

Full Length Research Paper

Evaluation of Turkey's 2013 Visual Arts (Grades 1-8) curriculum

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Turkey's Ministry of National Education aims to identify and develop valuable characteristics to prepare the nation's young for their professional life as adults. The Ministry has been conducting an extensive and comprehensive review of the educational system since the beginning of 2000. Educational system was implemented in time for the 2012/2013 academic year. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the clarity; the developmental, ethical, and intellectual appropriateness of Turkey's 2013 Arts Education policy to improve the Visual Arts curriculum. The evaluation shows that the curriculum contains significant erroneous information, creating misunderstandings regarding explanations of art and design in Visual Arts. The results of this study can be used as a reference for future academic and ministerial research.

Key words: Visual arts and design education, curriculum, evaluation, Turkish educational policy, visual arts curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the 19th century witnessed the introduction of age-appropriate painting classes for children, with painting and art education gradually applied to other school subjects as part of an integrated education. In the case of Turkey, prior to the changes initiated in mid-1920s, art education mainly followed the 'copy' method. In other words, educational curricula from other countries would be introduced to Art Education programs in the country without any localization process. That is, the borrowed curricula, and hence, the overall perspective, would be adopted without being appropriated according to the national and local circumstances.

However, the content of Art Education changed around 1925. When John Dewey arrived in Turkey (1924), improvements were made to both class content and the individual rights of teachers. Another important influence at this time was the establishment of museums by private benefactors. As Kurtuluş (2000) emphasizes, the ideas that have been effective in Art Education were formulated in line with the framework of Baltacıoğlu, Tonguç and foreign experts who were invited to Turkey to prepare reports on the field of education and who shared Atatürk's opinions on science as a leading force in achieving modern civilization (Atatürk, 2000: 21).

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As such, Art was, afterwards, not only used as a tool in other classes but also taught as a separate school subject with content based on the principles of behaviorism. The transformation of Art Education in Turkey began after the decision of the Fifteenth Education Council (May 13-17, 1996) to restructure secondary education and the subsequent transition to higher education. Furthermore, elementary education (an 8-year program) was made mandatory, and elementary curricula were redesigned on the basis of the principle of integration.

It is possible to describe the Visual Arts curriculum updated in 2006 under the 'World Bank Project,' as an 'independent' curriculum focused on interdisciplinary Art Education in the first years of the Republic of Turkey. The new curriculum completely rejected the previous function and structure of Art Education under the 1968 and 1992 curricula as a tool to be used in other classes. The name of the subject, which had been changed numerous times before, was substituted by 'Visual Arts' to encompass both the arts and the design fields. Oğuz and Akhun (2015), conducted a research, titled "A Comparative Study of Two National Curricula: 1992 Art-Craft and 2006 Visual Arts Curricula" and identified the similarities and differences in terms of curriculum design between the 1992 National Primary School Curriculum for Art and Craft Course and the 2006 National Primary School Curriculum for Visual Arts Course with the Guide Book (Grades 1-5) in Turkey.

Between 2012 and 2013, Turkey's 12-year compulsory education system (also known as '4+4+4,' indicative of the number of years spent in each level of schooling), which garnered significant public reaction, was introduced under Code 6287. As a result, drastic changes were made to Turkey's education system (T. C. Official Gazette, 2012, No: 28261). Prior to this law, children started school at 72 months of age; the new law lowered the starting age to 60 months. In response to the public's reaction, children were allowed to start elementary school at 66–71 months, and those determined not ready for school (after undergoing health assessment) were allowed to start a year later. The education system introduced by the Ministry of National Education (2013) shifted from a primary education system to one of elementary and secondary schools, and required the rearrangement of class hours and content. Elementary school Visual Arts classes (Grades 1-8) were introduced into the elementary and secondary school curricula by the Ministry in 2013, and for the first time, class texts were presented in a digital format before publishing.

Within this framework, the aims of the present study include evaluating the 2013 curriculum, identifying the benefits resulting from radical changes adopted in a short time (that is, within the same year), assessing the suitability of the content and structure of Art Education in Turkey, and discussing the current state and quality of Art

Education since the establishment of the Republic. In this perspective, it is argued that the constructivist model cannot adequately address Turkish culture and experiences because the physical infrastructure and equipment in classrooms are inadequate. Furthermore, change and reform is not achieved through furthering the titles. In other words, the adoption of educational curricula from other countries disregards local historical and cultural dynamics and skills, built upon years of experience. The curricula of other cultures, in essence, become destructive elements when applied to foreign systems. Buck and Snook (2016) summarize the broader concern as follows: "The first theme presented a broader problem than the specific school situation. That is, parents, students, and careers advisors view Arts as dance, drama, or music performance, or a visual art show. Seldom are the arts regarded as being interconnected and anything but a 'showing of talent.' Shifting perceptions to see both intrinsic and instrumental roles of the arts and then applying this across the curriculum requires a considerable pedagogical shift from principals, teachers, students, and parents. It was noted that performance offers many benefits and opportunities for students, however maintaining this limited perspective limits the scope for developing teaching and learning experiences" (Buck and Snook, 2016: 15-16).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

'The universe is a large human being, and a human being is a small universe' - Farabi

Just as art has existed since the first humans, so, too, has our curiosity and desire for learning. When there are few to no external negative elements threatening their biological and physiological integrity, humans are programed for 'normal' growth and development. In addition to these basic functions which are programed from birth, humans begin to learn and increase their knowledge through experience as they age, adapting to society, and, in a broader sense, to humanity. At this stage, they have responsibility for every period, every technological development and even paradigm of every changing education; and then they start to receive an education to become part of society and to behave 'appropriately.' Moreover, most of the rules set by societies arise out of necessity. Education starts within the family. Thereafter, multi-part and organic learning experiences are provided by formal and informal educational institutions, instilling the values of society and all areas of adaptation, including technology, cultural structure, geographical differences and language. Deniz and Erözkan (2012: 91) described this as follows: 'By birth, we find ourselves first within a family, later in a school environment and then within an environment,

within which we live, work and form dialogues. These conditions, in which we exist and characterize as an environment, have great physical, social and psychological effects on our lives. We gain most of our values, habits and characteristics by interaction with the environment.' Christensen and Kirkland (2009) also note that "Children become aware of other cultures as they experience art and connect their budding identities to artists' work. Seeing and hearing about representations of other cultures can fill in the spaces between themselves and others. Discussing and seeing art is a channel by which students become aware of historical contexts, and evaluate what the related art means to them" (Christensen and Kirkland, 2009: 89). Benic (2016) adds her opinion on this topic as follows: "[C]hildren have the ability to understand the world where they live much better than adults think they can, and they can use visual media to express their opinions regarding those topics as well as adults, but there is one condition. Children can express their attitudes and develop their sense of identity through visual communication only when teachers and adults do not confine their attitudes and expressiveness into predetermined frameworks. Freedom to express attitude is an important assumption that needs to be met so that children can explore their identities and attitudes about the world around them" (Benic, 2016: 61). Tozlu (1992: 141) extends Baltacioğlu's in-depth analyses on this topic: 'National personality: Humans are clearly affected by the ideas, beliefs, inspirations and influences of the nations in which they live. The personality of humans is remoulded and developed with the values of the nation in which they live. If individuals are suspicious about the values that make up their personalities, and the beliefs and inspirations of the nations, and if this suspicion is widespread in society, then the members of that nation become alienated from their own nation and values.' Baltacioğlu (1932) believes that Turkey is afflicted by such a sense of alienation and therefore claims the said values should be again assimilated by the Turkish people. According to him, 'the entire problem is the existence of the nation. For this, we need to know this nation well.' Baltacioğlu (1932) goes on to define the concept of nation as 'all social institutions such as religion, morality, customs, and language making up society.' In the light of these various yet complementary viewpoints, the significance of the interrelations among art, education, and the nation become undeniable.

The structure of the Turkish education system is rather fractured under the coordination of the Ministry of National Education (one of the three institutions in the country and defined as a 'national' institute). In Turkey, there are many educational institutions aiming to raise individuals with many different characteristics for many different goals. The first of these institutions takes individuals from childhood and educates them in a programed manner from early youth. John Locke

summarizes the goal of education (Locke, 1995: 1) as achieving "A sound mind in a sound body;" and though brief, this statement may be taken to represent the most accurate definition of happiness at the same time. Furthermore, he claims that "Men we meet with, nine parts of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education." In other words, education makes people who they are. Moreover, it would be beneficial to include the teacher, who is the most important component of education. Russell (1984: 42) expands this conception: "When humans die, they disappear as a value. The things they create as a tool exist until the end of the time. The importance of a human being as a tool could be positive or negative. Long-term results of human behavior are so uncertain that a wise person does not include this in their estimations. In a general sense, good people have good effects, bad people have bad effects." Here, the characteristics of the individual and student are questioned, not only those of the teachers.

Yayla et al. (2011) explains the significance of education thoroughly (based on the work of Tozlu). They claim that education in Turkey is misunderstood by many people; that is, education in the country is used like a 'magic wand,' a 'cure-all' solution to problems. Yayla et al. (2011: 86) then asked, 'What can you do with education if you do not have an understanding of humanity, of civilization, a deep-rooted philosophy, a strong economy, and a legal system operating on customs?' According to Tozlu (1992: 143), an education without philosophy is not an education but an ideology, a transformative custom. Education based on such an understanding is driving people away from their core. As Tozlu states, 'it steals people from themselves. It prepares them for servitude to anyone.' Another scholar examining the relationship between ideology and education is Sönmez. According to Sönmez (1994: 64-71), an education system can raise individuals who will, to some degree, challenge the official ideology, be in opposition to it, and change or even shatter it. This characteristic lies in the structure and at the core of the education system. In this context, the relations among the political system, education and philosophy can be grouped under the following explanations:

- i) No currently existing system can depoliticize people. Each person has to deal with politics, not only at the individual level but also at the institutional level, including organizations, society and communities. School has a structure that generates politics, examines effective political systems, and depicts their consistent and inconsistent aspects. Although this is an inescapable fact, it is not necessarily negative.
- ii) Education is the most efficient and effective long-term investment because, through education, people can establish and operate all components related to economic, social and political systems. That is, they can

establish the components of the cultural system, repair, reverse, dismantle, find and create new structures, and evaluate the existing ones.

iii) Generally, education can be considered a process that socializes people by equipping them with values that are deemed dominant by society. Thus, the appropriateness of terminal behavior to these dominant values of society can operate as a measure. However, it should be recognized that terminal behavior can come from science, art, philosophy, nature, the readiness of persons and other measures of social reality.

In this case, theories for which philosophy and education are to be linked gain importance. It has been claimed that Pythagoras was the first to use philosophical terminology (Gökberk, 1961: 17). The history books depict that philosophy started in Greece 2,500 years ago. In ancient Greece, a person who sought wisdom (*sophos*) was called a philosopher (quoting Ülken, 1965: 2) (where *phillia* means love and *sophia* means knowledge and wisdom [quoting Akarsu, 1919: 76]). Philosophical ideas and terminology were later incorporated in Arabic texts and from there on entered the Turkish language.

'Philosophy originated from myth, religion and poetry. It is clear from these components that they are carried in time. It developed by erecting scientific and free thinking foundations and attempted to completely explain the reality' (Sönmez, 1994: 7). Scientific study and reality can be broken down to manageable pieces, based on proven information. In contrast, philosophy handles reality as a whole and is suspicious of fundamental information obtained by organizing the thoughts and activities of people. In other words, philosophy is suspicious of scientific information and analysis. Thus, there is an obligation for the analysis of philosophy as a whole, to which educational paradigms are connected. Similarly, Tozlu (1992) provides some valuable comments regarding the roots of philosophy on which our education system is to be based: 'the philosophy on which our education is to be based will be a source of renewal for our social structure. This is to be gathered from the richness of groups, nations, regional and national cultures and philosophies, and will be based on religion, language and history, all of which come together under cultural values' (Tozlu, 1992: 214).

Therefore, Tozlu (1992) focuses on the need for educational content to be national, and highlights that it is a nation's 'core culture' that makes it 'a nation.' For Tozlu, the existence of a nation stems from this fundamental concept. Therefore, in addition to creating and maintaining a core culture for future generations, it is crucial to introduce and encourage a living example and exemplary personalities, and to have the desire to follow them. Tozlu (1992) calls this 'values education' (from the section of Assist. Dr. Ahmet Yayla, titled a new educational ideal in the educational philosophy understanding, quoting

Tozlu (1992: 87)) (Yayla et al., 2011: 90).

Russell's (1984: 35, 60) approach complements that of Tozlu: "it is best to clarify what the result we want to achieve will be before deciding how to educate." Many of our daily activities should be based on collaboration, and such collaboration should be intuitive. Nevertheless, we should learn for ourselves, especially in matters we fully understand, and we must gain the courage to clearly stand up for what we believe is important. When it comes to visual arts area in education, Kristch (2016) notes: "Artists believed that the problems with existing curricula and methods of instruction could be solved if performance-based art forms, which had the potential to reclaim the pedagogical value of play, were introduced to those in younger grades. In an interview with Filliou, Kaprow suggests that this experiment should be continued through to college, saying that "it would be interesting to see if their attitudes and capacities to study historical art (and) more advanced intellectual critical problems about the arts... made them much better qualified than the students who now come to college... with nothing but prejudices?" (quoting Kristch, 2016: 16).

Arts Education curriculum and policy in Turkey

Turkey's Art Education system was developed between 1887 and 1931. During that era, the concept of individuality was encouraged in both the Arts and the Sciences. This period marked the study of children's souls/personalities and the emergence of a new perspective: the Art Education Movement. The movement then gave rise to the Business School Movement. Particularly, the declaration of Constitutional Monarchy in 1908 helped to introduce pedagogic education in Turkey (Tonguç, 1932). After this date, all classes began to include painting to better reveal the personality of children and to create a national culture.

In 1924, immediately after the declaration of the Republic (1923), John Dewey was invited to Turkey by the Ministry of Education at the behest of Atatürk. Based on Dewey's (1994) reports, various reforms were introduced into the Turkish education system in 1926. The 1932 book *Painting, Handcrafts and Art Education in Elementary-Middle Schools and Teacher Training Schools*, by İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, was considered one of the most important books for educators at that time, addressing Turkish education, and appropriate methods, principles, tools and techniques.

Since then, there have been various art curricula: the 1948 Elementary School Painting Curriculum, 1951 Secondary School Painting Curriculum, 1957 High School Painting Curriculum, 1968 Elementary School Painting Curriculum, 1971/1974 Secondary School Arts and Work Education Curriculum, 1992 Elementary School Curriculum, and the 1991 High School 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Curriculum. These were followed by the 2006 curriculum (encompassing a structured approach and abandoning the behavioural model) and the 2013 Elementary School and Secondary School Curriculum, the subject of the present study. The latest model marked the use of an open access digital system, based on the reform of the 2006 curriculum (Tataroğlu, 2011).

A select committee developed a new curriculum for Art Education for the 2005-2006 academic year. The curriculum presented a broad perspective for art and design education for grades 1-8 under its new title: Visual Arts 1-8 Curriculum. During the 8-year period between the 2006-2007 and 2013-2014 academic years, significant efforts were made to ensure that interdisciplinary education played a significant role in formal education in Turkish Arts Education utilizing the curriculum and guidance books. Furthermore, the school starting age was reduced to 66 months under the 12-year mandatory gradual education system ('4+4+4').

On the issue of the perspective of other countries that included Turkey, United States, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, England, Finland, Germany, Korea, Portugal and Taiwan, Milbrandt et al. (2015) present these findings: "This study included questions regarding the source and content of art curricula standards in order to better understand the policies and standards in place at the national or state level that provide the context for the delivery of instruction in the art classroom. Based on the compiled documentation of visual art standards the predominant themes for teachers appear to be clustered around: Creating and Expressing, Problem Solving and Responding to Art. It should be noted that most curriculum standards for visual arts were grouped with other arts disciplines such as Music and Drama, and some shared overarching standards. There were also curricular indications of using the arts to 'connect' across disciplines like science or social studies" (Milbrandt et al., 2015: 161).

This study aims to evaluate the curriculum in terms of its learning areas, attainment goals, content, and most importantly, its applicability. It will discuss whether the arts and design education has attained an appropriate level of the aforementioned elements under the Turkish national education system. The strengths and weaknesses of the 2013 curriculum will be compared with the previous curriculum in the area of arts and design, its appropriateness to students, and its ability to meet the existing experiences and information of all educators.

METHODOLOGY

The aim here is to reveal (from a non-political perspective) the damage caused by the 2013 curriculum to Art Education in Turkey and to show that any type of curriculum activity that stems from this so-called 'reform' will not only have adverse effects on the Turkish society but also on societies worldwide as a result of globalization.

Thus, after briefly outlining the theoretical framework and describing the Turkish educational system, the content and structure of the 2013 curriculum are evaluated in detail. This investigation was conducted using a qualitative research method. Data were collected through document review and a descriptive analysis was performed.

The 2006 and 2013 policies were analyzed to determine their consistency, coherence, ethics, and developmental appropriateness, especially related to the development of childhood cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor skills. Such policies often make unfounded developmental assumptions, and use ambiguous language that may complicate implementation.

The general structure of the curriculum was then analyzed, and the content of learning areas scrutinized. In what follows, the content/strengths of each class level is examined, the classification of these attainment goals based on cognitive, emotional and psychomotor skills is determined and their level of relevance with scientific literature is evaluated. Both the applicability of the curriculum and also possible reservations regarding their applicability are discussed.

A Critical Inquiry model developed by Parlett and Hamilton (quoted in Özdemir, 2009: 138), with a focus on pluralistic-humanistic evaluation, which includes 'a critical inquiry process and a rigorous self-examination,' has been adopted. In this connection, the training program was evaluated line by line.

RESULTS

Evaluation of the general structure of Visual Arts Curriculum (Grades 1-8)

This part of the work identifies and evaluates the problematic sections of the general structure of the curriculum.

1. An evaluation of the general purpose of the Visual Arts class teaching curriculum: The general purposes are listed in the educational curriculum. The first article states that the curriculum has been prepared on the basis of general purposes of Turkish National Education expressed in Article 2 of the National Education Fundamental Law, numbered 1739, and the Fundamental Principles of Turkish National Education. However, the content of these articles has not been clarified. On closer inspection, it would seem that this article was included as an obligation originating from guidance functionality, to both motivate and clarify targets. Otherwise, it suggests an insincere approach that does not go beyond fulfilling legal liability. Başaran (2007: 197) defines the article as follows:

Turkish National Education principles: The principles of the education system that developed between the 1920s and 1973 were legalized in the National Education Fundamental Law enacted in 1973.

a) Generality and equality: Educational institutions are available to anyone without discriminating in terms of language, race, gender and religious beliefs. No special educational privileges are granted to persons, families,

groups or classes.

b) Necessities of individuals and society: The national education service is arranged according to the desires and skills of Turkish citizens and Turkish society.

c) Directing: Individuals are educated by directing various curricula or schools during their education based on their interests, skills and aptitude.

The end of the second paragraph concludes as follows: 'These artworks are works including architectural structures, painting, ceramics, statues, textile design, and photography.' Note that both art and design are mentioned. In this case, the given examples have to be considered as examples of these design and art areas. They cannot solely be called artworks.

The primary objectives of the curriculum are given in paragraph 4. Again, ambiguity ensues in these goals:

i) Visual literacy has perception and aesthetic consciousness: What is 'perception consciousness'? Or is 'perception' a stand-alone term? Confusion, both in terms of content meaning and sentence structure, characterizes this paragraph.

ii) Having knowledge, skills and understanding of fundamental concepts and applications in the visual arts area: What does having an understanding of applications and concepts mean? What kind of an understanding is mentioned? This matter requires clarification.

iii) Using information, materials, skills, techniques and technology affectively and in a safe manner in visual arts studies, and expressing their ideas: Here, the kind of tool required to express their thoughts should be indicated. In addition, 'expressing their ideas' is connected to listed techniques, hardware, knowledge, skills and technology. However, individuals can express their thoughts and emotions visually without the need for these. For example, look at the drawings in the Lascaux Caves from BC 25000. When considering elementary school students, who are at the peak of their creativity, surely it is sufficient that they think and feel that visual expression is enjoyable.

iv) Displaying ethical behaviour in the arts area: What is ethical behaviour? What level and approaches are expected to be expressed by the students? Essentially, ethical behaviour is usually assigned to various professional branches. Thus, elementary and secondary school students do not generally aim to engage in a profession in their visual arts class, nor can their work be evaluated as artworks. Furthermore, 'ethical,' included in the Turkish Language Society dictionary, is considered synonymous with morality. The approach described in the governing statute is aimed at the child's benefit, that is, exhibiting ethical behaviour, underlines various rules that are mostly professional in nature, and therefore places an extremely dangerous expectation on students'

developmental assignments.

Russell (1984: 199) notes, on the matter of age appropriateness, that "In general, things taught at school before the age of fourteen must be the type of things to be known by anyone; specialization must follow, other than in special cases. However, one of the purposes of the education before fourteen years of age should be to discover special skills in children, so that these found skills can be developed during the following years."

v) Examining their environment, being inspired by it and transferring it to future generations: Is it the 'environment' to be transferred to future generations? Or is it the cultural values in this framework? This sentence represents a serious content problem. Unfortunately, the actual meaning of the sentence is the transfer of the examined environment to future generations. It is not clear why such a goal is included in the goals of a visual arts class.

vi) To raise individuals who are willing to learn and apply visual arts: What does it mean to apply visual arts? Should a goal be expressed in this manner, be perceived as individuals who are willing to work in the visual arts area?

The last paragraph contains the following expression: 'assimilation of information generally obtained in classes 5 to 8 in the Visual Arts class curriculum and evaluates artworks more meaningfully.' What does to 'evaluate more meaningfully' mean? If we say 'more meaningfully,' can we conclude that less meaningful evaluations at earlier education stages are sufficient? This is surely an undesired result; however, it should be remembered that the meaning should be transferred clearly and not according to the area or level.

Curriculum's areas of learning

Visual communication and design

This area of learning is defined as the 'use of art components (color, line, mode, form, texture, location/space) and design principles (rhythm, balance, ratio-proportion, emphasis, unity, variation, movement, and contrast) in visual artworks.' As the arts and design components are listed, it is not clear why the principle of 'repeat' was omitted. Typically, there are four essential components to aesthetically characterize a design or an art object as an 'artwork': the principles of repetition, rhythm, contrast and unity. Only three principles are included in the curriculum but all four fundamental components must be present in qualified artworks and designs.

In contrast, information regarding the technical tools of design and their necessity are included in this area of learning. However, it contains no statement or explanation about visual literacy on the fundamentals of visual

communication or a directive about its importance. This omission within such an area should be clarified, and more importantly, remedied.

Cultural inheritance

When the content of the area of learning resembles an actual related heading, it is clear why the statement 'comprehension of the shaping and reflection of art and culture of other students' was included. It is universally recognized that culture is a higher form of identity and a common spirit. In this case, culture does not reflect art or this cannot be its sole purpose because art is a sub-component of culture. However, the reflection of culture through art is a sought-after quality. Art and the artwork dilemma becomes distanced from the society by the congestion experienced at the point of cultural connection, and typically, research conducted on this matter produces negative indications when examining this relationship. Therefore, this statement must be rewritten.

Another statement describes students as 'relating to museums and visual arts.' What is the intended meaning here? Museums have a wide variety of collections and there are many kinds of museums in Turkey classified accordingly. Is a museum relationship only formed via visual arts? How can this be achieved? Is this necessary? Or does this convey that the functions of a museum are to preserve, protect, repair and transfer? If so, does not a different 'consciousness' apply? Answering (or even not answering) these questions lead to rather significant conclusions. Although this area of learning seems to focus on the purposes of art history and museum functions, it also includes the goals of aesthetic and pedagogic art criticism in its explanations. Therefore, this area of learning is essentially presented as inadequate and baseless to trainee teachers and teachers. Similarly, the following statement produces the same result: 'Examining artworks and artists from different societies and cultures, mainly from Turkish culture, during the historical process.' What are the criteria for examination here? When the age group is considered, there is a pedagogical approach which is compulsory. In this case, the work conducted is criticism. In other words, it is an action to diagnose and understand. This is done verbally and visually. This statement requires clarification and definition. Given the title of the following area of learning, it can be argued that this section, too, appears to be misplaced.

Art criticism and aesthetics

This area of learning focuses on art history, steps of the application process, art criticism in interdisciplinary

education, and various aesthetic stages. Although only inferred, pedagogic criticism is located between the stages and purposes. In addition to these elements, the material value of an artwork is included: 'Noticing that artworks have an economic value.'

Artworks can never be measured by the revenue obtained from assigning everyday goods as meta-aesthetic or by means of manipulation via product marketing. On the contrary, this definition has never been universally used for artworks, not since the founding of aesthetic science nor today – the status of purchase and sale is only used for 'design' products. This is the fundamental difference between design products and artworks. Furthermore, introducing elementary and secondary school children (that is, 5-12-year olds) to such a perception will negatively affect future generations. It is thought that this purpose was placed here by mistake. This clause should be rewritten according to the spirit and content of art education.

The learning-teaching approach of the curriculum

Collaboration in the learning-teaching approach of the curriculum includes directives to make art education functional, such as individual/group studies and critical thinking. In addition, the reality, considering the ages and skills of the students, given that their interests and tendencies could be different, is emphasized and it is requested that these will be considered.

Russell (1984: 199) emphasizes an important issue, namely the teacher-student relationship: "Knowledge, processed by love, is what is needed by educators and required to be obtained by students." The most fundamental conclusion to be derived here is that mutual communication and interaction is the basis of learning and the acquisition of skills. Other factors, such as location, equipment, and skill, come later. The priority for effective communication and love represents the core and the unchanging preconditions of almost all education and training issues.

The measurement-assessment approach of the curriculum

Measuring is the most fragile and critical tool in art and design education, requiring a special strategy. It also affects future approaches and the interests of students during their educational life. Therefore, it must be ensured that current errors and inappropriate regulations are not repeated, and we must consider the requirement for the use of proper tools in a contemporary education environment.

It is expected that the measurement-evaluation approach of the 2013 curriculum is contemporary. Specifically, all the development characteristics and

sensitivities of the two age groups (elementary and secondary) must be considered. The evaluation of these two age groups must also be different. This is especially true of development assignments and the expectations of children, who are part of a rather small subset of formal education such as 5–9. The characteristics of 5- to 9-year-old children are naturally very different.

The following statement refers to the measurement approach of the 2013 curriculum: ‘The measurement and evaluation process in visual arts classes is discussed as student-centred.’ What is student-based measurement and evaluation? What is measured and evaluated to determine a student’s worth? It is clear that teachers’ own evaluations influence the students’ feedbacks. However, what does this mean in a situation as such that promotes student motivation and students’

Explanations regarding the structure and application of the curriculum

The following statement is an explanatory section regarding the structure of the curriculum that stands out: ‘Attainment goals aim for students to generally acquire knowledge, perception and psychomotor skills in the Visual Arts Class Education Curriculum; these can be developed by making amendments appropriate to the age and level of the students, enabling an evaluation of art types and their meaning.’ The ‘evaluation of art types’ is important. What does the ‘evaluation of art types and their meanings’ relate to? Does art have a meaning? Does art have meanings? If so, are they local or universal? By which scale will they be evaluated? These matters require urgent clarification.

Article 13 of the 2013 curriculum provides additional principles on the use of principles, thereby creating information pollution in terms of content and presentation. The article is as follows: ‘Matters concerning the area of cultural heritage, which is one of the three fundamental areas of the curriculum, must be related to museum education and art history.’ The term ‘museum education’ could be taken to refer to the training provided to museum workers, and would, therefore, have nothing to do with formal education. However, there is another expression, ‘education in museum’ and this clearly includes education. This error should immediately be remedied.

Evaluation of Visual Arts Curriculum by Grade (1-8) level

This section of the curriculum concerns evaluations based on the level of attainment, a truly problematic section. Some of the sentences referring to the attainment goals in italics both in the curriculum and in the added

text describe the material; they are also the only ones taken to the problematic section. The Appendix lists all attainment goals included in the curriculum.

1. First grade Visual Arts course curriculum

a. Visual communication and design:

a.1. ‘They are aware of the steps of the application process forming visual arts studies.’

The application step is regarded as a single-step process, as it relates to direct design. However, what is required here at least the idea drawn from the explanation relates to the visual arts studies formation process.

In addition, it is clear that if it had stated ‘art’ and/or ‘design’ instead of visual arts studies, then it would have been understood with an integrity that is more meaningful and easily recognized.

This attainment goal connects children with an organization and structure as an ‘application step,’ which is static, linked to previous rules, and as if the contrary has not been proven. However, when art or design processes are considered, it is easy to see how much relates to the individual and follows different paths. For someone to be teachable, s/he must be connected to certain principles. Nonetheless, it is difficult to mention an organization that is called forming steps in the field of Art and Design. Instead, it would be better to include an attainment goal that emphasizes the relationship among creativity, information and experience, and its connection with anticipation.

a.2 (no.6). ‘They are aware of the figure-location relationship in visual arts study.’

The placement of one shape on top of the other, a change in the measurement and/or the placement in the composition using the shapes that are formed.

Children in this age group do not possess the necessary location perception to arrange the location in an artwork; 5-year-old children generally arrange the composition using floating objects. Thus, they could not meet the attainment goal. The aforementioned explanation concerns actions, not the visual conception. In this case, there is no connection between the point of action performance and the explanation and attainment goal.

a.3 (no.8). ‘They observe objects and figures in their environs and draw them.’

Children aged 5 cannot be expected to make drawings based on observation. At this stage, they can only draw floating objects and their perception of location is not yet developed. Their drawings float in space; front, back, and

near (Buyurgan and Buyurgan, 2012) and their presentations and perspective in a primitive sense have not yet developed. Of course, there may also be some children below or above this development standard. However, the curriculum, which covers general development, must meet its responsibility in this regard.

a.4 (no.10). 'As visual arts study is formed, they use art components and design principles.'

Color: Main colors

Line: Zigzag, dot, undulating, spiral

Shape/Form: Geometric, organic

What kind of line is a 'dot'? When was it included in the literature as a type of line? This issue requires clarification because this curriculum applies to all elementary and secondary school children in Turkey. Stating that a dot is a type of line is a material error, and 'dot' or 'dot effect' is listed among art elements in the first directive. Was a dot consciously included as a line type? Any information pollution originating from this error requires clarification.

b. Cultural heritage:

b.1. 'They notice that art is a part of culture.'

It is naturally difficult to talk to a group of children (who think that they are engaging in a fun activity) about art and culture and to convey that art is a part of culture. To do so is developmentally inappropriate.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics:

c.1 (no.3). 'They can identify differences between artworks.'

This goal requires children to know the difference between art forms, not to teach the difference between artworks. This statement requires rewriting and this error should be fixed.

2. Second grade visual arts course curriculum

'The 2nd grade visual arts course emphasizes that students create new ideas based on inspiration/reflections from experiences, school, close surroundings, Turkish culture and different cultures. They can use art materials and techniques to apply these reflections onto ideas.'

What does to 'apply these reflections onto ideas' mean this requires explanation. The curriculum contains a number of repeated errors and these must be removed.

a. Visual communication and design:

a.1. 'Students try to find various solutions to the problems

faced as visual art work is formed.'

The problems concern how the matter is to be expressed, how the location is to be formed, which colors, lines, and shapes/forms will be used.

The aforementioned attainment goal cannot be understood without the accompanying explanation. Events considered a 'problem' and listed subsequently are in reality only the stages of the process. These questions can never be answered via the question-answer method. This is against the nature of art. Furthermore, it only can be achieved if the child is willing. However, children see what they want, and by using tools they can only achieve this by trying, doing, making mistakes and trying again. Therefore, as far as this particular expression of the attainment goal is understood, it is of serious concern and requires explanation. It should be removed from the curriculum.

a.2 (no.3). 'Students describe the use of imagination in visual artworks.'

Imagination is discussed and the students carry out projects on this.

An attainment goal should indicate a single action: clear, understandable and plain. It should not require any further sentences to ensure understanding. These children are 6 years of age. Such requirements are developmentally inappropriate. Children do not learn imagination from others, neither is it something to be learned (Striker, 2005).

Why is 'imagination is exemplified' placed underneath a statement concerning a 'subject' and not an 'attainment goal'? This is unacceptable.

İprişoğlu (2009: 47) comments on this as follows: 'Children think in a tangible manner, and hardly distinguish imagination and reality from each other. But if they draw what they see and think, they can express this with a few lines and colors. They abstract tangible shapes that they see. It is natural that this abstraction is not like an abstraction that goes through mind filter as it happens with adults. It wouldn't be wrong to call it thinking with eyes. This is the first step taken in the visual thinking process. This ability of children can be used in any matter.'

a.3 (no.8). 'Visual arts studies are formed by inspiration from daily life.'

This is not an attainment goal; instead, it falls within category of 'subject.'

b. Cultural heritage:

b.1 (no.5). 'They recognize handcrafts.'

It is impossible to recognize handcrafts without first differentiating between arts and crafts. An attainment goal constructed by an 'information' step (it is a cognitive

attainment goal and forms the first step of cognitive skills) places a high level of expectation on 5- and 6-year-old students. While children at this stage of perception can see and experience via games, it is not expected that they would recognize handcrafts.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics:

c.1. 'They recognize the scope of the artwork.'

Teachers show their students artwork samples including different scopes. They are asked what they see in the artworks. When these are classified according to subject, they are asked what they see. When these are classified according to subject matter, they are asked whether the work is a portrait, still life or landscape. The answers given by the students are written on the board. The teacher indicates that artworks that include a head are called portraits; artworks in which objects such as fruits, bowls, jugs, fabrics, and the like are used together are called still lifes; and artworks that include nature and scenery are called landscapes.

Although it seems beneficial for children to recognize that artworks have different names depending on the subject matter, it is clear that the process included in the explanation is beyond that of the children's development. Thus, we should avoid filling children's heads with unnecessary and confusing information. Regarding this point, only the school levels in formal education have changed in this age group, which is evaluated within the pre-school term until 2012. Children are at the same level in terms of the accumulation of skills. These children are only 6 years of age. Therefore, it is fruitless to expect them to possess skills above their development level. Within the Turkish context, how many families actually own art, be it a still life, portrait, or landscape? How many families are aware of this distinction? This attainment goal bears no relation to the reality of the families of children of this age, should either not be included at this level or be removed.

c.2. 'They interpret the ideas and feelings in their own artwork and that of their peers.'

Considering that children have trouble expressing their own feelings and thoughts in terms of linguistic development, it is unfair to expect children at this age to interpret the feelings of others. Such an interpretation requires knowledge. The desire to raise adolescents who are free from bias and who possess the ability criticize is understandable, but we cannot ask these children to engage in thought interpretation without knowledge. They can be asked to guess and to reason but they cannot be asked to interpret. Moreover, the concept of 'interpreting the ideas and feelings' needs to be clarified. We need to consider whether we could interpret the feelings of another person no matter what our age is. Moreover, is

such an interpretation necessary? Furthermore, this cannot come before the need to develop the ability to feel empathy, no matter at what age.

3. Third grade Visual Arts course curriculum

a. Visual communication and design:

a.1. 'They follow the steps of the application process when forming a visual arts study.'

This attainment goal is identical with that for 1st grade children and suffers the same problems.

a.2. 'An expressive approach is used when visual arts study is formed.'

Students may be asked to apply the positive experience of receiving a good report card, the excitement from sports activities, and the like to their work.

Each child possesses their own unique level of intelligence and skills. Thus, taking a conceptual approach and connecting this type of obligation to a connective element (such as an attainment goal) may not produce the desired results. Moreover, constraints should not exist in art education. Nevertheless, if children are forced to convey their feelings and thoughts through colors and shapes instead of using an expressive approach, then they will be constrained. This attainment goal should instead be offered as a tool, one that is not obligatory yet depends on the freedom of statement.

a.3 (no.5). 'They define and use foreground, middleground, background plans in two-dimensional studies.'

Children should know about location, volume, value concepts, and most importantly basic perspective rules for foreground, middleground and background planning. It is expected that they have some experience on this matter. Furthermore, taking into account the children's age and age-appropriate development assignment requirements (they are still at the 'tangible realism' stage), if they have difficulty fulfilling the requirements of this criterion, they may grow to dislike painting. These factors must be considered. Perhaps it would be more efficient and beneficial if this goal was approached by providing students with fundamental information such as indoor and outdoor locations.

a.4 (no.7). 'They use art components and design principles when forming visual art studies.'

Color: Hot, cold

Location: Positive, negative

Balance: Symmetrical, asymmetrical, central

Contrast: Dark-light and opposite colors, and the like

Positive-negative shapes are related to shape and

ground. It is necessary that volume (like form of the relationships) is exemplified if the location is to be defined.

b. Cultural heritage:

b.1 (no.2). 'They examine the relationship between an artwork's form and function.'

What is meant by the function of an artwork? Because an artwork or the art phenomenon targets an inherent feature, it cannot be linked to any material value or function. Thus, the function of an artwork should not be defined. This attainment goal should be removed.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics:

c.1 (no.2). 'They examine examples of portraits, landscapes, still lifes and depictive artworks.'

Examples of portrait, landscape, still life and depictive artworks are shown: portraits by Osman Hamdi Bey, landscape paintings by Nazmi Ziya, still life paintings by Mahmut Cüda and Feyhaman Duran, and artworks of Sami Yetik on the Independence War.

What does depictive art mean? If it means artworks with a theme from a well-known event or period, then this should be directly and clearly stated. At present, this is unclear.

c.2 (no.4). 'They can express an opinion on the artworks they study.'

Judgment:

Is this artwork valuable? Why?

Would you want to hang this artwork in your room? Why?

It is rather dangerous to ask such judgment-based questions. Broadly speaking, this question is inappropriate. Here, the economic value of the artwork is emphasized. Presenting such a question usually applied to a design product is unethical. It is clear that the writers of the curriculum do not respect ethical matters.

c.3 (no.6). 'He/she recognizes that artworks have a value.'

The reasons behind the affective, economic, political, and historical components of an artwork, relative to the student's level, are emphasized.

What does the evaluation of artworks in terms of an effective component mean? This statement requires further explanation.

Additionally, economic, political, and historical components are not usually considered in relation to artworks but may apply to the interpretation of an artwork based on the period in which it was created and the analysis of society. The meaning drawn from here is that

an artwork will be evaluated based on political, economical, and historical components. To resolve the ethical contradiction created by this erroneous expression, the statement should be rewritten or the goal removed.

c.4 (no.7). 'They are aware of the ethical rules in the arts field.'

Only adults and art producers need to understand the ethical rules concerning arts and design. Valuing arts, distinguishing art from the inartistic, or distinguishing between being an artist and not being an artist should be sufficient for elementary students. Students are not raised to begin a career in formal education. They are brought up according to their interests and skills. Therefore, there is no need or place for such a legal phenomenon with no drawn borders. To ask students to do so is forced and above their level. What is unethical is to take this approach and hold this expectation.

4. Fourth grade Visual Arts course curriculum

a. Visual communication and design:

a.1. 'They use design steps to form a visual arts study.'

The criticism levelled at this attainment goal for 1st and 3rd grade classes also applies here. Using the term 'design' instead of 'application' does not change the goal of the attainment. Thus, the same problems exist here as described previously.

a.2 (no.4). 'They relate their experiences using different thoughts, art forms and cultural themes, and form a visual arts study.'

a.3 (no.5). 'They make decisions to create composition unity in a visual arts study.'

The students make decisions to select appropriate art components and design principles in visual arts studies.

Children must be given as much freedom as possible in arts and design studies. Creativity can only grow in free environments and in free souls (Boydaş, 2006). The conclusion to be drawn here is to never leave children alone to make their own choices. However, studies structured like a cooking recipe are not appropriate. Therefore, these components and principles should not be limiting in nature; it is appropriate to encourage students to talk about what they used, how they used it and to make them aware.

a.4 (no.6). 'They can create depth on a two-dimensional level.'

The placement of one shape on top of the other, changes in measurement and the placement in the composition using the shapes that are formed.

This attainment statement is constructed quite successfully. Although it clearly expresses the

expectation, when it is read along with its explanation, it becomes confusing. What is to be placed 'on top of the other' on a two-dimensional level, for instance, when painting on paper? While a large-small relationship or a foreground-background relationship will certainly create a difference in depth perception, on their own they are insufficient to do so. Regarding the color component, the value needs to be known, and it is not until this stage that the color component includes a value. It is not clear at all what is meant by 'change in the placement in the composition.' Is there more than one composition? Will components such as shape, color, form, and the like within a single composition change place in a single composition? If so, then the contribution of this to depth perception should be clearly explained.

It appears that the explanation does not belong to this attainment goal or is insufficient as a description. Furthermore, it could lead to conceptual mistakes. As such, the statement should be rewritten or replaced.

a.5 (no.9). 'They use art components and design principles to form a visual art study.'

Color: Color types, light, dark, intense

What does 'intense color' mean? Color intensity or the concept of saturation is included in the literature. However, whether color is mentioned clearly or whether it refers to another topic requiring technical information requires clarification.

b. Cultural heritage:

b.1 (no.3). 'They compare the general characteristics of artworks from different cultures.'

This goal is similar to that in b.2 (as shown in Appendix). It is not appropriate to put two identical attainment goals in the same grade level. This will cast doubts on the reliability of the curriculum. Therefore, one of these attainments should be removed from this grade level.

b.2 (no.4). 'He/she identifies the common characteristics in artworks from different cultures in the museum.'

Although seemingly, this statement may reach its goal under a collection of ethnographic products and artworks from different cultures (like the Ankara Anatolian Civilizations Museum), it does, of course, apply to schools and formal education in Turkey. Therefore, the goals of the curriculum need to be 'general' and 'accessible' in line with the 'rules' and 'educational ethics.' It is an overreaching task to find works from different cultures in artists' workshops. Thus, this statement should be removed from this attainment goal. Both the statement and explanation need to be rewritten.

Alternatively, they could be removed from the curriculum.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics:

c.1. 'They know the difference between abstract, realistic and figurative artworks.'

Have the students been previously taught about abstract art? How in-depth will this information be? Is it appropriate for school children to evaluate the concept of abstract art? In addition, is there a new understanding or concept called 'figurative art'? Because these concepts are listed together and followed by 'artworks,' it is clear that they are regarded as examples of the same class. In this case, are there no figures in abstract art? Are there no figures in realist art? This information pollution must be resolved and removed from the attainment curriculum.

c.2. 'They can explain their reasons for selecting an artwork.'

Do children select artworks? What does this attainment goal seek to gain? If it refers to the ability to make a selection from many choices and to link this selection to arbitrarily specific reasons, then it is possible to express this in Turkish terms and more clearly. This curriculum attainment should be rewritten or removed.

c.3. 'They notice that people have different aesthetic preferences.'

Artworks of different styles are selected by students. Students are able to explain their reasons for selecting that artwork.

What has changed is not the phenomenon of 'aesthetic preference;' it is the differences in aesthetic 'liking.' We make our selections according to our aesthetic likings (Kagan, 2008: 32). This attainment goal should be rewritten to reduce information pollution and to better relate to Turkish art literature.

c.4. 'They obey ethical rules in the visual arts field.'

The earlier comments regarding ethics for the previous grades also apply here.

5. Fifth grade Visual Arts course curriculum

'In the 5th grade Visual Arts course, the focus is on students absorbing the information they receive and artworks are evaluated in a more meaningful way. At this level, the formation of visual art study and the conveying of personal values and ideas for art appreciation are emphasized. The usage of art components and design principles by students is emphasized in their works.'

What does 'artworks are evaluated in a more meaningful way' mean? Does this statement infer that the evaluation of artworks in previous grades was less

meaningful? If so, what kind of ethical problem does this situation create in terms of education and art education? What does 'personal value' mean? What does 'conveying of personal values and ideas' mean? As of 2012, this grade now falls within the scope of secondary schools, and as such, this should be made clear. It is obvious that the suggestions made here regarding class level and expectations reveal intentions that are erroneous in terms of information, conception and education pedagogy. This line of thought should be ignored and this section restructured.

a. Visual communication and design:

'Understanding and applying the process, starting with brainstorming and continuing until ideas, drawings, details and a visual art study emerge.'

The criticism aimed at the equivalent statement for the 1st, 3rd and 4th grades applies here.

a.1. 'They use the steps of the application process to form a visual arts study.'

a.2. 'Measurement and ratio are used to illustrate the phenomenon of location in visual arts study.'

Because the space phenomenon mainly relates to volume, it is inappropriate to only use ratio and measurement, which takes us to the same point on a two-dimensional level, and describe location. This goal requires review and rewriting.

a.3. 'He/she uses aerial perspective in visual art studies.'

After giving the valor, an aerial perspective may be appropriate; however, without fundamental knowledge of perspective, it is somewhat concerning to state this optical illusion (created by a change of background colors) as an attainment goal. It is thought that this expression could be included as an activity suggestion in location definition or color knowledge.

a.4. 'They draw a human figure based on proportions from observations.'

The drawing of figures by observation only may not be appropriate for children of this age. Based on live models, 5th graders might find it difficult to use patterns. However, basic patterns can be created using live models once rotation-proportion, balance, line effects, and the like are explained, which are included in the curriculum. Thus, by trial and error, children learn the components and principles of, for example, space, close-far and perspective.

b. Art criticism and aesthetics:

b.1 (no.6). 'They learn why artworks are evaluated

differently.'

It is emphasized that aesthetic judgments may be different because an artwork is evaluated sensually, economically, historically, socio-culturally, and functionally.

What does 'evaluated differently' mean? The explanation for this is quite interesting: it is stated that aesthetic judgment in an artwork could be different because of political, economic, socio-cultural, and functional components. There is consistency in neither the explanation nor the attainment goal. Namely, historical, economic, and political events determine our judgment about an artwork along with the social inputs in which that artwork is created. These are determinative components which cannot be depicted as influential or external causes. However, differences between artworks are extremely characteristic and personal in terms of the artists and designers of that period. This should not be confused with any effect. Thus, this is a flawed explanation and statement based on aesthetics, which is evaluated beyond the usual scope. The concern is that such misinformation will be reflected onto the students when their teacher attempts to apply this attainment goal.

b.2 (no.7). 'They obey ethical rules in visual art studies.'

The previous comments regarding this attainment goal apply here as well.

6. Sixth grade visual arts course curriculum

a. Visual communication and design:

a.1. 'Students create a presentation file of visual arts studies.'

A presentation file is prepared reflecting the process starting with brainstorming and continuing until the formation of ideas, drawing, detailing and visual arts study occurs.

The preparation of a 'presentation file' must be defined and included in the explanation.

a.2 (no.3). 'They convey their ideas and experiences in visual art studies using written, oral, rhythmic, dramatic, and such methods.'

It is of little value to relate the other narration tools (such written, oral, rhythmic, drama) of an idea, belief or emotion that is already expressed by the visual language of art. The purpose is to obtain a visual expression using various tools. The fundamental goal has been reached by conveying thoughts and experiences by visual means. Nor is there any necessity or meaning in conducting the process in the reverse order. Thus, this attainment goal requires revision.

a.3 (no.4). 'They reflect their ideas in visual arts study based on a selected theme and topic.'

Information on cells from science class is used in 6th grade attainment goals and the concept of texture in the Visual Arts course (6.1.8). In this context, students are able to form external textures originating from different cell textures that they have seen in Science class.

The attainment statement is rather clear and concise. The explanation mentions a relation between courses, and also suggests an activity based on this relation. Is it necessary to include an explanation regarding this attainment goal? Why are additional expressions repeatedly required to explain the limitations of attainment goals, despite the inclusion of this and similar activity examples in various attainment goals in the curriculum? This aspect will be confusing for teachers applying the curriculum. To achieve language consistency, the explanation should include definitions.

b. Cultural heritage:

b.1 (no.3). 'He/she recognizes the role of handcrafts in society.'

What role do handcrafts play in society? To fulfill this attainment goal, students need to identify it. Therefore, instead of stating the 'role of handcrafts in society' the goal should be more explicit. The language used in the curriculum does not reflect daily Turkish language.

b.2 (no.5). 'He/she notices how visual artworks, history and culture affect one another.'

History and art are sub-components of culture. Therefore, extreme care must be directed when composing a sentence describing such an interaction. Reference to the history-art relationship to culture may be a more appropriate approach. It is thought that this or a similar rearrangement could improve this attainment goal, thereby reducing information pollution.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics:

c.1 (no.2). 'He/she explains the emotions and thoughts reflected by the artist in their artwork.'

The student is asked to interpret or guess the possible emotions and thoughts of the artist relating to their artwork; that is, the student is asked to provide an opinion. We can never completely know the emotions and thoughts of artists as reflected in artworks and cannot, therefore, explain these at whatever level, even if we observe the creation of the piece. We can merely state our opinion. This expression, which includes an extreme aesthetical information error, should be removed. This goal contains a conceptual error and is, as such, unethical.

c.2 (no.6). 'He/She explains how artworks evoke personal

feelings, emotions and aesthetic reaction.'

Aesthetic reaction is an attitude we demonstrate in a situation, event, artwork, product, and the like. Therefore it does not move. It is related to an attitude to be developed as a result of an evaluation, after going through an intelligence and knowledge filter; it consists of mental analysis. Therefore, it is essential that this error be remedied.

7. Seventh grade Visual Arts course curriculum

a. Visual communication and design:

a.1 (no.2). 'He/she skilfully uses art techniques in visual arts study.'

The student cannot be expected to competently use techniques to create art and design. No such goal exists for visual arts education in the formal education process. Skill deemed to be at an expert level is only appropriate as a goal at higher education institutions. This attainment goal, which could discourage students and confuse attainment goals, should be removed from the curriculum.

a.2 (no.3). 'They take a moment from any period of their life and retell it in a visual arts study.'

Students create a story from personal events and develop it.

We see here that an event that could be a suitable 'subject matter' is turned into an attainment goal. Attainment goals do not consist of subjects; they consist of actions and are designed to gain a single goal. Thus, this attainment goal should be removed and/or replaced.

a.3 (no.4). 'Traditional and contemporary materials and techniques are used in visual arts study.'

Traditional materials include dry paint, watercolor paint, crayons, and brushes, and contemporary materials include video, computers, cameras, and tablets.

The technical and material aspects of visual arts cannot be an attainment goal applied to the entire country and art education. They can only be various techniques and materials suggested under all attainment goals. This matter should be evaluated under a separate heading. Techniques and materials are both given as information and experience, not only at this level but for all levels. They do not possess the necessary content to be considered a separate 'attainment' goal and only in one class.

b. Cultural heritage:

b.1 (no.2). 'They analyze how art and culture affect one another.'

This and similar expressions are included in numerous

sections in the curriculum. This statement should be replaced with one that emphasizes that interaction originates from culture.

b.2 (no.3). 'He/she explains the contributions of artists to society.'

There is no obligation for artists to have a 'positive' effect such as making a contribution to society. Thus, instead of the term 'contributions,' words that emphasize the function and state of the artist in society would save this statement from being ineffective.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics:

c.1 (no.2). 'Art criticism is used to evaluate artworks.'

The following questions are included in addition to those included in the art criticism section in attainment 3.3.3. for 3rd grade classes.

Definition:

How would you term the main texture in the artwork? (Is it superficial or natural?)

What forms are effective in this artwork? (Geometric, organic, or both)

Which tools were used?

What technique was applied in the artwork?

What is the name of the artist who made the artwork?

What kind of artwork is this? (Graphic design, ceramic, sculpture, painting, printmaking, and the like)

When was this artwork made?

List some of the significant events that took place in the period that this artwork was made.

Solution:

How were light and color values formed?

From which perspective was the artwork looked at and made?

What is the closest and farthest thing to you in the artwork? Why do you think so?

How were the shapes arranged in the artwork?

How was value used in the artwork? (Light, dark, medium or high contrast)

Were the objects or figures in the artwork life-size?

If the artwork is a sculpture, does it look light or heavy?

Interpretation:

What is the main theme of the artwork?

What do you think the artist made this artwork from?

Are there symbols in the artwork with different meanings? If so, what are they?

Does the object in the artwork evoke a particular scent for you?

Does the object in the artwork evoke a particular taste for you?

Does the object in the artwork evoke a particular image for you?

Does the artwork have a special message? What could that be?

What do the lines, colors and shapes make you feel when you look at the artwork?

Judgment:

Is this artwork beautiful? Why?

Does this artwork feel cold to you?

Do you think this artwork has a historical value?

Do you think this artwork has a function? Why?

Do you like this artwork? Why?

Do you think the artwork is successful?

Is this artwork worth putting into a museum?

Which room of your home do you think would be appropriate for this artwork? Why?

Why would someone want to make an artwork such as this (criticism of artwork)?

If necessary, there may be further questions taking into account the type of artwork and student level.

The purpose of asking children such questions is not clear. In this case, it is of little value to criticize a group of adults who evaluate the harmony of frames placed in a room. Which one of them is correct? Is it to approach the artwork from an economic perspective and to treat it as a valuable 'good;' is it to evaluate the work based on the value added to you, your room or your office? This issue should be emphasized and the attainment goals and explanations should be written to avoid any misunderstanding that may poison both teacher and student and following generation. Therefore, this statement must be removed.

c.2 (no.3). 'They compare the artwork-making processes of artists.'

Groups may be formed in the classroom and each group may be asked to research a different artwork-creation process. Acquired information is then shared in the classroom.

The artwork types shown above are separated in terms of the material they are made of and the technique used. These are not 'types.' These are the shapes and forms distinguished according to the material and technique of the artwork. Thus, the creative process of these artworks cannot be obtained following any research, and they cannot be known. However, materials and technical use conditions and processes can be evaluated, but it is understood that this is not the intended attainment goal. Therefore, the explanation must be revised and improved, and the attainment goal should relate to technique and material. Furthermore, this begs the question: For how much longer will technical difference and variety of material be repeatedly included as an attainment goal?

c.3 (no.6). 'They interpret the effects of social and cultural

beliefs in an artwork.'

What does 'social belief' mean in artworks? What does 'cultural belief' mean? The aim of the attainment goal and explanation is not clear and is, thus, unethical.

8. Eighth grade visual arts course curriculum

a. Visual communication and design:

a.1. 'They show the creation process of visual arts studies in their drawing book.'

Students can visually record in a drawing book the possible evolution of design and application from its inception to its end. However, this is only one aspect that can be shown visually. The 'didactic' process that is frequently emphasized in the curriculum and 'starting with brainstorming' is not included here. When the curriculum was designed, it is believed to have been the intention. Therefore, it would be beneficial to revise the attainment goal to directly and clearly convey the intended purpose.

a.2. 'They develop a process file as a source of visual arts study.'

Although a 'presentation file' is mentioned previously, the content of the file here is not clearly defined. In addition, a 'process file' is mentioned. Even if the ambiguity here is overlooked, one could ask if there is a source for forming art or design. Is this source the process file? Or is it a file in which a series of formations are accumulated with literary, linear and other factors? This type of file will have the characteristics of a file showing the development process of children or adolescents and providing some idea about their references. This is certainly necessary in terms of receiving feedback. However, it does not have the characteristics of a source. In other words, the sole purpose of making a process file cannot be new investments in a source. Creativity is not guided by such a rule. When the connectivity of the attainment goal is considered, it would be worthwhile to amend the statement to prevent misunderstandings of this type.

a.3. 'They make use of contemporary art to create a visual art study.'

The term 'current art' must be clearly defined. In addition, on reflection, benefiting from art using their own production and artistic creativity sounds strange. This attainment appears to be an activity. There is an obligation for attainment goals to be directed at a single target, and with a general and clear statement. This attainment fails to do so and should be removed.

a.4. 'They form visual arts study using inscriptions and visuals.'

If inscriptions and visual materials are involved, the

design and graphic arrangement are mentioned. Therefore, it would be more direct and clear if a 'design' phrase was used instead of visual arts study.

a.5. 'They reflect current events to visual art studies.'

This attainment concerns a 'topic' and should be revised or removed.

b. Cultural heritage:

b.1. 'They define how artworks are affected by social, political and economic factors.'

Because this issue also appears in the 'recognition' or 'defining' stage in the previous class levels, it is only natural that this function evolves into a higher expectation at this level. Here, the attainment goal should be amended to reflect a higher skill level.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics:

c.1 (no.3). 'He/She expresses the relation between aesthetics and art.'

The term 'aesthetics' is used only for art. Moreover, it is an expression equivalent to art in many fields. For example, the term 'aesthetic surgery,' which is somewhat confusing, is used in health sciences (Tunali 1998). The term 'aesthetic' is defined by 'surgical,' and there is no need for this distinction. It is crucial that the attainment goal is revised because the use of aesthetics above is not related to art.

c.2 (no.4). 'They analyze their studies and those of their peers.'

Clarification is required regarding the dimension of the study to be analyzed here and its definition. Otherwise, it is difficult to deduce an action from this attainment goal.

c.3 (no.5). 'He/She expresses the definition of art.'

What does 'expresses the definition of art' mean? What was the original intention if written in daily Turkish language? The writers of the curriculum need to clarify this point. The goal is confusing as it states that the process will end with a 'discussion,' as the attainment sentence includes the word 'expresses.' Thus, it is essential that the attainment goal and explanation be rewritten in everyday Turkish.

c.4 (no.6). 'He/She analyzes the effect of components such as images, inscriptions and symbols in contemporary media.'

What are the effects of the tools in contemporary media and how will they be analyzed? This should be clearly stated. Is it in accordance with the organization of each component or will they be analyzed using two-dimensional

and three-dimensional studies in terms of the difference between technique and function when these materials are used? This statement needs to be revised to avoid confusion and should be based on the age of the target children/adolescents.

c.5 (no.7). 'He/She notices the effects of popular culture on modern visual arts.'

This may represent a more appropriate approach to discuss the effects of popular culture tools. The created culture is made by art and design products and, as such, it does not affect something that comes out of itself; however, it may be reflected by the relevant tools.

DISCUSSION

The results of the descriptive analysis of the 2013 Visual Arts Curriculum (1-8) are summarized as follows:

i) The information and directives in the introduction section of the curriculum should be reviewed, and the information should be handled in the light of relevant science and according to the design and art field with a motivating and leading approach.

ii) The contradictions between directives regarding the areas of learning in the curriculum and naming and content should be removed. Furthermore, the continuity of the interdisciplinary approach (made clear in the 2006 and 2013 curricula) should be determined again, with characteristics that will ensure its reinforcement.

iii) Regarding the curriculum's attainment goals designed for each class level:

- Language integrity must be provided by means of appropriate and clear use of the Turkish language. Expressions that violate language rules and to go beyond scientific expression must be removed.

- Each expression must be directed at an action and all attainment goals that go beyond this must be revised following the attainment format and include applicable characteristics.

- Areas of learning must be made appropriate for the predetermined content. Hence attainment criteria deemed inappropriate are shown in the above analysis.

- Those regarding an activity and limited to a single application must be amended.

- Various determinants of the attainment goals are inappropriate (such as economic value, too general, inapplicable and incoherent). To ensure the integrity of the curriculum, this issue must be resolved.

- The expectation that the organization of attainment goals would be improved in the 2013 curriculum has not been met. Future analysis will investigate this issue further.

Kahraman (2014) records that teachers interviewed have also vocalized how some of the attainment goals

are difficult and excessively detailed and how they should be re-designed according to the students' levels appropriately (235).

iv) The curriculum contains numerous examples of erroneous information causing misunderstanding regarding phrases related to art and design in the name of visual arts.

v) The issue of measurement-evaluation was only briefly discussed and the terminology of the related tools was not explained. Measurement tools must be introduced.

vi) Basic data obtained in the evaluation of the educational curriculum show that the curriculum was not created through an understanding enabling economy, practicality, intelligibility and the development of a new skill at each grade level. Thus, despite the curriculum lacking essential characteristics, it has been in operation since the beginning of the 2013–2014 academic year. It can be argued that it has harmed visual arts classes, which should be 'optional' classes, as a separate class and with its own content.

vii) It is expected that art education classes (which are the most fundamental classes in formal education to ensure the transfer of national values and culture), and elementary and secondary school curricula that are the first step in this process, have necessary characteristics and content to serve this purpose. Those who do not have national values are not expected to have universal values. It is the right of every child to learn about their culture, values and art through a historical consciousness. It is expected that education curricula, which are the most direct and planned tools, contain a refined understanding. The goals of the curriculum are open to a number of interpretations and place the teachers in a difficult situation. It is undeniable that worldwide, it is of utmost importance to ensure awareness, respect for nature, self-respect, ethics, and culture treasures. However, Turkey's curriculum contradicts these concepts and contains many ethical errors. Therefore, the curriculum cannot be considered a guide offering practical education. Instead of strengthening the curriculum, it has weakened it. As this problem continues into higher educational levels, we cannot expect young Turks to accept the world as it is, nor will they be well-rounded citizens. Thus, it is only a dream to expect our youth, who are 'strangers' to the realities of the world and with a 'lost' education, to be 'people of the world.' As the Great Atatürk (the founder and first president of Turkey) stated, 'A nation without art is one whose veins have been cut off.'

viii) It is not easy for people who are familiar with the universal language of art and the power of artistic transfer in communication to adapt to a world limited by technology. Thus, it is essential that children in the process of becoming adults receive art education to ensure the successful adaption to modern conditions. Unfortunately, the curriculum has failed at this juncture to address these significant points.

- ix) The results of this study highlight the need for further study into the classification of the attainment criteria in skill areas and the founding of a grading system for this classification.
- x) This evaluation presents an opportunity to compare current data with that of the 2006 curriculum.
- xi) It is expected that data from this evaluation will present significant challenges for scholars conducting academic research in this field, primarily the Ministry of National Education, and will be the unifying point in the search for solutions. As Kahraman discusses, teachers commenting on the problems experienced in arts classes have repeatedly expressed that the course is not taken seriously, that teachers are inapt in some exercises, and that families' social standing and the total course hours fall short (236). It is expected that such direct comments from teachers fully involved in the curriculum will be taken into account more seriously and, so will this evaluation.
- xii) It is expected that scholars in this area will conduct empirical research and quantitative data analysis to assess the success or failure of Turkey's art education policy.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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APPENDIX

Outline of the Visual Arts curriculum (Grades 1-8)

1st Grade visual arts course curriculum

a. Visual communication and design

a.1. Students are aware of the requirements for visual arts studies.

The visual arts curriculum incorporates different materials and involves determination and representation of feelings, thoughts, and observations.

a.2. Students use different materials, tools and techniques in visual arts studies.

a.3. They reflect their feelings and thoughts through visual art .

a.4. They produce visual art based on themes, subjects, thoughts, poems and stories.

a.5. They arrange forms on a two-dimensional level.

The arrangement comprises various shapes, such as squares, circles, of triangles, atop a coloured background cardboard.

a.6. They are aware of the figure–location relationship in visual arts studies.

An exercise is designed where students position themselves within a specified space. During the exercise, distance and size relations among the objects and students within that space are identified.

a.7. Students use big–small relations in visual arts studies.

a.8. They observe objects and figures in their environs and draw them.

a.9. They can form three-dimensional pieces.

Three-dimensional art, such as origami, can be formed using techniques such as cutting, gluing, and/or folding.

a.10. As visual artworks are formed, students use art and design principles.

Colour: Main colours

Line: Zigzag, dot, undulating, spiral

Shape/Form: Geometric, organic

b. Cultural heritage

b.1. They understand that art is a part of culture.

b.2. They notice that art is a part of culture.

b.3. They express their impressions regarding museums, art galleries, artist workshops, historical ruins, etc.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics

c.1. Students distinguish between artificial objects and natural objects.

Students recognize artificial (human-made) and natural objects in their surroundings, including artworks. After the objects are examined, the art components of these objects are identified, such as colour, line and shape/form.

c.2. Students describe the formal characteristics of artworks.

Artworks are selected according to the age and level of students; they are examined in terms of colour, line and shape/form.

c.3. Students indicate differences between artworks.

The differences between two selected artworks are considered. A statue and an oil painting are brought to the class or images are shown. Students are asked to describe the differences between the two works. The teacher writes the students' ideas on the blackboard. He/she then seeks further discussions about the statements on the board. The teacher then explains the difference between the two pieces.

2nd Grade Visual Arts course curriculum

The 2nd grade visual arts course emphasizes that students create new ideas based on inspiration/reflections from experiences, school, close surroundings, Turkish culture and different cultures. They can use art materials and techniques to transfer such inspiration into ideas.

a. Visual communication and design

a.1. Students try to find various solutions to the problems faced as visual artworks are formed.

Students are asked how a matter can be expressed, the way the space is to be represented, which colours, lines, and

shapes/forms are to be used.

a.2. Students notice that unexpected/unforeseen results can occur when artwork is produced.

It is emphasized that it is natural for plans and designs to change, depending on the stage and process.

a.3. Students describe the use of imagination in visual artworks.

Imagination is discussed and the students carry out projects on this topic.

a.4. Inspiration comes from various written resources, concepts and themes as visual art studies are formed.

a.5. Foreground and background are used in visual artworks.

a.6. Objects are placed according to their size and ratio-proportion in visual art studies.

a.7. He/she makes drawings based on observations to form visual art studies.

a.8. Visual arts studies are formed by inspiration from daily life.

a.9. He/she makes three-dimensional studies using different materials.

Manual shaping techniques can be used when these studies are generated. In this context, simple shapes can be made such as animals, fruit and kitchen utensils.

a.10. Art components and design principles are used as visual art studies are formed.

Colour: Intermediate colour

Form: Three-dimensional (cube, cylinder, pyramid, cone, sphere)

Line: Vertical, horizontal, diagonal

Shape/Form: Two-dimensional geometric and organic

b. Cultural heritage

b.1. They identify different intentions from different cultures.

Specifically, intentions with symbolic meaning are selected.

b.2. They recognize architectural components belonging to Turkish culture.

Architectural components such as bay windows, adobe windows, rectangular windows, yards, roofs, ceilings, and doors are shown.

b.3. They recognize architectural components from other cultures.

Residential structures such as traditional Japanese houses, Eskimo houses, etc. are shown.

b.4. They recognize the importance of museums, art galleries, artists' workshops, historical ruins, etc.

b.5. They recognize handicrafts.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics

c.1. They recognize the scope of the artwork.

Teachers show their students artwork samples including different scopes. They are asked what they see in the artworks. When these are classified according to subject, they are asked what they see. When these are classified according to subject matter, they are asked whether the work is a portrait, still life or landscape. The answers given by the students are written on the board. The teacher indicates that artworks that include a head are called portraits; artworks where objects, such as fruit, bowls, jugs, or fabrics, are used together are called still lifes; and artworks that include nature and scenery are called landscapes.

c.2. They interpret the ideas and feelings in their own artwork and that of their peers.

Students may be asked to state what they wanted to reflect in their visual artworks and to express an opinion about what their classmates reflected in their artworks.

3rd Grade Visual Arts course curriculum

The focus here is students learning through questioning. Students are able to express opinions, apply their knowledge and evaluate when forming visual arts studies. Attention is also paid to the examination of art and architecture from different cultures.

a. Visual communication and design

a.1. They follow the steps of the application process when forming visual arts pieces.

Students recognize and apply the process, which starts with brain storming and continues until an artwork is formed.

a.2. An expressive approach is used when artwork is formed.

Students may be asked to apply the positive experience of receiving a good report card, the excitement from sports activities, etc. to their work.

a.3. Ideas are formed using inspiration from daily resources when creating visual artworks.

Aural, written and visual resources are examined.

a.4. They use observed geometric and organic shapes in drawings.

Geometric and organic forms of objects such as flowers, leaves, seashells, etc. are used in drawings based on observation.

a.5. They define and use foreground, middleground, background plans in two-dimensional studies.

a.6. They make three-dimensional pieces using different materials by adding and subtracting.

Students make three-dimensional studies using material such as wood, metal, fabric, waste products, etc.

a.7. They use art components and design principles when forming visual art studies.

Colour: Hot, cold

Location: Positive, negative

Balance: Symmetric, asymmetric, central

Contrast: Dark–light and opposite colours, etc.

b. Cultural heritage

They discuss how handcrafts reflect different cultures and periods using artworks.

b.1. They compare artworks from their own and other cultures.

Visits are made to museums, art galleries, artists' workshops, historical ruins, etc. Where this is not possible, replicas and copies are used.

b.2. They examine the relationship between an artwork's form and function.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics

c.1. They are aware of the intentions of local culture.

The intention, often having symbolic meaning, behind artworks, such as architecture, paintings, carpets, rugs, jewellery, or china, is examined. The intention/purpose is shown in artworks by Osman Hamdi Bey, Nuri İyem, Malik Aksel, Mustafa Pievneli, Nuri Abaş, Erol Akyavaş, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, and Turgut Zaim, in the doors at Sivas Divriği Ulu Mosque and Şifahane, Erzurum Çifte Minareli Madrasa, and Dolmabahçe in the use of tulips, carnations and tree of life in Turkish ornamental arts.

c.2. They examine examples of portraits, landscapes, still lifes and depictive artworks.

Examples of portrait, landscape, still life and depictive artworks are shown: portraits by Osman Hamdi Bey, landscape paintings by Nazmi Ziya, still life paintings by Mahmut Cüda and Feyhaman Duran, and artworks of Sami Yetik on the Independence War.

c.3. They show the art components and design principles used in artworks.

Students are taught about art components and design principles until they are able to express and demonstrate this in artworks.

c.4. They can express an opinion on the artworks they study.

The focus here is on definition, solution, interpretation and opinions.

Definition:

What do you see in artworks?

What materials were used in the artworks?

What kind of art form is this?

What colours do you see?

Solution:

How are the colours arranged?

Are warm colours or cold colours dominant in the artwork?

Which lines are used in the artwork? (Straight, curved, broken, zigzag, all).

How is balance formed in the artwork?

How is location formed in artwork? (Straight, one on the top of the other, depth, etc.)

Interpretation:

What does the artwork make you feel?

What kind of voice does the artwork have?

What is the story in the artwork?

If you had to name this artwork, what name would you give it?

Does the name of artwork reflect the content of the study?

Judgment:

Is this artwork valuable? Why?

Would you want to hang this artwork in your room? Why?

What is the difference between this artwork and its copy?

c.5. He/she indicates the differences between artworks and objects that do not have artistic value.

c.6. He/she notices that artworks have a value.

The reasons behind the effective, economic, political, and historical components of an artwork, relative to the student's level, are emphasized.

c.7. They are aware of the ethical rules in the arts field.

4th Grade Visual Arts course curriculum

In addition to the visual arts course enabling sensitivity to the arts, art components and design principles are emphasized. Students are taught to explain their opinions about their own visual artworks, the materials used and the main idea behind their work. A further focus is on examining the effect of historical artworks on modern culture.

a. Visual communication and design

a.1. They use design steps to form visual arts studies.

a.2. They show the use of the information and experience gained in their visual arts studies.

a.3. They use their imagination as they form visual arts studies.

a.4. They relate their experiences using different thoughts, art forms and cultural themes to form visual arts studies.

a.5. They make decisions to create composition unity in a visual arts study.

The students make decisions to select appropriate art components and design principles in visual arts studies.

a.6. They can create depth on a two-dimensional level.

The placement of one shape on top of the other, changes in measurement and changing the placement in the composition using the shapes that are formed.

a.7. They use contour lines and shadowing techniques in drawings based on observation.

Contour should be handled as a single line.

a.8. They use different materials and conduct three-dimensional studies.

As indicated in attainment 4.2.4, following the examination of artworks in museums from different cultures, applications are made based on students' opinions (using materials such as clay, etc.).

Furthermore, they show colour and texture components in their studies as indicated in attainment 4.1.9.

a.9. They use art components and design principles to form visual art studies.

Colour: Colour types, light, dark, intense

Texture: Real, artificial

Value: Intensity of a colour, grading and shadowing

Variety: Usage of one or more art components together to create interest.

b. Cultural heritage

b.1. They define the roles of artists and craftspeople.

b.2. They compare the distinct characteristics of artworks from Turkish culture with those of other cultures.

b.3. They compare the general characteristics of artworks from different cultures.

Examples of artworks from Turkish culture and from European, Asian, African, etc. cultures.

b.4. He/she identifies the common characteristics in artworks from different cultures in the museum.

Visits are made to museums, art galleries, artists' workshops, historical ruins, etc. Where no such opportunities exist, then replicas and copies are used.

b.5. They recognize the various professions in the visual arts field.

They examine occupations such as photographer, sculptor, painter, architect, illustrator and designer.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics

c.1. They know the difference between abstract, realistic and figurative artworks.

c.2. They can explain their reasons for selecting an artwork.

c.3. They notice that people have different aesthetic preferences.

Artworks of different styles are selected by students. Students are able to explain their reasons for selecting that

artwork.

c.4. They obey ethical rules in the visual arts area.

5th Grade Visual Arts course curriculum

In the 5th grade visual arts course, the focus is on students absorbing the information they receive and artworks are evaluated in a more meaningful way. At this level, the formation of visual art study and the conveying of personal values and ideas for art appreciation are emphasized. The usage of art components and design principles by students is emphasized in their works.

a. Visual communication and design

Understanding and applying the process, starting with brain storming and continuing until ideas, drawings, details and a visual art study emerge.

a.1. They use the steps of the application process to form a visual arts study.

a.2. Measurement and ratio are used to illustrate the location phenomenon in visual arts study.

a.3. He/she uses aerial perspective in visual arts studies.

a.4. They draw a human figure based on proportions from observations.

a.5. They use different materials in visual arts studies.

Videos, computers, cameras, tablets, etc. can be used, depending on schools' resources.

a.6. They form a relief or sculpture using three-dimensional art materials.

a.7. They use art components and design principles when visual art studies are formed.

Colour: Colours, light, dark, tones formed by students

Form: Concave, convex, negative, positive

Texture: Surface embroidery

Value: Intensity of a colour, graduation

Balance: Symmetrical, asymmetrical

b. Cultural heritage

b.1. They can explain the similarities and differences between the artworks and artists from different cultures.

Examples of artworks mainly from Turkish culture and other cultures (e.g., European, Asian, African).

b.2. They can identify the differences between historical and contemporary artworks.

b.3. They can identify the relation between museums and visual arts.

Museums, museum types and the contribution of museums to cultural inheritance are emphasized.

b.4. They can identify the relation between the art materials used and the various types of artists in the visual art field.

Artistic professions and materials used are emphasized; for example, those materials (e.g., clay, metal, stone, bronze, plaster, wood, etc.) are used by sculptors to form their artworks.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics

c.1. They compare natural and constructed environment.

c.2. They analyse the visual characteristics of selected artworks.

c.3. They interpret the content of selected artworks.

c.4. They analyse artworks according to the period and conditions in which they were created.

The environment and conditions in which artists lived, the function of artworks, and religious, intellectual and cultural characteristics are examined.

c.5. They analyse their own visual art studies.

They can express that their artworks are formed according to the conditions and environment in which they live.

c.6. They learn why artworks are evaluated differently.

It is emphasized that aesthetic judgments may be different because an artwork is evaluated sensually, economically, historically, socio-culturally, and functionally.

c.7. They obey ethical rules in visual art studies.

6th Grade Visual Arts course curriculum

In the 6th grade visual arts course, students are able to reflect their emotions and thoughts in their works using art

components and design principles. The analysis and evaluation of how artists use forms, materials and symbols in their artworks are emphasized.

a. Visual communication and design

a.1. Students create a presentation file of visual arts studies.

A presentation file is prepared reflecting the process starting with brain storming and continuing until the formation of ideas, drawings, details and visual arts study occurs.

a.2. They use different materials and techniques in the formation of visual arts study.

a.3. They convey their ideas and experiences in visual arts studies using written, aural, rhythmic, dramatic, etc. methods.

a.4. They reflect their ideas in visual art studies based on a selected theme and topic.

Information on cells from science class is used in 6th grade attainment goals and the concept of texture in the visual arts course (6.1.8). In this context, students are able to form external textures originating from different cell textures that they have seen in science class.

a.5. They use perspective in visual art studies.

Line perspective is used in this attainment goal to create depth.

a.6. They make short- and long-term drawings based on observations.

a.7. They use sculpture, assembly or modelling techniques to form three-dimensional studies.

It is emphasized here that assembly is formed naturally and by organizing industrial objects within a new arrangement.

a.8. They use different types of handcrafts together in visual art studies.

Different types of Turkish handcraft, such as calligraphy with marbling, stencilling with marbling, jewellery and weaving, etc. when visual art studies are formed.

a.9. They use art components and design principles when forming visual art studies.

Colour: Colour relationships

Line: Different line types

Texture: External texture, visual texture

Value: Grading

Ratio-proportion: Realistic, deformed

b. Cultural heritage

b.1. He/she explains the theme selected by an artist in their artworks, the materials used and techniques.

b.2. He/she examines handcraft examples in ethnographic museums.

Materials such as replicas, copies, etc. are used in locations where there is no ethnographic museum.

b.3. He/she recognizes the role of handcrafts in society.

b.4. He/she recognizes Anatolian civilizations by means of artworks in museums.

b.5. He/she understands how visual artworks, history and culture affect one another.

b.6. He/she can explain the similarities and differences between professions in visual arts.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics

c.1. He/she uses critical-thinking skills to define, explain, interpret and judge artworks.

The examination of artworks by a detailed explanation of the artist's intention and related information. At the end of the examination, the student is asked 'Is this artwork successful? Why is it successful?'

c.2. He/she explains the emotions and thoughts reflected by the artist in their artwork.

c.3. He/she explains the effect of visual language in conveying personal expressions.

The role of art components and design principles in conveying expressions in the examined artwork, specifically art components, are emphasized.

c.4. He/she discusses why artists create artworks.

c.5. He/she explains the effect of personal opinions and value judgments on the evaluation of artworks.

c.6. He/she explains how artworks evoke personal feelings, emotions and aesthetic reaction.

7th Grade Visual Arts course curriculum

The focus in the 7th grade visual arts class lies on the study of the creative process, its analysis and discovery. Students are able to produce designs using traditional and contemporary art materials based on art components and design principles. The development of students' visual arts language is emphasized using inquiry skills to evaluate themes,

topics and symbols in artworks. Students are encouraged to investigate the meaning and value of art.

a. Visual communication and design

a.1. He/she illustrates the steps of the application process based on research in their drawing book to form visual arts studies.

a.2. He/she skilfully uses art techniques in visual arts study.

a.3. They take a moment from any period of their life and retell it in a visual arts study.

Students create a story from personal events and develop it.

a.4. Traditional and contemporary materials and techniques are used in visual arts study.

Traditional materials include dry paint, watercolour paint, crayons, and brushes, and contemporary materials include video, computers, cameras, and tablets.

a.5. They use different perspective techniques in visual arts studies.

They use line and aerial (colour) perspective together to create depth in the location.

a.6. They use different techniques in drawings based on observations.

a.7. They create three-dimensional works using different materials and techniques.

a.8. They use art components and design principles to form visual arts studies.

Colour: Chromatic colour relationships

Chroma: Transition from bright to dull or from light to dark

Line: Contrast, grading

Location: Space, fullness

Emphasis: Focus point, dominant

Ratio-proportion: Realistic, exaggerated

b. Cultural heritage

b.1. They notice different styles in artworks.

b.2. They analyse how art and culture affect one another.

b.3. He/she explains contributions made to society by artists.

The cultural, social, economic, scholastic, etc. contributions of artists are discussed.

b.4. He/she examines the effect of historical events on artworks.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics

c.1. They define the themes, topics and symbols included in artworks.

c.2. Art criticism is used to evaluate artworks.

The following questions are included in addition to those included in the art criticism section in attainment 3.3.3. for 3rd grade classes.

Definition:

How would you describe the main texture in the artwork? (Is it superficial or natural?)

What are forms are effective in the artwork? (Geometric, organic, both)

Which tools were used?

What technique was applied in the artwork?

What is the name of the artist who made the artwork?

What kind of artwork is this? (Graphic design, ceramic, sculpture, painting, printmaking, etc.)

When was this artwork made?

List some of the significant events that took place in the period that this artwork was made.

Solution:

How were light and colour values formed?

From which perspective was the artwork looked at and made?

What is the closest and farthest thing to you in the artwork? Why do you think so?

How were the shapes arranged in the artwork?

How was value used in the artwork? (Light, dark, medium or high contrast)

Were the objects or figures in artwork life-size?

If the artwork is a sculpture, does it look light or heavy?

Interpretation:

What is the main theme of the artwork?

*What do you think the artist made this artwork from?
Are there symbols in the artwork with different meanings? If so, what are they?
Does the object in the artwork evoke a particular scent for you?
Does the object in the artwork evoke a particular taste for you?
Does the object in the artwork evoke a particular image for you?
Does the artwork have a special message? What could that be?
What do the lines, colours and shapes make you feel when you look at the artwork?*

Judgment:

*Is this artwork beautiful? Why?
Does this artwork feel cold to you?
Do you think this artwork has a historical value?
Do you think this artwork has a function? Why?
Do you like this artwork? Why?
Do you think the artwork is successful?
Is this artwork worth putting into a museum?
Which room of your home do you think would be appropriate for this artwork? Why?
Why would someone want to make an artwork such as this (criticism of artwork)?
If necessary, there may be further questions taking into account the type of artwork and student level.*

c.3. They compare the artwork-making processes of artists.

Groups may be formed in the classroom and each group may be asked to research a different artwork-creation process. Acquired information is then shared in the classroom.

c.4. They notice style of artists in visual artworks.

c.5. They examine artworks based on personal and contextual information.

Students must take in to account that contextual information reflects the environment and conditions of the artists, the function of the artwork, influencing characteristics, and religious, intellectual and cultural characteristics. It is emphasized that personal information is obtained by observing and examining an artwork.

c.6. They interpret the effects of social and cultural beliefs in an artwork.

The effects of the beliefs and social environment from different cultures on artworks are interpreted.

c.7. They recognize the direct effect of components in contemporary media such as images, text and symbols.

c.8. They express how information and experience can affect attitudes towards an artwork.

8th Grade Visual Arts course curriculum

In 8th grade visual arts classes, the focus lies on the application of previously learned information, skills and experiences. Students are able to use different techniques together in the formation of visual art studies. For students to develop opinions on artworks, the focus lies on inquiries into the purpose, meaning and value of artwork.

a. Visual communication and design

a.1. They show the creation process of visual art studies in their drawing book.

a.2. They develop a process file as a source of visual arts study.

a.3. They make use of contemporary art to create a visual arts study.

a.4. They form a visual arts study using inscriptions and visuals.

a.5. They reflect current events in visual arts studies.

Topics such as the economy, natural disasters, environmental sensitivity, job health and safety, scientific developments, technological developments, etc. can be used.

a.6. They use different perspective techniques in their visual arts study.

One/two directional perspectives and aerial perspective are used together to create a sense of depth in the location.

a.7. They illustrate different perspectives in their drawings based on observation.

Drawings are formed using different perspectives such as bird's-eye view, worm's-eye view, fish-eye view, and face-on view.

a.8. They make three-dimensional studies using both different techniques and materials.

a.9. Art components and design principles are used when visual art studies are formed.

Colour: Contrast relationship

Value: Shadowing

Ratio-proportion: Ration relationships

Unity: Harmony

Variation:

Good use of one or more art component.

b. Cultural heritage

b.1. They define how artworks are affected by social, political and economic factors.

b.2. They understand the roles of artists in society.

b.3. They compare the characteristics of artworks according to term, style, and materials used.

b.4. They understand the importance of protecting artworks in museums.

c. Art criticism and aesthetics

c.1. He/she analyses the effect of the arrangement of visual language in artworks.

Artworks are examined in the context of art components and design principles.

c.2. He/she notices the effect of knowledge and experiences in evaluating an artwork.

c.3. He/she expresses the relation between aesthetics and art.

c.4. They analyse their studies and those of their peers.

c.5. He/she expresses the definition of art.

Definition, types and changes in art in different timeframes can be discussed.

c.6. He/she analyses the effect of components such as images, inscriptions and symbols in contemporary media.

c.7. He/she notices the effects of popular culture on modern visual arts.