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EXEMINING OF STUDENT OPINIONS ON THE USE OF EDUCATIONAL GAMES IN TURKISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE COURSE: GÜMÜŞHANE PROVINCE EXAMPLE – TURKEY)

Dr. Mustafa Çağrı ENGİN

Psychological Counsellor, Dr. National Ministry of Turkey, Erzurum.

ORCID: 0000-0002-4825-2675

Professor Doctor Ali Osman ENGİN

Ataturk University, Kazim Karabekir Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Sciences, Education Programs and Teaching Main Science Department, Erzurum, Türkiye.

ORCID: 0000-0002-3705-6548.

Öğretmen Nuran KILIÇ

Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi, MEB Öğretmen, Gümüşhane, Turkey.

ORCID: 0009-0007-5682-8260

Abstract

This study aims to examine the effects of an educational game designed by the researcher for teaching information in the Turkish language and literature course on students' learning and students' thoughts on the use of educational games. In order to understand, analyze and critically evaluate texts in books in the Turkish language and literature course, students need some basic information about text types, authors, poets, literary periods, movements, concepts, etc. Similar results were obtained with studies conducted on the effects of using educational games on different courses. According to the results obtained from the examined studies, it was observed that games that are effective in the learning of students at primary and secondary school levels also have a positive effect on the learning of high school students. It was determined that high school students also wanted educational games to be used in their courses and that they thought that the use of educational games was necessary because they provided effective learning.

When the students' exam success scores applied before and after the game were taken into consideration, it can be said that the teaching carried out by including educational games significantly increased students' learning about works, artists, genres/forms and periods in the Turkish language and literature course. Teaching using educational games; enabled students to learn this information more easily. Lessons became fun, students had the opportunity to learn by having fun. Findings showed that students had positive thoughts about the use of educational games for Turkish language and literature lessons and other lessons.

Keywords: *Educational games, Turkish Language and Literature Teaching, Use of educational games in education and teaching.*

**TÜRK DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI DERSİNDE EĞİTİM AMAÇLI OYUNLARIN
KULLANIMINA İLİŞKİN ÖĞRENCİ GÖRÜŞLERİNİN İNCELENMESİ:
GÜMÜŞHANE İLİ ÖRNEĞİ – TÜRKİYE)**

Dr. Mustafa Çağrı ENGİN

Psikolojik Danışman, Dr. Erzurum İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü, Erzurum, Türkiye.

ORCID: [0000-0002-4825-2675](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4825-2675)

Professor Doctor Ali Osman ENGİN

Atatürk Üniversitesi, Kazım Karabekir Eğitim Fakültesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü, Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim Anabilim Dalı, Erzurum, Türkiye.

ORCID: 0000-0002-3705-6548.

Öğretmen Nuran KILIÇ

Master Student, MEB Teacher in Gümüşhane Turkey.

ORCID: 0009-0007-5682-8260

Özet

Bu çalışma, araştırmacı tarafından Türkçe dil ve edebiyat dersinde bilgi öğretimi için tasarlanan bir eğitim oyuncunun öğrencilerin öğrenimi ve eğitim oyunlarının kullanımındaki düşünceleri üzerindeki etkilerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Türkçe dil ve edebiyat dersinde kitaplardaki metinleri anlamak, analiz etmek ve eleştirel olarak değerlendirmek için öğrencilerin metin türleri, yazarlar, şairler, edebi dönemler, akımlar, kavramlar vb. hakkında bazı temel bilgilere ihtiyaçları vardır. Farklı derslerde eğitim oyunlarının kullanımının etkileri üzerine yapılan çalışmalarla benzer sonuçlar elde edilmiştir. İncelenen çalışmalarдан elde edilen sonuçlara göre, ilkokul ve ortaokul seviyesindeki öğrencilerin öğreniminde etkili olan oyuncuların lise öğrencilerinin öğreniminde de olumlu bir etkiye sahip olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Lise öğrencilerinin de derslerinde eğitim oyunlarının kullanılmasını istedikleri ve etkili öğrenme sağladıkları için eğitim oyunlarının kullanımının gereklili olduğunu düşündükleri belirlenmiştir.

Oyun öncesi ve sonrası uygulanan sınav başarı puanları dikkate alındığında, eğitim oyunlarının dahil edilmesiyle gerçekleştirilen öğretimin, Türkçe dil ve edebiyat dersinde eserler, sanatçilar, türler/birimler ve dönemler hakkındaki öğrencilerin öğrenimini önemli ölçüde artırdığı söylenebilir. Eğitim oyuncularının kullanımıyla öğretim; öğrencilerin bu bilgiyi daha kolay öğrenmelerini sağladı. Dersler eğlenceli hale geldi, öğrenciler eğlenerek öğrenme fırsatı buldu. Bulgular, öğrencilerin Türkçe dil ve edebiyat derslerinde ve diğer derslerde eğitim oyunlarının kullanımına ilişkin olumlu düşüncelere sahip olduklarını gösterdi.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Eğitim oyuncuları, Türkçe Dil ve Edebiyat Öğretimi, Eğitim ve öğretimde eğitim oyunlarının kullanımı.*

Introduction

From the beginning of life to the present day, people have constantly learned something and reinforced what they learned by repeating their practices; this reinforced information has been adopted and made permanent over time (Ülküdür, 2016). It is not possible to develop

children's creativity, independent thinking and problem-solving potential with traditional teaching methods (Kavasoğlu, 2010). In today's information and technology age, developments in every field have brought some changes in teaching environments; these changes have led teachers to organize learning-teaching activities in a way that is fun for students; to ensure that students learn willingly, lovingly and actively (Bakar et al. 2008; Bayırtepe and Tüzün, 2007; Çankaya and Karamete, 2008; Taşdemir and Şüyük, 2016; Yükseltürk and Altıok, 2016). For this purpose, game-based teaching environments are created by using games in which students learn by having fun, feel comfortable expressing themselves and can focus (Öztemiz and Önal, 2013; Ülküdür, 2016).

Information is meaningless unless it is processed. Students must actively participate in the lesson to make the information meaningful. In order to ensure active participation of the student in the lesson, new approaches developed in education and teaching must be implemented in the classroom; the use of teaching strategies and methods is also important for effective teaching. One of the new approaches is active learning and educational games have an important place in active learning. Students learn consciously or unconsciously thanks to their excitement and increased interest in the lesson. Thanks to games, both students actively participate in the lesson and teaching becomes effective (Kavasoğlu, 2010).

It is very important for educational environments to be organized in a way that supports social interaction and allows different experiences. For this reason, educational environments should be organized in a way that includes applications that focus on the student. As a requirement of the renewed curriculum, students should be supported with different educational activities in and out of class. (Bakar et al., 2008).

The aim of using educational games in the teaching process is to create a teaching environment supported by concrete materials where students can learn by doing and experiencing (Çavuş et al., 2011; Gülsoy, 2013). Educational games with a well-managed planning and implementation process will make learning easy and fun and will contribute to the development of students' cognitive, affective, psychomotor and social skills (Bayat et al., 2014).

According to constructivist teaching theories, the teacher plays the role of the person who facilitates the learner's learning. The teacher should prepare appropriate environmental conditions to facilitate learning, ask open-ended questions, offer options and guide the students. Instead of constantly lecturing in front of the student, the teacher should stay in the background and support the student. In addition, students with different characteristics should interact with each other and work together (Özkılıç, 2014).

When the distribution of scientific research on the use of educational games according to disciplines is examined; It has been observed that almost half of the studies on educational games were conducted in the field of science education and educational sciences, and it has been determined that the national scientific studies examined mostly preferred middle school, primary school and university students as samples (Karamustafaoglu and Kılıç, 2020).

No studies were found on the use of educational games in the Turkish language and literature course in the literature review. When the results of the research by Karamanoğlu and Kılıç (2020) were examined, it was seen that studies on the Turkish course were included, but statistical information on studies on the Turkish language and literature course was not included. In addition, the number of studies in which high school students were preferred as the study group and sample was limited. It is thought that the educational game used and the findings obtained from this study will contribute to revealing the positive effect of the use of educational games on high school students, to obtain information about student opinions on the use of educational games, and to show the relationship between the use of educational games and success.

Two problems were identified in this research conducted with the qualitative design method:

- 1) What are the opinions of high school students on the use of educational games?
- 2) Does teaching with educational games have an effect on students' learning?

Games and Educational Games

The Turkish Language Association (2023) defines games as “entertainment that develops talent and intelligence, has certain rules, and is useful for having a good time.” According to Piaget (1962), “games are harmony and games are actions that students determine and have clear rules for themselves” (Karadağ and Çalışkan, 2005). Educational games are fun teaching methods that allow students to reinforce the information they have learned and to repeat it in a more pleasant environment for the student (Baya et al., 2014; Güler, 2011). According to Hazar (1996), “Educational games are a very effective method in achieving the goals of school, lessons, units, and subjects” (p. 18). As the importance of games has been realized, their use for educational purposes has also increased. Today, games are frequently used as a teaching method. The reasons for the widespread use of games in education are that games are entertaining, facilitate concentration, can be adapted to individual and group work, can be customized for different lessons, and their rules can be adapted to the needs of the group playing them. (Erbaşan and Sağlam, 2023).

As the importance of games has been realized, their use for educational purposes has also increased. Today, games are frequently used as a teaching method. The reasons for the widespread use of games in education are that games are entertaining, facilitate concentration, can be adapted to individual and group work, can be customized for different lessons, and their rules can be adapted to the needs of the group playing them. (Erbaşan and Sağlam, 2023).

Related Researches

There are many studies conducted independently on educational games. It is thought that supporting lessons with educational games will contribute to the student's attitude towards the lesson, motivation, and development of creativity skills. Studies in the literature also support this idea (Çuha, 2004; Yurt, 2007; Baştug, 2015; Gedik, 2017; Gözalan and Koçak, 2014; Gülsøy 2013; Varışoğlu et al., 2013).

It was aimed to examine the descriptive and experimental studies on educational games in Turkey together and reach some generalized results. For this purpose, within the scope of the research, accessible descriptive and experimental articles on educational games in Turkey, proceedings presented and published in scientific congresses, and master's and doctoral theses accessible as PDF extensions from the YÖK National Thesis Center were examined. As a result of the examination, a total of 96 studies conducted on educational games in Turkey were reached. In total, of all the examined studies, 31 were on information technologies (26.7%), 22 were on mathematics (18.9%), 21 were on science (18.1%), 8 were on Turkish (6.8%), 7 were on social studies (6%), 6 were on foreign languages (5.1%), 5 were on physical education (4.3%), 3 were on religious culture and moral knowledge (2.5%), 4 were on preschool (3.4%), 2 were on music (1.7%), and 2 were on visual arts (1.7%). In addition, the subject area examined in 5 of all studies was not specified (%4.3) (Cop and Kablan, 2018).

While Cop and Kablan examined only descriptive and experimental studies on educational games in our country and published until 2017, the data collection process was carried out using the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) National Thesis Center, DergiPark Academic and Google Academic databases. The scope of the research consists of articles, reports and theses published between 2010-2019 on educational games. In this context, the specified databases were searched using the keywords "Educational game", "Gamification", "Game-based learning", "Educational computer game", "Digital game" and "Teaching with games" in order to access all academic studies on the specified educational games.

The scans were last updated on January 31, 2020, and a total of 122 scientific studies were reached, including 40 articles, 74 theses, and 8 reports (Karamustafaoglu and Kılıç, 2020). In a study conducted by Kula (2020), it was stated that games improve students' self-confidence, communication, and thinking skills. In addition, this study showed that games improve students' ability to cooperate, ensure active participation in lessons, reduce distractions by facilitating understanding, and increase motivation. The study also revealed that students try to cope with the feeling of failure they experience when they lose games, thus improving their ability to cope with failure situations by gaining self-confidence.

Method

Research Method

This section includes information on the research model, participants, data collection tools, data analysis, and the implementation stages of the research. In this research, a qualitative research approach was adopted and a case study design was used. According to Stake (1995) and Yin (2012), a case study is a research design used in many areas, especially in evaluation processes, in which the researcher analyzes a situation, often a program, event, action, process, or one or more individuals in depth (Cited by Creswell, 2017). According to Creswell (2007), a case study is a qualitative research approach in which the researcher examines one or more situations limited in time with data collection tools (observations, interviews, audiovisuals, documents, reports) that include multiple sources, and where situations and themes related to the situation are defined.

The case study method involves examining a single situation or event in depth and longitudinally, rather than following certain rules by examining a limited number of variables. Case studies are a way of looking at what is actually happening in the environment, systematically collecting data, analyzing it, and presenting results. The end product is a clear understanding of why the event happened that way and what needs to be focused on in more detail for future research. For this reason, the special case method is more suitable for producing or presenting something rather than testing or hypothesizing (Davey, 1991).

In this study, the case study design, which is one of the qualitative research approaches, was used because it was aimed to obtain in-depth information about the students' views on the use of educational games in the Turkish language and literature course, to present a cross-section of the existing situation, to examine the participants' perspectives in detail, to have information about the effect of the use of educational games on learning, and to describe these situations in detail. In the study, the views of eleven 12th grade students on the use of educational games in the Turkish language and literature course were examined. At the same time, the difference between traditional teaching and teaching with games was tried to be revealed with a short-answer test applied before and after the game.

Participants

The participants of this study are 12th grade students studying at a state high school in Gümüşhane province in the spring of 2023-2024. Before the study, the necessary institutional, parental and student permissions were obtained (see ANNEX-1, ANNEX-2, ANNEX-3).

Information on the participants is shown in Table-2.1.

Table 2.1.

Information on the Participants

Male	Female	Total
5	6	11

Data Collection Tools

In the study, the educational game prepared by the researcher, short-answer test questions prepared by selecting from the questions in the educational game and semi-structured interview form prepared by the researcher were used as data collection tools. (For the data collection tools used, see ANNEX-4, ANNEX-5, ANNEX-6)

Data Analysis

In the first stage, volunteer students were determined and information about the research was provided. Since the students participating in the study were 12th grade students, subject repetitions were carried out in classes and Support and Training Courses with traditional methods. After the traditional explanation, a test consisting of twenty short-answer questions, which were also included in the questions of the game, was applied to the students. The scores obtained from this test were recorded.

In the second stage, the students played the game in groups and the prepared test was applied to the students again. The scores of the test applied before the game and the test applied after the game were compared and tabulated.

The test scores obtained before and after the game are shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2.

Pre-Game and Post-Game Test Scores of Participants

Participant Numbers	Test Score Before the Game	Test Score After the Game
Participant 1	40	75

Participant 2	65	90
Participant 3	50	80
Participant 4	70	95
Participant 5	60	90
Participant 6	50	80
Participant 7	10	80
Participant 8	50	85
Participant 9	25	65
Participant 10	25	75
Participant 11	15	60

Afterwards, semi-structured interview questions were directed to the participants and student opinions were obtained regarding the use of educational games. The opinions of two students for three levels determined as low, medium and good levels were examined in depth based on the test scores applied before the game.

Low Achievement Level Student 1 (Participant 7)

Researcher (A): Do you think educational games will/do make the lesson fun?

Participant 7 (F 7): Yes, they make it fun; they create a sweet competition environment with my friends.

A: What do you think about the necessity of using educational games in Turkish language and literature lessons?

F 7: I think it is necessary because it makes what we learn more permanent.

A: What do you think about the effect of using educational games in Turkish language and literature lessons on the memorability of the information learned?

F 7: It increases permanence because it helps to repeat information.

A: What is the effect of using educational games in Turkish language and literature lessons on the active learning?

F 7: Since we learn by playing, it allows us to be active in the process.

A: Do you think there will be/are differences between Turkish language and literature lessons supported by educational games and Turkish language and literature lessons with normal activities? If there are differences, what are they?

K 7: There is a difference, the desire to learn increases in lessons learned through games.

A: Do you think that educational games will provide social skills in addition to the achievements of the Turkish language and literature lesson? If so, what social skills do they provide?

K 7: It improves our relationships with our friends and our socialization skills.

A: Do you want educational games to be used in other lessons as well, why?

K 7: I want it, I think it is important in terms of socialization and effective learning.

Low Achievement Student 2 (Participant 11)

A: Do you think educational games will make the lesson fun?

Participant 11 (P 11): Yes, I do. Since we learn by having fun, the information becomes more permanent and learning becomes easier.

A: What do you think about the necessity of using educational games in Turkish language and literature lessons?

K 11: I think it is necessary because the games played make the lessons more fun and fluent.

A: What do you think about the effect of using educational games in Turkish language and literature lessons on the memorability of the information learned?

K 11: I think that the information is more permanent because it allows us to learn different information and tactics from our friends and to learn by having fun.

A: How does using educational games in Turkish language and literature lessons affect active learning?

K 11: It has a great effect. By constantly playing and repeating the game, we keep the information active and make it permanent.

A: Do you think there will be/are differences between Turkish language and literature lessons supported by educational games and Turkish language and literature lessons with normal activities? If so, what are the differences?

K 11: Since different activities will attract the attention of the students, participation in the lesson and socialization will increase.

A: Do you think that educational games will provide social skills in addition to the achievements of Turkish language and literature lessons? If so, what social skills will they provide?

K 11: Yes, I do. It provides skills such as communication with friends in the team, self-expression, gaining self-confidence, and learning to compete.

A: Would you like educational games to be used in other courses, why?

K 11: Yes, I would like to because I learned many things I did not know with the game in literature class; I think the same result will be obtained in other courses.

Achievement Level Medium Student 1 (Participant 3)

A: Do you think educational games will make the course fun?

Participant 3 (K 3): I think the courses will be more enjoyable and educational.

A: What do you think about the necessity of using educational games in Turkish language and literature courses?

K 3: It is necessary because it allows us to both have fun and learn. I think the course learned in this way will be more memorable.

A: What do you think about the effect of using educational games in Turkish language and literature courses on the memorability of the information learned?

K 3: Since we learn by having fun, we provide more permanent learning and we also have the opportunity to learn things we do not know from our friends.

A: What is the effect of using educational games in Turkish language and literature classes on active learning?

K 3: Since students are more active while playing games, the class is more productive and the retention of knowledge increases.

A: Do you think there will be/are differences between Turkish language and literature classes supported by educational games and Turkish language and literature classes with normal activities? If there are differences, what are the differences?

K 3: There is a difference, lessons learned with games are more productive, and the student's desire to learn increases.

A: In addition to the achievements of Turkish language and literature classes, educational games also contribute to social skills.

A: Do you think there will be/are any differences between the Turkish language and literature course supported by educational games and the Turkish language and literature course with normal activities? If so, what are the differences?

K 8: Since Turkish language and literature is a verbal course, students can get bored and learn by necessity. In courses supported by educational games, students both learn willingly and are more excited and curious.

A: Do you think that educational games will provide social skills in addition to the achievements of the Turkish language and literature course? If so, what social skills do they provide?

K 8: Yes, I do. They help students learn to overcome their excitement, gain courage, improve communication with friends, learn to cooperate and develop speaking skills.

A: Do you want educational games to be used in other courses, why?

K 8: Yes, I would like it because what is learned will be more permanent. All courses

are loved this way and the courses are taught in an entertaining way.

High Success Student 1 (Participant 2)

A: Do you think educational games will/do they make the lesson fun?

Participant 2 (F 2): Yes, because we both have fun and learn while playing.

A: What do you think about the necessity of using educational games in Turkish language and literature?

F 2: I think it is necessary because information is more permanent thanks to games.

A: What do you think about the effect of using educational games in Turkish language and literature on the memorability of the information learned?

F 2: I think that information learned while having fun is more effective in terms of memorability.

A: What is the effect of using educational games in Turkish language and literature on the active learning?

F 2: I think it helps learning.

A: Do you think there will be/are differences between Turkish language and literature lessons supported by educational games and Turkish language and literature lessons with normal activities? If there are differences, what are they?

F 2: I think literature lessons learned with games are more educational and fun.

A: Do you think that educational games will provide social skills in addition to the achievements of the Turkish language and literature course? If so, which social skills do they provide?

K 2: Yes, I think they do. I think they contribute to communication, solidarity, unity, and social skills.

A: Do you want educational games to be used in other courses, why?

K 2: Yes, they should be applied especially for numerical courses because courses can sometimes be boring. I think that information learned while having fun is more memorable.

High-Achievement Student 2 (Participant 4)

A: Do you think that educational games will/do make the course fun?

Participant 4 (P 4): Yes, they allow us to both have fun and learn.

A: What do you think about the necessity of using educational games in Turkish language and literature courses?

K 4: It is necessary because it prevents us from getting bored in class.

A: What do you think about the effect of using educational games in Turkish language and literature courses on the memorability of the information learned?

K 4: Since we play the game with pleasure, it becomes easier for the information to be remembered.

A: What is the effect of using educational games in Turkish language and literature classes on active learning?

K 4: Thanks to games, we learn things we don't know and when we come across this information again, we don't have the situation of making mistakes or not knowing.

A: Do you think there will be/are differences between Turkish language and literature classes supported by educational games and Turkish language and literature classes with normal activities? If there are differences, what are the differences?

K 4: I think there will be differences because when only verbal expressions are used and no practice is done, the information is not permanent, while what is learned through games is more permanent. In addition, we do not forget the mistakes we make while playing games.

A: Do you think that educational games will provide social skills in addition to the achievements of Turkish language and literature classes? If so, which social skills do they provide?

K 4: I think, they provide socialization and sharing of information among people.

A: Would you like educational games to be used in other classes as well, why?

K 4: I would like to, I think teaching through games is more enjoyable and Educational.

Findings and Recomendations

All six students selected from different success levels stated that using educational games made lessons more fun. The use of educational games was deemed necessary by the students who expressed their opinions on the points that it creates a competitive environment, provides the opportunity to learn by having fun, makes the lesson enjoyable, makes learning easier and makes the information more permanent. It was stated that the information learned with educational games is recorded in long-term memory and more permanent learning is provided due to the fact that it provides repetition of the subject and provides the opportunity to learn new information and tactics from friends. It was said that since it is student-centered rather than teacher-centered, it enables students to be more active in the learning process and the lesson is more productive for the students.

When the lessons using the traditional narration method and the lessons using educational games are compared, it was commented that the lessons using educational games are more remarkable, increase the desire to learn, provide active participation and socialization in the lesson, keep the student excited and curious and save the lesson from boredom, offer the opportunity to learn from mistakes, and are more educational and instructive.

It was stated that educational games provide permanent learning as well as providing and developing different personal and social skills. Strengthening friendships, providing socialization, learning to compete, gaining self-confidence, feeling team spirit, gaining motivation, learning to overcome excitement, gaining courage, learning to cooperate, developing communication and speaking skills, and providing solidarity are stated as skills that educational games contribute to.

All of the students stated that they wanted educational games to be used in other courses for reasons such as providing effective learning, making the course enjoyable, providing a fun learning environment, and providing more permanent learning. When the effect of educational games on course success was examined, it was determined that there was a positive increase. For example; the student with the lowest score of 10 points in the exam administered before the game experienced a 70-point increase by getting 80 points in the exam administered after the game. Similarly, the student with the highest score of 70 points in the exam administered before the game experienced a 25-point increase by getting 95 points in the exam administered after the game. A similar increase was observed in the exam success scores of all participants after the game. The increase in exam scores varied between 25 and 70 points.

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