as well as respect for nature, and contains profound knowledge about the history and culture of Turkic-speaking communities. It is practised and sustained by the community concerned on a wide variety of occasions - from family events to national and international festivals - and is therefore well-rooted in society, serving as a connecting thread between generations" (retrieved from <https://ich.unesco.org>).

In this respect, the importance of differentiating nations' identities in a globalized and uniformized culture is increasingly understood. For this reason, the effect of Dede Korkut Stories on gaining national identity should not be ignored.

For this reason, this study was carried out with the aim of introducing the primary school fourth grade students to Dede Korkut and their stories and introducing them to these stories at an early ages.

It is essential to introduce such an important work on the history and language of our nation from the elementary school years. When the studies about Dede Korkut Stories are examined, it is seen that the studies for primary school students are limited and many of these studies are only for the analysis of stories that are not intended for practice. This study is important to meet such a need.

#### *Purpose and Sub-Problems of the Research*

The aim of this study is to increase the awareness of Dede Korkut and his stories about the fourth grade students in primary school. For this purpose, the following questions have been sought:

1. What is the awareness of the fourth grade students attending the research about Dede Korkut?
2. How is theme-centered teaching contributing to the knowledge and recognition of Dede Korkut and his stories in primary school fourth grade students?
3. What do students think about the processing of Dede Korkut and his stories with thematic teaching?
4. What are the observations of the researcher during the application?

#### **Method**

##### *Research Pattern*

This study is a qualitative research and is designed with action research. Before the study, the very low awareness of the students about Dede Korkut is the main reason for this research. Research is a problem-solving research. For this reason, action research pattern was preferred. When creating the pattern, the following steps were taken in order to determine the general problem, collect data, create plans, evaluate and improve the steps of implementation (Aksoy, 2003).

##### *Study Group*

The study group consisted of 22 students in the fourth grade of a primary school located in Germencik, Aydin. The study group was selected from the schools in the region where the researcher worked as a primary school teacher due to its easy accessibility. The reason for this is that the researcher should be able to obtain a more comfortable working environment and to obtain quality data.

##### *Data Collection Tools*

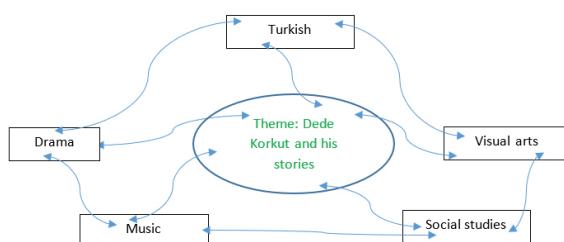
In this study, three different data collection tools were used. The first of these is the "Dede Korkut Awareness Form" prepared by the researchers in order to determine the status of Dede Korkut and their stories about the fourth grade students. The second data collection tool is a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers to determine the views of the students about the Dede Korkut stories. Two academicians and two primary school teachers were interviewed when they were creating both forms. The third data collection tool is the researcher's diaries during the implementation process.

##### *Data Collection Process*

First, "Dede Korkut Awareness Form" was applied. Later, Dede Korkut and his stories were taught to fourth grade students at primary school through theme-centered teaching.

Theme-centered teaching, requiring interdisciplinary study, individual and group of students taking responsibility for real-life events, depending on the topic created in the content, perform their research based on their own interests and abilities, and the teacher's role as facilitator and the role of the teacher and it is an approach that can combine different approaches within itself (Duran, 2003). Thematic approach, different disciplines of the same theme as a whole to handle the gains, meaning of the student to understand, associate and reach high-level mental skills is important (Demirbaş, 2006). Bloom (1987) states that it is necessary to increase students' interest in school by creating a learning environment in which different disciplines are linked with thematic approach.

The selected theme is a broad content that integrates concepts from different disciplines and serves to integrate different pieces of information, but also to create a skeletal structure that enables meaningful or purposeful learning (Ulbricht, 1998). Primary school students cannot comprehend the assets, concepts, events by grouping them; they understand their lives with a concrete and meaningful integrity. For this reason, it is important to establish a relationship between the courses in primary school. It provides a thematic-centered approach to relationships. Theme-centered teaching; to integrate with real life problems, to facilitate teaching in the classroom, to provide effectiveness and meaningfulness in teaching, to allow students to work in their own way and to establish their own knowledge, such as by many researchers (Davis, 1999; Davis, 1992; Fogarty & Stoehr, 2007; Tertemiz & Çakmak, 2001) is a recommended teaching method. Therefore, the researcher used theme-centered teaching method in the study. The thematic model used in the research is as follows.



**Figure 1.** Theme-centered teaching model used in research

In the study, the thematic teaching of Dede Korkut and his stories was realized through the following activities:

First of all, a letter was sent from the mouth of Dede Korkut to the students in the study group and the primary school teacher who will conduct the study. The letter was formulated by researchers. In this edited letter, Dede Korkut briefly introduces himself and discusses the importance of his stories. She also stated that she upset her by saying that most of the students did not recognize her stories. Finally, he wanted to read the stories of the students and get to know him better.

Later, the books about Dede Korkut stories provided by the researcher were distributed to the students in the study group and to the primary school teacher as Dede Korkut's gifts to them. Letter delivery and book gifts were considered as a motivational tool before the study.

Within the scope of the plan determined by the researcher, students read 12 stories in Dede Korkut's book every 12 days by reading a story every day in Turkish lessons. Book reading applications were made in the school library. At the end of each story, the students summarized the stories that attracted their attention in the story with

their teachers, expressing the interesting or unfamiliar aspects of them.

After reading the books, the students moved to the visual arts workshop. Here, the students tried to express the impressions they left in the story by means of painting. The pictures of the students were filed by the researcher in order to be presented at the exhibition.

After the students expressed the stories they read in the visual arts workshop, they moved to the drama workshop. Here, students form groups among themselves and read the stories they read through creative drama. They were specially prepared to present a story they enjoyed the most during the drama process at the end of the practice. During the Social Studies course, students made evaluations about Dede Korkut and his stories in the area of "National Cultural Elements" learning under the theme of "Culture and Heritage." These evaluations include the working papers prepared by the researcher in line with the theme-end activities in the social studies textbook. The working papers consist of gap filling, correcting false, matching, multiple choice and open-ended question types. In this way, the students had the opportunity to evaluate what they learned about Dede Korkut and his stories periodically.

Within the scope of the plan determined by the researcher, the students in the study group moved to the music workshop during the free activity course hours. Here, along with the students, they made free poetry studies about the heroes of Dede Korkut and his stories, Kyrgyz folk music was rested and songs in the music workshop were created with rhythm.

At the end of the study, the students organized a painting and poetry exhibition within the school to display the paintings they made in the visual arts workshop and the poems they wrote in the music workshop. In this exhibition where all students at the school accompanied their teachers, the students in the study group took part in the promotion of the products in the exhibition. Finally, the students in the study group staged "Boğaç Khan's" story of Dede Korkut, which they enjoyed most by reviving them through creative drama in the drama workshop, to all school students and teachers in the schoolyard.

Following the termination of the practice part of the study, the form used to measure the students' level of awareness about Dede Korkut and their stories was redistributed to students before the application. Thanks to the data obtained from this, the difference between the level of awareness of the students before the application and the level of awareness in the application question was determined.

Four weeks after the application of the students, the same forms were re-applied to the students and the students' recall levels were determined. The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of teaching Dede Korkut and her stories with thematic teaching method on remembering. Finally, a semi-structured interview form was applied to determine the views of the students about the Dede Korkut stories. In this interview form, students are asked the following questions:

- What do you think about Dede Korkut and his stories? Can you explain that?
- What do you think about thematic learning and Dede Korkut and his stories? Can you explain that?
- Would you like to see Dede Korkut and his stories in the Turkish textbook? Can you explain that?

- Would you like to watch Dede Korkut stories as cartoons? Can you explain that?

#### Data Analysis

The data of the first and second sub-problems of the study were analyzed using descriptive and content analysis technique; The data of the third sub-problem were analyzed by thematic coding technique. The data obtained from the interview form were categorized and sub-categories were created from these categories and interpreted by thematic coding technique. In addition, the student expressions were written in the form of a report with direct quotations. The data of the fourth sub-problem was obtained by analyzing the data based on the observations of the researcher during the application by content analysis technique.

#### Findings and Comments

At this stage, the findings of the study and comments on these findings are included. The findings and comments were presented by taking into account the order of sub-problems in the study.

##### Findings Related to the First Sub- Problem

"What is the awareness of Dede Korkut about the fourth grade students attending the research?" The findings related to the sub-problem are given in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Awareness of Dede Korkut and Stories About the Students Before the Implementation

Awareness	Status
The availability of resources related to Dede Korkut or stories in class libraries	There is no reference to Dede Korkut or his stories in the students' classrooms.
The status of the sources related to Dede Korkut or stories in their homes.	Only the student of the S20 coded house has a source for Dede Korkut.
Existence of a story they read of a story about Dede Korkut stories.	None of the students read a book about Dede Korkut stories.
The existence of a cartoon or a movie about Dede Korkut or his stories.	Only S8 and S16 coded students watched cinema about Dede Korkut.
Information about Dede Korkut or his stories about his teachers or elders.	S5, S9, S13, S16 students have information from their elders.
S: Student	

When Table 1 is examined, there are no sources related to Dede Korkut or his stories in the class libraries of the students; In their homes, only 1 student (S20) has the resources related to Dede Korkut or his stories. In addition, the student with the book related to Dede Korkut or his story, it was determined that he did not read this book in accordance with the data in the chart. Two students (S8 and S16) stated that they watched cartoons or films about Dede Korkut or their stories. Four students in the class (S5, S9, S13 and S16) stated that they had learned from Dede Korkut's or their teachers' stories about their teachers or elders.

##### Findings Related to the Second Sub- Problem

"How is theme-centered instruction contributing to the knowledge and recognition of Dede Korkut and his stories in primary school fourth grade students?" The findings related to the sub-problem are given in Table 2.

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that only 3 students (S4, S8 and S16) recognize Dede Korkut before the application. After the application, it is seen that all of the stu-

dents recognized and remembered Dede Korkut. While there were only 3 students (S8, S13 and S16) who had knowledge about Dede Korkut and his stories before the application; After the application, it is seen that all of the students have information about Dede Korkut and their stories. It is seen that there is only one student (S20) who has a book about Dede Korkut and his stories before the application. After the application, the number of students who have a book about Dede Korkut and his stories has been determined as 10.

In the recall position, it is seen that the number of students with books has increased to 13. Before the application, only 2 students (S8 and S16) were able to paint Dede Korkut and his stories while 17 students after the application and 19 students Dede Korkut and his stories at the recall level were able to paint them after the application.

**Table 2.** Preliminary Information of Dede Korkut and Stories of Primary School Fourth Grade Students, Learning Status and Remembering Levels

Awareness	Preliminary Information (Before Application)	Learning Situations (Immediately after the application)	Remembering Levels (4 weeks after the end of the application)
Recognizes Dede Korkut.	S4, S8, S16	S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22	S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22
Has knowledge about Dede Korkut and his stories.	S8, S13, S16	S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22	S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22
Have a book about Dede Korkut and his stories.	S20	S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22	S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22
Dede Korkut can paint his stories.	S8, S16	S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22	S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22

##### Findings Related to the Third Sub-Problem

"What do students think about the processing of Dede Korkut and his stories with thematic teaching?" The findings related to the sub-problem are given in Table 3.

When Table 3 is examined, the opinions of the students about the processing of Dede Korkut and his stories with thematic teaching are grouped in four themes. These themes include: "Dede Korkut and his stories and thoughts of students", "Students' thoughts about learning thematic education and Dede Korkut and their stories", "Students' thoughts about Dede Korkut and asking to see their stories in Turkish textbook" and "The thoughts of students about watching Dede Korkut stories as cartoons" are expressed under the headings.

"In the theme of students' thoughts about Dede Korkut and their stories", 8 sub-categories of thoughts about Dede Korkut were determined and the student opinions

**Table 3.** Students' Opinions about the Dede Korkut and Stories of the Students with Thematic Teaching

Theme	Sub-Category	n	Student Opinions
Students' thoughts about Dede Korkut and his stories	A Grandfather With A White Beard	20	"He is a holy grandfather with white hair and a white beard." (S20)
	A Person Who Finds a Name	17	"He finds a name for the hero.." (S5)
	Knowledgeable Person	15	"Very knowledgeable, very experienced old man." (S11)
	Praying Person	13	"A grandfather praying to everyone at the end of each story." (S8)
	Ancestor of the Oğuz Turks	9	"He is the grandfather of Oguz." (S13)
	Person Playing the Kopuz Instrument	8	"He always plays kopuz at the end of the stories. He never falls." (S7)
	Person Who is Model To Society	6	"Dede Korkut is a model for everyone with his behavior and words in stories." (S8)
	The Great Person Who Helped The Oğuz	5	"Whenever Oguz is in trouble, they ask Dede Korkut for help." (S21)
	Stories in which the life of that period was learned	14	"Teaches the customs, lives and beliefs of Turkish people." (S11)
	Stories that show that the Turks are brave	9	"When I read these stories, I saw how brave and powerful the Turks were." (S16)
Students' thoughts on learning thematic teaching and Dede Korkut and their stories	Very Fun, Pleasant Stories	8	"I couldn't leave the book while I was reading it. It was fun and immersive." (S22)
	Willing to Participate in Events	17	"I was even thinking about these activities in other classes." (S17)
	Persistence Property	15	"If we had just read it, we wouldn't have stayed that long. Because I forgot most of the books I've read before." (S18)
Students' thoughts about wanting to see Dede Korkut and their stories in Turkish textbook	Feeling as if Lived That Period	11	"As if we ate the food of that period, we wore the clothes of that period." (S3)
	Yes	22	"Not only in 4 <sup>th</sup> grade books, but in all grades' books." (S19)
	No	0	-
Students' thoughts about watching Dede Korkut stories as cartoons	I want to watch	21	"Then it would be fun to watch." (S4)
	I Don't Want to Watch	1	"No, I do not want. Then the magic of everything escapes." (S1)

were expressed with the following sub-category headings: "A Grandfather With A White Beard" (20 expression), "A Person Who Finds a Name" (17 expression), "Knowledgeable Person" (15 expression), "Praying Person" (13 expression), "Ancestor of the Oğuz Turks" (9 expression), "Person Playing the Kopuz Instrument" (8 expression), "Person Who is Model To Society" (6 expression), "The Great Person Who Helped The Oğuz" (5 expression).

"In the theme of the students' thoughts about Dede Korkut and their stories", 3 sub-categories related to the thoughts about Dede Korkut stories were determined and the student opinions were expressed with the following sub-category headings: "Willing to participate in events" (17 expression), "Persistence Property" (15 expression), "Feeling as if Lived That Period" (11 expression).

Two sub-categories related to "The thoughts of students about wanting to see Dede Korkut and their stories in Turkish textbook" were determined and student views are expressed in the following sub-categories: "Yes" (22 expression), "No" (no expression).

Two sub-categories related to the theme of Students' thoughts about watching Dede Korkut stories as cartoons were determined and student views are expressed in the following sub-categories: "I want to watch" (21 expression), "I Don't Want to Watch" (1 expression).

#### Findings Related to the Fourth Sub- Problem

"What are the observations of the researcher during the application?" the findings related to the sub-problem are given below. In this section, the observer's observations are given.



**Figure 2.** Letters

#### Start

At the beginning of the research, the fictional letters sent to the students in the study group from Dede Korkut's mouth created a great surprise and started to read the letter sent to them with great curiosity and excitement.

Afterwards, Dede Korkut sent a book to them as a gift, contributing to the motivation of the students by enabling them to show a positive attitude towards the study.

In this direction, the researcher found that when the teachers increased the readiness of the students to the course and shaped the subject matter around a fiction, the motivation of the students increased and they became willing to the lesson.

#### *Reading Dede Korkut Stories in the Library*

Students read one Dede Korkut Story every day in the school library during the Turkish class hours. In the meantime, there were some issues that attracted the attention of the researcher. It was the researcher's attention that the students should fully adapt to the library environment, make silent reading by paying attention to the rules to be followed in the library, and wait quietly for the students who read the book without distracting the other students. It was also observed that the student who finished his story started to read his story again.

The researcher concluded that the students' goals were determined and they were informed about these goals, they were motivated to read sufficiently and they could select positive book types for their interests and they could show positive attitude towards reading.



**Figure 3.** Reading Time in the Library

#### *Visual Arts Workshop Related to the Theme*

The students who read their books in the library tried to express the summaries of the stories they read in the visual arts workshop. During his observations, the researcher realized that the students enjoyed painting very much and that all students brought painting tools, crayons, erasers and pencil sharpeners.



**Figure 4.** Drawing Work



**Figure 5.** Drawing Work

It is known that the time period in which elementary school children can express their emotions, thoughts and dreams in the best way is painting hours. In this direction, the researcher concluded that students could enjoy expressing their emotions, thoughts and dreams, especially through painting, when they were released without being bound to ready-made forms while summarizing the books they read.

#### *Rhythm and Music Studies Related to the Theme*

Within the plan determined by the researcher, the students in the study group moved to the music workshop during the free activity class hours. Here, students listened to Central Asian Turkish folk music and created rhythm songs with instruments in the music workshop. In addition, Dede Korkut and her poems about heroes have made freelance studies, wrote letters to them. The researcher observed that the students were very happy in this environment and that they were willing to write poems and letters about Dede Korkut and his stories.



**Figure 6.** Rhythm Study



**Figure 7.** Poetry and Lyrics Study

In this respect, the researcher concluded that writing skills, which are the most difficult and the most difficult to apply among the four basic language skills, can be accomplished when they are realized within a certain plan and the students' tendencies towards writing are considered.

#### *Drama Works Related to the Theme*

In the drama workshop, the students presented their stories through drama by forming groups. During the drama process, they prepared a story that they like to present on the school stage. In this process, the researcher observed that the students participated in the activities in unity and integrity, and they were in continuous cooperation and solidarity. He also observed that they were working in harmony between groups for role selection and drama. The researcher attributed the coherence in task sharing to the fact that each student reads the same story and thus predicts the work already planned. In this direction, the researcher concluded that the students who came together for a common purpose and who were informed about what to do before, could be in harmony in the processes such as distribution of tasks, cooperation and solidarity.



**Figure 8.** Drama Preparatory Work



**Figure 9.** Drama Work



**Figure 10.** Drama Work

#### *Performing Theme Events*

At the end of the study, the students staged Dede Korkut's story, Boğaç Khan, which they enjoyed most in the drama workshop, to the students and teachers in the school yard. In the meantime, the researcher did not observe that the students were very enthusiastic and they enjoyed being in such an activity. The researcher observed that the parents had come to the school yard long before they were able to watch the students' demonstrations and had taken care of their children. In addition, the primary school teacher stated that they show the necessary support of the families in providing the necessary decorative materials for the drama performance.

In this direction, the researcher observed that the activities carried out in cooperation with the parents were successful and contributed to the achievement of the common goal. In this regard, the researcher has come to the conclusion that the inclusion of parents of students at regular intervals will contribute to the education process.



**Figure 11.** Drama Show



**Figure 12.** Song Scene

#### *Painting and Poetry Exhibition on Theme*

At the end of the study, the students presented their paintings in the visual arts workshop and the poems they wrote in the music workshop in the painting and poetry exhibition held within the school. In addition, all the students in the study group took part in the presentation of the paintings in the exhibition. In this process, the researcher observed that the students were working with a sense of duty, taking their work seriously and showing the exhibition to their friends without harming the exhibition. In addition, the researcher observed that the students in the study group did this work fondly and willingly. In this direction, the researcher concluded that when the students were given tasks and responsibilities, they could be successful by understanding the importance of their work with a sense of responsibility.



**Figure 13.** Painting Exhibition



**Figure 14.** Painting Exhibition



**Figure 15.** Painting and Poetry Exhibition

## Result and Discussion

In line with the data obtained from the first sub-problem of the study, the awareness of the students about Dede Korkut and their stories was determined before the application. It was concluded that there were no sources about Dede Korkut and his stories in the class libraries and homes of the students, and that most of the students did not watch cartoons about Dede Korkut and his stories and did not get information from their teachers or elders. In the second sub-problem of the study, it was concluded that almost all of the students know Dede Korkut, learn about their stories and can paint Dede Korkut and their stories. Based on these results, it is concluded that students do not know Dede Korkut and her stories which contain cultural values related to the society to which they belong, but successful results can be obtained when these works belonging to our culture are transferred to the students with appropriate methods.

Nowadays, the basic function of educational activities is not only to provide the individual with reading and writing skills. One of the functions of educational activities is to ensure the continuity of the culture belonging to that society by transferring the cultural heritage such as common language, belief, life and past that keeps the societies alive from generation to generation. In order to ensure this continuity, young generations should be taught the cultural accumulation of society. The literary works of that society are of great importance in transferring cultural accumulation to the new generation. Because literary works carry the ideals, views of life and cultural and social values of a nation for centuries. As a matter of fact, Karahan (2010) concluded that benefiting from the literary works belonging to old Turkish literature in Turkish teaching could improve the cultural identity of the students and transfer cultural values to new generations. Özcan (2008) states that folk literature products in the literary works have been admired by our society from the past to the present day and therefore reflect the cultural characteristics adopted by the nation very well. In addition, it is emphasized that folk literature products are the most important works that can convey the consciousness of the nation to the children, and that using folk literature products is an obligation, not an option.

In this study, the opinions of students about Dede Korkut and their stories with thematic teaching were determined. At the end of the interview, the students mentioned that they participated in activities related to thematic teaching and Dede Korkut and learning their stories, felt as if they had lived in that period and that they learned through these activities was permanent. In this direction, we can conclude that the thematic teaching method is successful in teaching Dede Korkut and his stories. Özkartal (2009) investigated the effect of the Dede Korkut Epic, which was studied in art activities course, on the acquisition of national values of secondary school students. At the end of the study, it was concluded that the experimental group students were more successful than the control group students. This result is in line with the conclusion that the thematic teaching method in the study was successful in teaching Dede Korkut and his stories. In addition, Güney's (2009) study in which Dede Korkut's stories were adapted to drama techniques concluded that literary products such as epics and stories that reflect our cultural values can be used as material in drama activities. In addition, Akyüz (2010) emphasized that in a study of Dede Korkut's epics in Turkish theater plays, the existing games in terms of cultural heritage should be brought to light, new adaptations from epics should be made and Dede Korkut Epics should be exhibited in genres such as drama and theater. These results are similar to the results of the drama activ-

ity applied according to the thematic teaching method in the study.

According to the data obtained from the interview, it was concluded that the students wanted to see Dede Korkut and their stories in Turkish textbooks. Yıldırım (2011) in his study on the usability of Dede Korkut Epics in education, concluded that Dede Korkut Epics could be included in Turkish textbooks both in terms of cultural elements and literary language. In addition, Çatal (2009) stated that Dede Korkut stories were found in the textbooks based on stories, epics, nursery rhymes, marijuana, etc. in a study he conducted on the evaluation of Dede Korkut stories in elementary Turkish classes. In this period in which language is aimed to be taught, it will make our culture popular and comprehend the subtleties of language; He emphasized that the most appropriate text based on event and verse sections is Dede Korkut Stories and these stories should be included in Turkish textbooks. These results support the conclusion that students want to see Dede Korkut and their stories in Turkish textbooks.

Başpinar (2018), in a study on the use of folk literature texts in the context of reproduction of culture, concluded that our cultural values can be transferred by taking advantage of the effect of cartoons on children's education. Sleepaz (2012) emphasizes that children identify themselves with the heroes of the works they read and try to be like them. He also states that the didactic aspect of Dede Korkut stories is quite high and that the protagonists in the stories are a good model for children. These statements support the conclusion that the students in the study wanted to watch Dede Korkut stories as cartoons. Because the children of this period identify themselves with them by forming emotional and psychological ties with the heroes they watch in cartoons. The goal of raising the right personality in education and training can be achieved by giving positive messages to students through the heroes in the cartoons to be prepared about Dede Korkut stories.

Deveci, Belet and Türe (2013) state that there are various values in Dede Korkut Stories in their research and that Dede Korkut Stories can be used in direct or indirect value education activities in schools. Moreover, Uyumaz (2012, p. 41) to teach the individual both the past and the society and culture in order to facilitate the adaptation of our folk literature products Dede Korkut Stories would be useful to use.

The immersive language and imaginative mythological elements in folk literature products have a special place for children. Especially epics and legends attract the attention and attention of children with this aspect. In education, it is important to motivate the students by attracting their attention in order to gain the desired behavior. This is especially important for primary school students. For this reason, it will be prudent to make use of the folk literature products that attracted the attention of the students during the primary school period, both in the textbooks as printed material and on the television with cartoons, animations, etc.

Dede Korkut stories, Turkish language and literature, customs and traditions of the Turks, Turkish morals and customs, beliefs, heroism is told and undoubtedly one of the most valuable and most important masterpieces of the Turkish cultural world. However, when the literature is examined, it is seen that the studies about Dede Korkut stories, publications such as articles, books and magazines are not enough and this work is neglected. Symposia, congresses, workshops, seminars, conferences about Dede Korkut and their stories should be organized and awareness should be raised in all parts of the society.

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