

# The effects of drama method on the academic achievement in ninth graders history course

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## ABSTRACT

This research aimed to present how using the drama method in high school history courses affected student achievement. The descriptive study utilized data collected with quasi-experimental design in quantitative method and made use of data based on content analysis in qualitative method. The study group of the research consisted of 59 students in 9/K (experimental) and 9/G (control) classes, selected through simple non-random sampling method from a state high school in Çankaya District of Ankara Province in the 2017-2018 academic year. The research was limited to the unit of "Eurasia in the First and Middle Ages" in the 9th grade History Course. The data obtained at the end of the eight-week implementation process were collected with pre and post academic achievement tests, focus group interviews and researcher observations. Quantitative data on academic achievement were analyzed with the SPSS 15.00 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) Package Program, focus group interview data were analyzed with content analysis and researcher observations were analyzed with descriptive analysis. The study concluded that history lessons taught with the drama method were more effective and efficient compared to history lessons taught with direct instruction method and that there was a significant difference in favor of the experimental group students in regards to academic achievement. The findings of focus group interviews and researcher observations demonstrated that use of drama in education was effective on student learning, it developed positive affect and it informed students about drama.

**Keywords:** 9th grade, history, drama in education, academic achievement.

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## INTRODUCTION

History teaching programs have been restructured in line with the constructivist approach since 2007 within the framework of the curriculum development studies initiated by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) (Akkurt, 2010; Günel and Kaya, 2012, Şimşek, 2016). This fundamental change in the current history curriculum aimed to ensure students' acquisition of information and values, especially historical thinking skills, through active methods (Aktekin and Ceylan, 2012: 255; Şimşek, 2016: 317). This change meant more of a transformation for the teacher-centered history classes where the students were passive (Karabağ, 2003) because the previous approach regarded history as a heap of ready-made information provided to the individuals by the teacher and hence, history curriculums were almost "unable to teach

history" at all (Safran and Dilek, 2008: 382).

Taking these problems into consideration, the History Curriculum was redesigned in Turkey in 2018 to include domain-specific skills and values. However, among the other history programs, the 9<sup>th</sup> grade history course has the most intensive content since it covers many subjects from the beginning of humanity to Anatolian civilizations; from the beginning of Turkish history to the birth of Islam. A study conducted in 2017 determined that the topics in the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade History Course Curriculum were not selected based on their significance in the history of civilization and while the periods and states with less contribution to history were given more coverage, topics that may have contributed more to national awareness were not sufficiently included (Kaya and Perihan, 2017:

994). Therefore, the Grade 9 history course, with its scope from pre-historical periods to XII Century, presents a serious challenge for 14-year-old students both in terms of time and space. In addition to that, following the general history topics that are covered in the Social Studies course program, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade History is the first course where students encounter history topics directly and in detail. In this regard, it can be argued that the 9<sup>th</sup> grade history course influences students' attitudes towards the course and forms the basis in a sense of historical awareness. In order to educate citizens with high level of cultural awareness and citizenship consciousness along with national and universal values, it is imperative to provide "national awareness" and "historical awareness" (Pamuk and Alabaş, 2008: 23); for which the necessary infrastructure is already available in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade history course content. In the event that such an important curriculum is not taught effectively and in a lasting manner, not only the knowledge and skills related to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade program but also the basis for historical awareness will not be formed. In this respect, it is believed that the 9<sup>th</sup> grade history curriculum, which the students encounter for the first time in regards to history, in which the perception of history is formed and the first seeds of national awareness and historical awareness are planted, should be taught to students in a much more effective and efficient manner.

It is clear that the 2018 9<sup>th</sup> Grade History Course Curriculum, which is generated with contemporary understanding by foreseeing a series of competence and skill acquisition and by blending values and knowledge, should be taught with effective approaches and methods. Comprehension of the subject area, planting the first seeds of values and skills specific to the field and providing awareness about the course will only be possible with active teaching (Finlay-Johnson, 1912). Knowledge, skills and value development are more effective and permanent in cases where students learn by doing (Demirel, 2015; Gülbahar and Alper, 2014; Magdalena, 2015; Yurdakul, 2016) and drama is one of the effective methods that will make students active in history courses (Adıgüzel, 2016; Erdoğan, 2017; Güven, 2014; Finlay-Johnson, 1912; Heathcote, 1991; O'Neill and Lambert, 1990; Sağlam, 1997; Slade, 1954; Way, 1967; Yassa, 1999).

Drama brings history into the present for students who perceive history only as the past and cannot connect it with the present. The drama method can be used to explain the concepts in history courses, to examine historic events with their underlying causes and to understand the conditions and the thought system of a certain period (Arcila, 2010; Demirel, 2015; Finlay-Johnson, 1912; Goalen, 1996; Kornfeld and Leyden, 2005; McEniry, 2017; McGregor, 2015; Medlycott, 1973; Morris, 1997; Pecora, 2006; Robinson and Tate, 1977). Drama can draw students' attention to history and provide an understanding about the matters included in

history classes (Finlay-Johnson, 1912; Kornfeld and Leyden, 2005; Medlycott, 1973; Morris, 1997; Pecora, 2006). With its techniques and philosophy, drama makes boring lessons more active, entertaining and instructive because drama is learning by doing (Finlay-Johnson, 1912; O'Neill and Lambert, 1990; Slade, 1954; Way, 1967). As a matter of fact, Dorothy Heathcote, one of the pioneers of drama, concisely addressed drama as a "life practice" (Adıgüzel, 2016; Johnson and O'Neill, 1984). It is known that the recall and retention rate reaches 10% in oral lectures, 30% in teaching supported with visuals and 90% in teaching based on experiences (Çelik, 2017; Gülbahar and Alper, 2014; Magdalena, 2015; Yurdakul, 2016). However, the concept of drama as a teaching method, as it was used in this study, should not be confused with role playing, improvisation and dramatization. While drama is a teaching method in education, role playing, improvisation and dramatization are the techniques of drama (Adıgüzel, 2006: 20). These concepts are usually confused with each other because they all include impersonation (San, 1990: 576-579).

The fact that the topics in the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade History Course Curriculum deal with a relatively distant time and the lesson times being insufficient to teach what is covered results in students' not being able to achieve the acquisitions related to the subjects in history lessons. Moreover, due to limited opportunities and access for museum trips and field trips and due to fewer instructional and evidence based materials for the subjects included in Grade 9-unlike the topics included in the Ottoman history, history of the Republic of Turkey and the contemporary Turkish History and World History-students have difficulty in grasping and imagining these earlier periods. For example, in the study by Kurt and Karabağ (2018) which aimed to identify 9<sup>th</sup> graders' perceptions of concepts regarding Central Asian Turkish History with metaphor analysis, 189 metaphors related to 10 concepts were formed and only 9 of them were evaluated to be valid by the researchers. A substantial lacking in the perception of concepts in this topic was identified despite the fact that the relevant period was covered in the school prior to the implementation and the metaphor study was carried out during the same week when teaching was completed.

### **Problem statement**

Students' passive roles in history courses, their reliance on memorization due to expectations from them to learn extensive amounts of information in a very short time, lack of learning skills, lack of attention and interest towards history courses based on their belief that history is boring, lack of visualization skills in regards to historical periods and figures and lack of empathy can be listed among the problems of teaching history. The drama method is considered to be a solution to these problems

since it is based on learning by doing and incorporates experiences. However, the number of studies on the use of drama method in 9th grade history course is very limited (Arcila, 2010; Aronson, 1995; Finlay-Johnson, 1912; Kornfeld and Leyden, 2005; Morris, 1997; Pecora, 2006) and more studies are needed in the field. Based on this need, this study aimed to determine the effect of using the drama method in 9th grade history course on students' academic achievement levels. The problem statement was presented as "Does the use of drama method in 9th grade history courses have an effect on academic achievement?" Related sub-problems in this study are as follows:

1. Is there a significant difference between experimental and control group pre-test scores?
2. Is there a significant difference between experimental group pre-test and post-test scores?
3. Is there a significant difference between control group pre-test and post-test scores?
4. Is there a significant difference between experimental and control groups post-test scores?
5. What findings do the focus group interviews conducted after the implementation and researcher observations yield related to academic achievement in history course?

## METHOD

### Research design

The research was designed as a quasi-experimental study to compare and contrast the effects of using drama method for experimental group and direct instruction method for the control group on students' academic achievement determined by convenience sampling (Bursal, 2013: 159). Convenience sampling was preferred to select the sample due to limitations in terms of time, accessibility and workforce.

The opinions of the researcher and students are extremely important as they both affect and are affected by the process. In this study, the data obtained from researcher observations and the focus group interviews conducted at the end of the process were used to present perceptions in a realistic and holistic manner (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011: 39). In this sense, it can be argued that these data were used in the study to increase validity and reliability. In conclusion, this research was of a mixed nature using quasi-experimental design from quantitative methods and researcher's observations and focus group interviews from qualitative methods.

### Study group

The study group consisted of students from the classes of 9/G and 9/K in a state high school in Çankaya district of Ankara province in the 2017-2018 academic year. The

average high school entry scores, class size, gender distribution and the impressions of the history teacher, who taught all the 9<sup>th</sup> grades in the school, were taken into consideration in selecting the study group. First of all, the high school entry exam scores of the students attending the 11 classes in grade 9 in the school were examined. Among the classes with the closest averages, the classes with similar class sizes were identified. 9/G and 9/K were selected as the study group after consulting the history teacher, who taught history in all 9<sup>th</sup> grades, and taking gender distribution in 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes into consideration. A total of 67 students participated in the study initially, with 34 students, 3 of whom were females, being from 9/G and 33 students, 4 of whom were females, from 9/K. However, since 5 students from the control group and 3 from the experimental group did not participate in the pre-test or post-test, a total of 59 students, 29 of which were from the control group and 30 were from the experimental group, formed the study group.

### Data collection tools

Study data were collected by using the academic achievement test, focus group interviews, and researcher observations. Academic achievement test consisted of 28 multiple choice questions. A pool of questions was created from among the questions used in the Transition to Higher Education Examination and Undergraduate Placement Exam of the Student Selection and Placement Center between the years 2010-2017 and 30 questions were selected from this pool. Since the validity and reliability of each of these questions in the central exams were ensured by the Student Selection and Placement Center and they were selected as exam questions by experts, another validity and reliability study was not conducted by the researchers. Before these 30 questions were administered as an academic achievement test, the content validity was obtained by seeking expert opinion from a total of three experts, one in the field of history, one in the field of history education and one in the field of educational sciences. In accordance with the experts' opinions, 2 of 3 repeating questions among these 30 questions were removed from the test and an academic achievement test was finalized with 28 questions. Achievement test was administered twice as pre-test and post-test; once before the experiment and once after the experiment was completed. Academic achievement test data were analyzed with SPSS 15.00 package program.

Relevant studies on the subject were examined by the researchers to develop the focus group interview questions and 8 questions were determined in accordance with the purpose of the study. Later, these questions were reduced to 5 by taking expert opinions from a social studies expert, a history education expert and a special education expert. These 5 questions were used in a pilot study with 31 9<sup>th</sup> graders who were not

included in the study in the high school where the implementation was to be conducted. The responses recorded with students' consent were transcribed and analyzed by the researchers. The analysis was once again submitted to the social studies expert, the history education expert and the special education expert for expert opinion. Based on their feedback, the number of focus group interview questions was finalized as 2.

### Process steps

The research was conducted in a total of eleven weeks and included one week for pre-test, eight weeks for drama implementation, one week for post-test and one week for focus group interview. The experimental and control groups took the academic achievement test as a pre-test during the first week. Starting from the second week, the drama activities developed by the researchers based on the specified acquisitions were carried out with the experimental group every week in the history class while the control group was taught history with the direct instruction method. Topics related to Central Asian Turkish History which was selected for the implementation process included a total of eight acquisitions. Therefore, each week was dedicated to a single acquisition with the drama activities and researchers made observations during the process regularly. The academic achievement test was given to the experimental and control groups as a post-test in the tenth week when the implementation was completed. A focus group meeting was held with the experimental group in the eleventh week after receiving permission for the venue and date of the interview. The interview was conducted with the experimental group in classroom of 9/K during the history lesson. The interviews were recorded with the consent of the director, parents and students by having them fill in the required consent forms. Necessary arrangements were made and measures were taken in the classroom environment to ensure high quality recording. The oral data recorded during the interviews were transcribed. Later, these data were coded for meaning and the themes were identified, categorized, tabulated and interpreted.

During the process, observations were made by the researchers and any positive or negative circumstance before, during or after the implementation were noted. Thus, the development of students' academic achievement could also be observed during the implementation of the drama method to the experimental group. In addition, the plans and activities used in the lessons were also assessed.

### Data analysis

SPSS 15.00 Package Program was used to analyze the

data. Independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine the difference between the groups' pre-test and post-test mean scores. Paired *t*-test was performed to determine whether there was any difference between the groups' pre-test mean scores and post-test mean scores. Level of significance was accepted as 0.05 in the interpretation of the results. Results were tabulated and interpreted. The observation notes taken by the researchers and focus group interview records were transcribed at the end of the process as they were and the transcribed data were analyzed with content analysis with an inductive approach. During content analysis, "selective coding", one of Strauss and Corbin's (1990) coding types, was used. By adhering to the content analysis method of Strauss and Corbin, the researchers first determined the concepts. During the identification of all concepts related to academic achievement, the information provided in the observations, sentences or paragraphs was investigated in detail by asking questions such as "what ? what does it tell us? and what does it mean?". The themes (categories) were created by combining concepts such as "achievement, increase in achievement and better grades". The problem statement was kept in mind while developing the themes. Based on the purpose of this study which aimed to explain the effect of using the drama method on academic achievement, the generated themes were "academic achievement" and "other". Frequency tables of the themes were also created. Content analysis was supported by providing direct quotations from researchers' observations and student responses.

## FINDINGS

### Pre-test findings of the experimental and control groups

The findings of the independent samples *t*-test conducted to determine whether there was a significant difference between the pre-test scores of the experimental and control group students are as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 presents the independent groups *t*-test results for experimental and control groups' pre-test mean scores. The pre-test mean score was found to be 7.36 for the experimental group while it was 6.79 for the control group. The difference between groups' pre-test mean scores was determined as 0.57. The standard deviation of both groups was determined as 57. According to the results of the *t*-test conducted to reveal whether there was a significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of the two groups, the *t* value was 1.02 and the \**p* value was 0.308. The \**p* value presented in the results was greater than 0.05 (\**p* > 0.05) which indicated no significant difference between the pre-test results of the experimental and control groups. According to the achievement test given before the implementation in both

**Table 1.** Independent samples *t*-test results for experimental and control groups' pre-test mean scores.

Pre-test	(x)	SS	Sd	t	P*
Control group	6.79	2.07	57	1.2	.308
Experimental group	7.36	2.20			

\*p &lt; 0.05.

groups, the groups were equivalent to one another with equal knowledge levels.

### Pre-test and post-test findings of the experimental group

Table 2 presents the results of the paired *t*-test conducted to determine whether there was a significant difference between experimental group pre-test and post-test scores.

According to Table 2, the pre-test mean score for the experimental group was 7.36 but after the implementation, their post-test mean score increased to 11.73. A 4.37-point increase was obtained (59% increase) in students' achievement levels. Using *t*-test, the value obtained was found to be 13.21 and the \*p value was 0.000. The \*p value presented in this result was less than 0.05 (\*p < 0.05). Hence, there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the experimental group. In line with these data,

it can be argued that the academic achievement level of the students in the experimental group increased after the "Eurasia in the First and Middle Ages" unit was taught using drama method.

### Pre-test and post-test findings of the control group

Table 3 presents the results in regards to whether control group pre-test and post-test scores differed significantly.

According to Table 3, the pre-test mean score for the control group was 6.79 but their post-test mean score increased to 8.13 after the history classes taught with the direct instruction method. A 1.34 point increase was obtained (19% increase) in control group students' achievement levels. According to the results of the *t*-test, the *t* value was found to be 5.096 and the \*p value was 0.000. The \*p value presented in these results was less than 0.05 (\*p < 0.05). These findings point to a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the control group.

**Table 2.** The paired *t*-test results for experimental group pre-test and post-test scores.

Experimental group	(x)	SS	Sd	t	P*
Pre-test	7.36	2.20	29	13.21	.000
Post-test	11.73	3.73			

\*p &lt; 0.05.

**Table 3.** The paired *t*-test results for control group pre-test and post-test scores.

Control group	(x)	SS	Sd	t	p
Pre-test	6.79	2.07	28	5.096	.000
Post-test	8.13	2.94			

### Post-test findings of the experimental and control groups

The findings in regards to difference between the experimental and control group students' post-test scores obtained by using the SPSS are as shown in Table 4.

Based on Table 4, the post-test mean score of the experimental group was 11.73 and the post-test mean

score of the control group was 8.13 based on the obtained data. The difference between the post-test mean scores of the control and experimental groups was found to be 3.60. *t* value was found to be 4.09 and the \*p value was 0.000. The \*p value presented in these results was less than 0.05 (\*p < 0.05). p < 0.05 points to a significant difference between the post-test results of the experimental group and the control group. There was a

**Table 4.** Independent samples *t*-test results for experimental and control groups' post-test mean scores.

Post-test	(x)	SS	Sd	t	p*
Control group	8.13	2.94	57	4.09	.000
Experimental group	11.73	2.73			

clear increase in the achievement levels of both the experimental and control groups after the implementation. However, the experimental group's post-test mean score demonstrated a greater increase compared to the control group's post-test mean score.

### Findings of the focus group interviews and researcher observations

Findings regarding the fifth sub-problem will be discussed under two headings, focus group interviews and researcher observations.

#### Findings regarding the focus group meeting

The data obtained in the focus group meeting held after the implementation process were sorted, coded, combined under themes and tabulated. According to these data, Table 5 presents the student responses to the first question.

Two different themes emerged based on the data in Table 5. These themes obtained by the coding of sentences are based on the following student responses: "We no longer daydream in the classes, we listen to them.", "The things that we cannot remember because we only read about them are now better recalled because we do them.", "My exam grades have increased as a

**Table 5.** What did the history lessons taught with the drama method change?

Student responses	f	%
Academic achievement level	3	10
Other levels	27	90

result of drama." Student responses and frequency values for the second question are given below.

The responses which generated themes in Table 6 are as follows; "My grades have increased, my two grades from the first semester history course were very low and now they have gone up.", "When we studied with the book, it was not lasting and I would immediately forget, now everything is in my mind.", "Before, what we had previously studied in the lessons was in my mind at most that week, but now with drama, we do not forget the topic and we will be successful in exams". These student responses are regarded as indicators of positive development in their academic achievement. Only one student stated that the use of drama method was not effective on achievement: "I can do it when I study. Drama or any other method does not affect my learning. Since I learned by studying on my own, there was no difference. My studying style is effective in my academic achievement; my grades are not good if I do not study myself."

**Table 6.** Which skills and values did the history lessons taught with the drama method teach you?

Student responses	f	%
Theme regarding academic achievement	9	27
Theme stating that drama did not affect academic achievement	1	3
Other skills and values	20	67

#### Findings regarding researchers' observations

Observation notes about the research were taken by the researchers throughout the process and they were reflected in the analysis. The researchers observed the effects of the drama method on the academic achievement of the students from the beginning to the end of the process took notes of the changes experienced and reflected them on the research by interpreting them. The observations of the researchers

which revealed the effect of the drama method on academic achievement are as follows:

At the beginning of the implementation, it was identified by the researchers that a group of students were uninterested in the course and that the pre-test results of these students were also low. The history teacher also confirmed this fact during discussions. Researchers took this situation into consideration and organized some drama activities for them to ensure their participation in the lesson. After four weeks, it was observed that these

students' interest towards the lesson increased, they willingly took part in the activities and their academic achievement increased in the post-test results. Another remarkable point of history courses taught by the drama method was the change in students' willingness to learn. It was observed that before and after the lessons, the students researched the historical character that they would characterize or the historical event that they would recreate and shared the research results in the classroom. Therefore, in the light of the findings obtained from researcher observations, it can be argued that the use of the drama method increased students' academic achievement by motivating them to come to class more prepared, ensuring their willing and active participation and encouraging doing research after the lesson.

## DISCUSSION

In line with the findings obtained in this study, it was determined that experimental group students' academic achievement level increased as a result of teaching the "Eurasia in the First and Middle Ages" Unit through the use of drama method. This result is supported by other studies which showcased the effect of drama method on achievement in teaching history (Altıkulaç and Akhan, 2015; Arcila, 2010; Aronson, 1995; Kartal, 2009; Kömür and Kömür, 2016; Medlycott, 1973; Morris, 1997; Pecora, 2006; Şentürk, 2020; Yurtalan, 2005).

Based on the comparison of the differences between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the experimental and control group students, it can be argued that the drama method is more effective than the direct instruction method in teaching outcomes. Similar results were obtained in different studies. For example, in Medlycott's (1973) study with 12-13 year-old students, drama method was used as a solution to boring, memorization-based and dysfunctional history lessons and history exams. The research was carried out in three stages and the first stage included examination of Medieval subjects from the textbook with the students, the second stage involved studying the documents and obtaining a deeper understanding and the last stage included presentation of the history lesson as a performance using the drama method. With this research, Medlycott, while emphasizing the need for preliminary preparation for classes, proved that the drama method reduced the tediousness of history lessons. By combining the traditional Mexican-American educational traditions called "la carpa" with social drama and drama in education, Aranson (1995) investigated the multifaceted effects of these three methods on students. In the study, the most significant effect the drama method in education had was on academic achievement. Aranson stated that due to its interdisciplinary nature, drama triggers simultaneous use of skills and activates cognitive, affective and motor skills and as a result, academic

achievement increases. The results of this Aranson's study also demonstrated that students' historical knowledge level improved thanks to drama. The research conducted by Yurtalan (2005) aimed to determine the effect of activities developed by using drama method in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade social studies course history subjects on students' learning levels and found a significant difference in favor of the experimental group in the learning levels of the students.

It was determined that the experimental group's post-test mean score showed more of an increase than the control group's following the application of the drama method. This shows that teaching history through drama method is more effective than the direct instruction method, and makes a significant difference in academic achievement levels of students in favor of experiment group. A relative increase was observed in control group's achievement level in the "Eurasia in the First and Middle Ages" unit when it was taught with direct instruction method. However, when the 1.34-point (19%) increase between the control group's pre-test and post-test mean scores was compared with the 4.37-point (59%) increase between experimental group's pre-test and post-test mean scores, it can be argued that the drama method was more effective than the direct instruction method in regards to acquisitions. In Kömür and Kömür's study, which had a qualitative nature, a practice of the the method Finlay-Johnson used in History lessons was conducted. The findings obtained as a result of the study showed that the method had positive effects on science students' interest towards the history course, made difficult to comprehend subjects easier to learn through drama, gave students self-confidence, strengthened group work and cooperation and provided a setting for students to use their unique talents.

Examination of the findings obtained from the focus group interviews shows that the students expressed positive opinions on contribution of the drama method to their academic achievement. This result is in parallel with Morris's (1997) result obtained from focus group interviews that "students were successful in learning". Similarly, Arcila (2010) researched the historical memory problems and learning difficulties with 16 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and then used the drama method with the same group of students to create awareness of history, facilitate historical learning, strengthen historical memory and approach history critically. Through focus group interviews and researcher observations, Arcila demonstrated a positive correlation between drama method and historical learning, historical criticism and historical recollection. Additionally, in a study by Altıkulaç and Akhan (2010) examined the effects of drama and Six Thinking Hats method on students' achievements and attitudes in 8<sup>th</sup> grade history lesson, and concluded that the drama method increased the level of interest towards the lesson as well as the effectiveness of the teaching process. The results of the studies conducted by both

Arcila, Altıkulaç and Akhan are consistent with the results of the focus group interviews and the outcomes of this study.

According to the results of the researcher observations, the students developed affectively, cognitively and socially throughout the process. In a 16-week research with 8 students, Pecora (2006) tried to teach World War II fascism and Jewish genocide topics with drama. The study demonstrated that students with no previous achievement in history courses were more successful when the drama method was used. Similarly, the study conducted by Kartal (2009) aimed to identify the effects of the drama method on achievement and attitude towards the lesson in teaching First Age history topics and concluded that there was a positive development in academic achievement and attitude in favor of the experimental group.

The study conducted by Şentürk (2020) measured the effect of the drama method on academic achievement and attitude towards the lesson in teaching 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies Unit "Culture and Heritage", found that the use of drama positively affected students' academic achievement while it had no effect on their attitudes towards the lesson. There are other studies supporting the negative findings obtained by Şentürk's research on effects of drama on attitude towards the lesson (Ceylan and Ömeroğlu, 2011; Ormancı and Özcan, 2012).

## CONCLUSION

There are many studies in which drama is used as a method in education. Although different methodologies were used in these studies, almost all of them reached the conclusion that using drama as a method in education increases academic achievement. This study determined that the use of drama method in 9<sup>th</sup> grade history course increased academic achievement in line with the results of relevant studies in the literature. Based on the results obtained in this study, the following recommendations are made for researchers:

More studies are needed in history teaching using drama as a method. Therefore, conducting similar studies on different units and with different grades will contribute to the field. The effects of teaching history via drama method on the attitude towards the lesson, permanence, and the development of different skills and values can be investigated at different grade levels in addition to studying its effect on academic success.

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