

The Role of Oral History in Acquiring Chronological Thinking Skills and Perception of Change and Continuity Skills via Van Weddings

¹Aydın Güven^{ID}, ^{2*}Rüstem Çurku^{ID}

¹Atatürk University, Erzurum, Turkey, ²Ministry of National Education, Van, Turkey

*Corresponding author: rustemcurku040@gmail.com

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to reveal the contributions of oral history practices about the wedding traditions in Van to enable students acquire skills in chronological thinking and perception of change and continuity. The research was conducted using a case study, which is one of the qualitative research methods, and convenience sampling was employed within the framework of purposeful sampling in the study. Students conducted interviews with 60 volunteer participants, who were family members aged 50 and above regarding Van wedding traditions. The students prepared a report based on the participant's statements, and interviews were conducted with the participating students to monitor and assess the study. Data collection tools such as documents, semi-structured interview forms, and focus group interviews were utilized. In the study, the data obtained regarding students' skills in perceiving change as well as continuity chronological thinking skills were evaluated using checklists developed by the researcher. Descriptive analysis was performed on the data. This research revealed that the students were able to evaluate history from a broad perspective both chronologically and culturally, according to the determined criteria and they were also able to comprehend the reasons behind the occurrence of events from the past to the present. Additionally, it was determined that students were able to identify what has changed and what has remained unchanged in terms of their skills in perceiving change and continuity.

KeyWords: chronology, chronological thinking, change and continuity, historical thinking skill, oral history

Introduction

One of the major challenges in history education is that history lessons fail to capture students' interest and do not form a meaningful whole for them. It is possible to benefit from oral history in order to enhance students' interest in history and eliminate monotony in lessons. Oral history differs from the traditional understanding of history as it adopts a student-centred rather than a teacher-centred approach. Through this method, students can acquire numerous concepts and behaviours that are expected to be learned in history courses (Gazel, 2015, p. 110). In this context, oral history plays a crucial role in making history lessons engaging, comprehensible and bridging the gap between the past and the present. The traditional understanding of education often resulted in students who merely memorized information without being able to think critically, generate ideas, or provide alternative solutions to problems; however, this model has changed thanks to the inclusion of the constructivist approach in curricula and the activities carried out. Consequently, students' capacities need to be developed in order to adapt to the changing world.

Oral history studies provide an opportunity for students to enhance their empathy skills, critical thinking abilities, and historical thinking skills in an increasingly globalized world. These activities are incorporated into Social Studies and history curricula, aligning with the new educational understanding, which aims to move away from rote memorization and actively involve students in the historical process. Furthermore, these activities enable students to work as little scientists or historians, raising awareness and finding enjoyment in what they do (İncegöl, 2010, pp. 1-2). It is expected to train well-equipped individuals with different perspectives from history teaching in Turkey. In this context, there is a need for modern approaches like oral history in history education (Kumru, 2009, pp. 1-2). It has been stated in literature that students' perspectives on history and events can change with the oral history practices. Moreover, it has been revealed that students can acquire important skills (historical thinking, communication, overcoming anxiety, gaining self-confidence, perceiving change and continuity, interview methods, analysis, interpretation, report writing, and developing sense of responsibility (Dere & Dinç, 2018, p. 122; Işık, 2011, p. 1300; İncegöl, 2010, pp. 96-97; Kandemir, 2017, p. 44; Küpüç, 2014, p. 43; Öztürk, 2010, p. 25; Sarı, 2007, p. 129; Uygun, 2006, p. 29).

The domain-specific competencies and skills section of the 2018 History Course Curriculum aimed to have the students act like a scientist and learn the steps they need to follow. Within this framework, the curriculum identifies various historical

thinking skills that students should acquire. These skills include chronological thinking, historical comprehension, establishing cause-effect relationship, perceiving change and continuity, research based on historical inquiry, historical analysis and interpretation, historical problem analysis and decision making, understanding and appreciating the perspectives, values, and experiences of people in the past, or historical empathy (MoNE, 2018, pp. 12-15).

Chronological thinking, which is one of the historical thinking skills, can also be described as applied time. The chronology mentioned here is a linear historical classification of events and is central to historical thinking. Contrary to chronology, chronological thinking encompasses a more intricate framework that necessitates comprehending the cause-effect relationships and the change within the process (Seefeldt, Castle & Falcaoner, 2015, p. 209). Historical time is another concept that should be known about chronological thinking. Historical time can be defined as the timeframe represented by specific dates its components include (Haydn, Stephen, Arthur & Hunt, 2014, p. 89).

Chronology, as a significant concept in comprehending historical events and establishing their interrelationships, entails more than a mere sequence of past events. It necessitates an understanding of the cause-and-effect relationship and the change and transformation within historical movements (Drake & Nelson, 2005, p. 81).

In order to effectively teach history subjects, it is essential to understand how events occurring over time are measured in terms of their duration and how these periods are expressed. Students should accurately date historical events, develop a cognitive framework for comprehending the passage of time, and cultivate a strong understanding of chronological thinking (Haydn et al. 2014, p. 131).

Within this context, the research results regarding the development of students' perception skills related to chronological thinking are as follows:

- Students can understand expressions related to time and chronology at a young age, and they can use a clear language when expressing issues related to these concepts,
- Using visual resources (materials) can make the classification of events related to these concepts easier and activities based on visual materials can be conducted to facilitate the development and continuity of students' cognitive levels regarding their perception of chronology and time.

- Teaching time and chronology in relation to historical buildings and objects can contribute to students' understanding of these concepts,

- To enhance students' awareness of these concepts, it may be necessary for them to have more access to and immerse themselves in both visual and written sources in order to prevent errors in categorizing and dating events (Phillips, 2002, pp. 101-110).

When implementing chronological thinking, it is crucial to specify the structure of historical process and historical classification. In addition, teachers should guide students to interpret the changes and continuities in technology, institutions, values, traditions, and beliefs within a cause-effect relationship. Thus, educators will assume the role of guiding children in interpreting the causes and effects of events that take place within a specific period of time in their chronological thoughts (Drake & Nelson, 2005, p. 83).

The National Centre for History in the Schools (NCHS) has defined the standards for a student's perception of chronological thinking skills as follows on its website:

- Distinguishing between past, present, and future time,
- Identifying the temporal structure (before, after) in a historical story or narrative,
- Establishing temporal or chronological order in constructing their own historical narratives or creating a historical text based on a specific timeline,
- Explaining historical change and continuity,
- Comparing alternative approaches for periodization and suggesting alternative ways of organizing historical periods,
- Displaying competencies in measuring and calculating calendar time,
- Comparing alternative models for periodization (National Centre for History in the Schools. [NCHS], 2020).

Studies on the significance of chronology and time in history education were conducted primarily in England during the first quarter of the twentieth century. The research conducted during the 1920s and 1970s, which marked the initial phase of these studies, highlighted the incompetence of young students in terms of their knowledge and perception of time. The studies conducted during this period were built upon Piaget's theory, which emphasizes the positive relationship between

learning and maturation (Hoodles, 2002, pp. 175-178). Researchers during this period, including Levin, Friedman, Gilat, Berndt, Wood, Smith, and Thomlinson, conducted studies that were grounded in Piaget's theory (Aktin & Dilek, 2016, p. 130).

The second period of studies took place from 1980 onwards, during which Bruner introduced a new perspective on education. Bruner emphasized that any subject could be taught to any child, regardless of their age. This approach also applied to history education, where students could explore historical concepts and engage in the process of thinking like a scientist or historian (Bruner, 1999, p. 17; Hunkins & Ornstein, 2018, p. 176).

The studies conducted in the second period revealed that children's learning can occur at varying ages and rates. In addition, the significance of factors such as memory, social environment, attention, perception, and language development in relation to the perception of time was emphasized. Researchers such as Stow, Haydn, Donaldson, Thorndon, Vukelich, Alleman, Brophy, Egan, Seefeldt, Zembat et al., Dilek, Aslan, Çulha, Hacısalihoğlu, Özdemir, Şengül, Coşkun and Ünsal have conducted important studies on the perception of time (Aktin & Dilek, 2016, pp. 130-131; Çulha & Aslan, 2008, p. 105; Dilek, 2007, p. 67).

In addition to the concepts of time and chronology, the concept of change and continuity has also gained prominence in history. Change and continuity are key elements within the objectives and learning outcomes of history and social studies education in developed countries. It is essential to teach these concepts to students through effective teaching activities. By acquiring these concepts and skills, students will be able to perceive the past and the present, discerning what has changed and what has remained constant, as well as recognizing the influences of the past on the present. It is important to pose certain questions that help unveil this understanding. Some relevant questions include the following: How-rapidly does change occur?, What aspects undergo change?, and what remains unchanged?, Where does change occur?, and in which areas does it show limited or minimal impact? (Culpin, 1996, p. 130).

In addition to revealing what students can do with the acquisition of the concepts of change and continuity, it is necessary to highlight some of the qualities that understanding of change and continuity can enable them to develop: These qualities include the following: Examining the connections and interactions between societies and different historical periods that are studied and taught, understanding the outcomes and significance of historical movements (change-transformation), perceiving diverse movements and tendencies that occur during different historical

periods, and comprehending and considering the importance of change in research (Phillips, 2002, p. 101).

In order to effectively teach the concepts of change and continuity, it is important to implement a variety of teaching activities that actively engage and empower students. Some effective methods to consider include concentrating on a framework (structure), incorporating timeline-diagrams and graphics related to the movement of change and transformation, and encouraging comparative studies. Moreover, it is crucial to include the following approaches while teaching the concepts of change and continuity: Comparing changes that occur throughout the life span of individuals in various historical periods or processes, encouraging students to develop multiple perspectives, utilizing hypothesis-based question implementing classification-debate activities, and identifying and addressing misperceptions (Haydn et al. 2014, pp. 133- 137).

Based on Seixas' (2006) Criteria for Historical Thinking: A Framework for the Canadian Assessment and Evaluation System (as cited in Yalı, 2018, pp. 245-246) the perception of change and continuity skills in students can be summarized as follows:

- Students should be able to identify and distinguish between what has changed and what has remained the same over time in historical contexts.
- Students should be able to assess and evaluate the nature of change over time considering whether it represents progress, development, decline, or regression in historical processes,
- Students should be able to analyse the organization and categorization of continuity and change in historical periods,
- Students should be able to analyse and interpret the progress and decline experienced by various groups during a specific historical period,
- Students should be able to interpret change and continuity in areas such as technology, values, traditions, and beliefs exploring the cause and consequence relationships.

The emergence of a new perspective on history in the 1970s in England brought significant advancements to history education. This new understanding of history encompassed various concepts such as the development of thinking skills, the use of investigative methods, the interpretation and evaluation of evidence, the cultivation of empathy, the exploration of causality, and the examination of change and

continuity (Ata, 1999, p. 2). The publication titled *Educational Objectives for the Study of History*” by Coltham and Fines in 1971 presented the teaching of history as an independent discipline and outlined a collection of skills and abilities that students should acquire through history education (Demircioğlu, 2009, p. 229).

The aim of this research was to investigate the impact of oral history practices related to weddings in Van on students with a focus on their acquisition of skills in perceiving change and continuity, as well as chronological thinking. In pursuit of this goal, the study aimed to address the following question: What are the impacts of oral practices related to weddings in Van, spanning from past to present, on students’ acquisition of skills in perceiving change and continuity, as well as chronological thinking, which is one of the historical thinking skills? In light of this problem, the study aimed to address the following research questions:

1. How do the participants (students) perceive the contributions of oral history studies to their acquisition of chronological thinking skills?
2. How do the participants (students) perceive the contributions of oral history studies to their acquisition of skills in perceiving change and continuity?

Method

Research Design

Qualitative data collection methods and tools were utilized in the research. This method was employed to obtain rich descriptions, understand the meanings individuals attribute to their experiences, and comprehend how they shape the world through an inductive process regarding Van weddings (Merriam, 2015, pp. 13-17). Qualitative research can be described as a type of research where data is gathered in a natural setting using multiple methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis. In addition, the collected data is presented in a comprehensive manner, organized, and expressed through emerging categories, themes, patterns that encompass all data sources, and researchers fully engage themselves in their studies (Creswell, 2013, pp. 45-47). In this study, an attempt was made to provide methodological diversity by using research techniques such as focus group discussions and document analysis that are appropriate for the research design.

The study followed a qualitative research design, specifically utilizing the case study approach. The study was structured as a holistic case study, specifically employing the embedded type 2 design. In a case study, a bounded system, such as a specific student or program, is selected as the unit of analysis. A case study requires a well-defined and bounded structure (Stake, 2006, p. 1). Furthermore, a case study aims to

investigate a contemporary phenomenon in-depth, within its real-life context (Yin, 2009, p. 18).

This study was conducted based on data collected from participants consisting of students attending a high school in Tuşba, Van and their parents. Considering the high school in Tuşba, Van as the primary unit of analysis, the students and their parents can be seen as sub-units or mini cases within this broader context. Therefore, a holistic case study design, specifically an embedded single case study design, was employed in this study.

The study group of the research

In this study, the study group was selected using convenience sampling, which falls under the category of purposeful sampling, given the qualitative nature of the research. Purposeful sampling involves deliberately selecting cases or individuals that can provide rich and insightful information for in-depth investigation. Through purposeful sampling, researchers aim to uncover and explain the relationships between various phenomena and events (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2014, p. 90). Sample selection in qualitative designs considers factors such as accessibility and cost (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 141). Given the time-consuming and costly nature of oral history studies, the researcher chose the school where he works, the students who study in that school, and the parents of those students as the study participants. This selection was made for several reasons, including the ability to collect the required information (data) quickly, the cost-effectiveness of the study, time efficiency, and ease of access to the chosen participants. The study group of the research consists of a total of 19 students (10 girls, 9 boys) who volunteered to participate in the study and continued their education in 2017-2018 academic year in a high school in Tuşba, Van.

Data collection tools and analysis

In accordance with the research design, this study utilized focus group interviews and document analysis as data collection methods. Additionally, checklists specifically designed to assess the acquisition of perception of change and continuity skills and chronological thinking skills were employed (Büyüköztürk et al. 2014, p. 253). The utilization of multiple data sources, data collection techniques, and data analysis methods with triangulation in this study served multiple purposes. Firstly, it aimed to enhance the credibility of the research findings by providing verification and convincing the reader. Secondly, it facilitated the evaluation of the research results from various perspectives. Lastly, it ensured the validity and reliability of the results.

The study's required permissions were acquired through the correspondence exchanged between the Institute of Educational Sciences at Atatürk University, dated 03.11.2017, and the Van Provincial Directorate of National Education, dated 28-29-30.11.2017. In addition, an official request for permission was submitted to the administration of a high school in Tuşba, a district of Van. Following the successful acquisition of the required permissions, consent forms were obtained from both the students and their parents, ensuring their voluntary participation. Subsequently, the process was finalized. The study also obtained ethics committee approval from the Ethics Committee Unit of Educational Sciences at Atatürk University, with a decision dated 18.06.2021 and 06/13.

For the study, the participating students conducted interviews with 60 volunteer participants who were family members aged 50 and above. These interviews were conducted using an interview form that consisted of 24 questions. The formulation of these questions resulted from expert evaluation. Upon conducting interviews with the parents, the students collected the required information and produced 23 reports. These student reports, which focused on the research problem, were subsequently incorporated into the research for document analysis.

Focus group interviews were employed to gain insight into the perspectives and emotions of the students regarding Van wedding traditions and to uncover any concealed or undisclosed information. A focus group interview can be described as a series of thoughtfully designed discussions conducted within a safe and non-threatening environment, with the purpose of obtaining perceptions related to a predetermined area of interest (Krueger & Casey, 2000, pp. 4-5). The focus group interviews involved 6 students who took part in the study and prepared a report. During the focus group interviews, the students were asked 8 questions about their reasons for liking/disliking the oral history activity, contributions this practice had made to them, the customs and rituals associated with Van weddings from the past to the present (including activities conducted before, during, and after the weddings), the current practices and the similarities and differences between contemporary weddings and those of the past.

In addition, the focus group interview was video recorded to enhance the reliability of the study. The data gathered from the reports and focus group interviews, which were prepared by the students regarding the perception of change and continuity skills and chronological thinking skills, were also evaluated by the researcher. This evaluation was carried out using checklists that were developed based on relevant literature.

Based on the criteria determined in the relevant literature (Demircioğlu & Akengin, 2012, p. 201; Drake & Nelson, 2005, p. 83) and the National Centre for History in

the Schools (NCHS) at the University of California, a four-item checklist was developed in the study to evaluate students' chronological thinking skills. Additionally, for the evaluation of perception of change and continuity skills, a checklist was prepared by benefiting from Seixas' relevant study (as cited by Yalı from 2006, 2018, pp. 245-246).

After conducting the interviews, the students analysed the audio recordings and transcribed them. They then compared the data they obtained from the interviews with the information they gathered from the secondary sources such as books, papers, and the internet. This comparative analysis was utilized in the evaluation process of the studied subject. Moreover, the students compared the past and the present, aiming to identify the wedding traditions that have undergone changes and those that have remained unchanged.

The researcher evaluated the data obtained from student reports and focus group interviews concerning students' perceptions of change and continuity skills and chronological thinking skills. This evaluation was conducted based on checklists developed in accordance with the relevant literature. The data obtained from the evaluation were subject to descriptive analysis. In the descriptive analysis, the data is processed and interpreted based on pre-determined themes. These themes can either emerge from the research questions, or be aligned with the questions or dimensions used during the interviews or observations. Quotations are frequently utilized in this analysis, aiming to present the findings to the reader in a well-structured and interpreted manner (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 256).

In this study, student reports were assigned codes R1, R2, and students who took part in the focus group interviews were assigned codes FG1, FG2.

Findings

Findings Regarding the Evaluation of Student Reports Based on the Criteria of Perception of Change and Continuity Skills and Chronological Thinking Skills

Based on the established criteria, the students' demonstration of chronological thinking skills, as evidenced by their prepared reports, are as follows:

Table 1. Students' Demonstration of Chronological Thinking Skills Based on Their Prepared Reports

Opinions

f

Distinguishing between past, present, present, and future time	19
Evaluating history in a chronological and cultural sense.	10
Understanding the causes of events from the past to the present	7
Analysing change and continuity in historical time	6
Total	42

Upon reviewing Table 1, it became evident that the primary criterion for evaluating students' chronological thinking skills is their ability to differentiate between past, present, and future time. In the reports prepared by the students, it was found that 19 students addressed this criterion. The findings indicate that, it was understood that the students can evaluate past (before)-present (current) and distinguish between these related concepts. The following statements extracted from the students' reports exemplify their understanding of this subject:

R23 “... *In the past, the elders of the family prepared the meals. After the wedding, the leftovers were kept and then eaten, but now they are thrown into the garbage. That is, there is a great difference between our old weddings and our current weddings. The message that is meant to be given in this report is only the name of the weddings... When we look at the essence of the matter, all our weddings have changed chronologically. Our aim in this study is to remind our old customs to the new generation youth of the future...*”

It was discovered that the second criterion for assessing students' chronological thinking skills is their ability to evaluate history from a chronological and cultural perspective, and 10 students addressed this criterion in their reports, demonstrating their capability to intricately evaluate and interpret history in a chronological and cultural context. The following statements, extracted from the students' reports, exemplify their understanding of this criterion:

R7 “... *when we look at the traditions applied in engagement ceremonies in the past, the elder members of the family came together and chatted to create a stronger bond.*”

Nowadays, despite holding a crowded engagement ceremony, our old traditions have unfortunately lost their value... In the past, city and village weddings were more local because there was not much urbanization in the past. But today, because the cities and village have developed a lot, there are not only similarities but also differences due to the facilities offered by the cities ... ”

Upon analysis, it was determined that the third criterion for evaluating chronological thinking skills is the understanding of the causes of events from the past to the present. Out of the reports examined, 7 students addressed this criterion, demonstrating their ability to comprehend the causes behind historical events and how and why they occurred. The following statements, derived from the students' reports, exemplify their understanding of this criterion:

R3 “... *When we look at the changes and transformations experienced in weddings, education and training opportunities are increasing from the past to the present, financial opportunities are developing; therefore, people's perceptions, attitudes, time and conditions are changing... traditionalism is decreasing, all kinds of needs can be met... technology is developing, modern age and needs require it, everything becomes ready. Today, the places where men and women come together are increasing more and more (cafes, discos, etc.) and of course, socialization is increasing...*”

It was discovered that the fourth criterion for evaluating students' chronological thinking skills is their ability to analyse the changes and continuity within historical time. Out of the reports examined, 6 students addressed this criterion. According to the findings obtained from the reports, it was understood that the students can demonstrate the change and continuity of historical time from the past to the present and analyse these developments. The statements extracted from the students' reports regarding this subject are as follows:

R15 “*In the past, the bride could not talk to her father-in-law after she got married, she could not eat dinner with her family members, the bride and groom could not show affection and love to their children in the presence of their elders, these were shameful situations... nowadays, brides do not live in the same house with their father-in-law, the places to get together have increased in number, socialization has increased, but people have become selfish, our values have degenerated, love-respect is lost. and spouses can act as they wish...*”

Based on the evaluated criteria, the students' demonstration of skills related to perceiving change and continuity are as follows in the prepared reports:

Table 2. Students' Demonstration of Perception of Change and Continuity Skills Based on Their Prepared Reports

Opinions	f
Recognizing changes in historical events	14
Evaluating change over time	12
Making periodic classification in the organization of the understanding of continuity and change	11
Interpreting change and continuity within cause and effect relationships	11
Total	48

Upon analysing Table 2, it became evident that the initial criterion for evaluating the skills related to perceiving change and continuity is awareness of changes in historical events. It was observed that 14 students addressed this criterion in their reports. Based on the findings-derived from these reports, it was determined that the students can explain both the changes and the continuities within any given historical period. The following statements were extracted from the reports prepared by the students regarding this topic:

R21 “... in the past, small gifts were given to those who were not financially able to ask for a girl's hand before the wedding (needle, leaf, broom, thread, bread with walnuts)... nowadays, the opportunities have increased, everything (eg., house, land, car, etc.) is given before, during, or after the wedding, anyone gives gifts as they wish... gift giving continues, but its quality has changed, jewellery-valuable presents are given and there is even pinning money on the newly married couples' garments ...”

It was discovered that the second criterion for evaluating the the skills related to perceiving change and continuity is the evaluation of changes over time and it was reported by 12 students in their respective reports. Based on the findings derived from these reports, it was concluded that the students can evaluate changes over time, including progress, development, decline, or regression. The following statements were extracted from the students' reports, illustrating their understanding and evaluation of changes over time:

R11 *"...before, there was love, respect, shame... today, elderly is neglected and ignored, people have become selfish, the concepts of love-respect-decency and shame are lost... In the past, opportunities were few, there was no variety, but now technology has developed, opportunities and variety of things have increased, people's perspectives have changed..."*

It was determined that the third criterion for evaluating the skills related to perceiving change and continuity skills is the ability to make periodic classification in organizing the understanding of continuity and change, and this criterion was addressed by 11 students in their reports. Based on the findings derived from these reports, it was concluded that the students can categorize and classify historical events into relevant periods or timeframes to better comprehend continuity and change. The following statements were extracted from the students' reports:

R9 *"... according to the responses we received, in the past, some people got married at an early age, people did not see each other much when they were engaged because it was considered shame and disgrace to meet before marriage... In the past when people went to ask for a girl's hand, it was the father, uncle and the elders of the family who used to go to ask for a girl's hand, and the elders used to talk among themselves, and they agreed. It was not like that now. Today, young people agree and make promises between themselves... Although the weddings of the previous generation were local, the rules were very strict. The weddings of the current generation are also traditional, but couples can move freely..."*

It was discovered that the fourth criterion for evaluating the skills related to perceiving change and continuity is the ability to interpret change and continuity within a cause and effect relationship and this criterion was addressed by 11 students in their reports. Based on the findings derived from these reports, it was concluded that the students can interpret the change and continuity in technology, institutions, values, traditions, and beliefs within a cause-and-effect relationship during the organization of understanding of change and continuity. The following statements were extracted from the students' reports:

R18 “...In the past, wedding meals were prepared at home, now ready-made meals delivered by the factories/catering companies are served. While weddings were held in the garden of the house, now weddings are held in the wedding-ceremony halls... we encounter this situation in our interviews and related works... technology has developed, the rate of literacy has increased, the number of factories has increased with industrialization, everything used to be difficult in the past, but now it is more comfortable. However, we have lost most of our values... In the past, mostly religious marriages were performed by imams, but now couples cannot get married without an official marriage. Such harmful traditions as throwing an apple on a bride’s head have disappeared because of increasing awareness ...”

Findings on the Evaluation of the Focus Group Interviews Regarding the Criteria of Perception of Chronological Thinking and Change and Continuity Skills

During the focus group meetings conducted as part of an oral history study, the students were prompted to discuss the similarities and differences between the Van weddings in the past and present. They were also asked to express their opinions on the changes and transformations observed in these weddings. The purpose is to examine the impact of oral history practices on students’ development of perception of change and continuity skills, and as well as chronological thinking skills. Based on the focus group interviews, the students’ demonstration of chronological thinking skills are as follows based on the specified criteria:

Table 3. Students’ Demonstration of Chronological Thinking Skills Based on the Focus Group Interviews

Opinions	f
Differentiating the past, present, and future	6
Comprehensive evaluation of history in a chronological and cultural sense	6
Understanding the causes of events from the past to the present	5
Analysing change and continuity in historical time	5

Upon examining Table 3, it was discovered that the first criterion in the evaluation of students' chronological thinking skills pertains to the ability to differentiate between past, present, and future time and it was indicated by 6 students during the focus group interviews. Based on the findings obtained from these interviews, it became evident that the students can assess and distinguish the past (before)-present (current). The following statements were expressed by the students during the focus group interviews:

FG5 *"... Let me compare the past with the present. In the past one of the pre-wedding preparations was clothing. The bride used to wear a dress that her father bought, that is, she had a white dress sewed at that time, and put it on. On the other hand, the groom would buy a suit as it happens now, if he had the means. If he did not have money, he would borrow a friend's suit and wear it... Today, things have changed. Everyone goes shopping for the wedding and chooses different dresses for the wedding. And even brides can wear different wedding dresses for three days at their wedding..."*

It was reported that the second criterion in evaluating students' chronological thinking skills is the ability to *comprehensively* evaluate history in both a chronological and cultural sense, and this criterion was expressed by 6 students during the focus group interview. From the findings gathered in the focus group interview, it was concluded that the students can evaluate and interpret history in a detailed manner, taking into account its chronological and cultural sense. The following statements were made by the students during the focus group interviews:

FG3 *"... In the past weddings used to be held in front of the houses, but today wedding was held in the wedding-ceremony halls. In the past, the brides rode a horse to go to their weddings but now thanks to the development of technology, the brides go to the wedding by a car or a convoy travelling together... Of course, there are some similarities, too. There are people who stick to their traditions... Of course, changes have also occurred. In the past, they acted according to the superstitions. But now, due to the increasing educational and cultural levels, superstitions are not practiced much anymore..."*

It was discovered that the third criterion in evaluating students' chronological thinking skills is their ability to understand the causes behind events from the past

to the present and this criterion was mentioned by 5 students during the focus group interviews. Based on the findings derived from these interviews, it was became evident that the students can understand the reasons behind historical events from the past to the present and how and why they occurred. The following statements were expressed by the students during the focus group interviews.

FG4 “... *There was a dinner ceremony held before the engagement after asking for the girl’s hand. In this dinner ceremony, two families got together, both for the purpose of getting to know each other and for the purpose of asking for the bride price. The bride’s family gets the bride price from the groom’s family, and they buy the food and things that fall on them with that money. There are no such practices for people today because financial possibilities have increased. Families act according to their children’s wishes, do not see their children as a commodity to be sold, that is, time, conditions and thoughts have changed...*”

It was determined that the fourth criterion in evaluating students’ chronological thinking skills is their ability to analyse changes and continuities in historical time, and this criterion was expressed by 5 students during the focus group interview. Based on the findings derived from the focus group interviews, it was evident that the students can identify and analyse changes and continuities that have occurred from the past to the present. The following statements were made by the students during the focus group interviews:

FG3 “... *In the past, when a wedding was to be held, there was no such thing as a wedding invitation, for example, the elder person in bride’s family or the person called Ruvi or the messenger would go and inform the bride’s side or the villages in the vicinity...Now, there are even no wedding invitations because people inform others about the wedding with phone or telegram... Weddings are still organized but wedding traditions have changed. People have become more modern, communication opportunities have improved, technology has improved, literacy rate has increased, and mentalities have changed. I think this is the reason for the changes... Many practices have been abolished, but the groom still has the best man...*”

Based on the focus group interviews, the students’ demonstration of their perception of change and continuity skills according to the specified criteria are as follows:

Table 4. Students’ Demonstration of Perception of Change And Continuity Skills Based on the Focus Group Interviews

Opinions	f
Recognizing changes in historical events	6
Evaluating changes over time	5
Making periodic classification in the organization of the understanding of continuity and change	5
Interpreting change and continuity within cause and effect relationships	5
Total	21

Upon analysing Table 4, it was discovered that the first criterion in evaluating the perception of change and continuity skills is the awareness of changes in historical events and this criterion was expressed by 6 students during the focus group interview. Based on the findings derived from these focus group interviews, it became evident that the students can articulate both the changes and the continuities within any given historical period. The following statements were made by the students during the focus group interviews:

FG1 “... While there was gift giving before, after and during the old weddings, now it has completely changed and disappeared, these customs were common in the past...now it continues at the engagement stage, but now the weddings are held at assortment of venues, so the gifts are usually given during the ceremony by putting them on a gift table, or in a bridal money bag...”

It was discovered that the second criterion in evaluating the perception of change and continuity skills is the ability to evaluate changes over time, and this criterion was expressed by 5 students during the focus group interview. Based on the findings obtained from the focus group interviews, it was concluded that the students can assess changes over time including progress, development, decline, and regression.

The following statements were made by the students during the focus group interviews:

FG4 “... *In the past, there were meaningless practices such as the bride price and bride exchange at weddings and many young people were in trouble because of the bride price, it took time for them to save money and the wedding processes were therefore longer than they are today... such practices do not continue today because it is considered ignorance and the bride exchange has disappeared, but the bride price is rare, albeit exists with different names...*”

It was reported that the third criterion in evaluating the perception of change and continuity skills is the ability to make periodic classification in organization of the understanding of continuity and change, and this criterion was expressed by 5 students during the focus group interview. Based on the findings derived from the focus group interviews, it became evident that the students can categorize and classify historical events into relevant periods or timeframes in organization of the understanding of continuity and change. The following statements were made by the students during the focus group interviews:

FG2 “... *40 years ago, people used to marry by arranged marriage, the previous generation’s weddings were local, it was obligatory to follow the traditions and customs... now people get married by meeting and loving each other. In the past, young people could not get married by meeting or loving each other because this was highly despised and condemned, and although regional characteristics are seen in the weddings of the next generation, I think there are differences in terms of practices...*”

It was identified that the fourth criterion in evaluating the perception of change and continuity skills is the ability to interpret the change and continuity in a cause and effect relationship and this criterion was expressed by 5 students during the focus group interviews. Based on the findings derived from these interviews, it became evident that the students can interpret the changes and continuities in technology, institutions, values, traditions, and beliefs within a cause-effect relationship in the organization of the understanding of continuity and change. The following statements were made by the students during the focus group interviews:

FG1 “... *In the past, the opinions of the girls were not considered when asking for the girl’s hand, but now their opinions are taken into consideration. While the groom and the bride could not see each other during the engagement process, now those who are far away can talk freely on the phone, and those who are close can meet freely in cafes or wherever they want... In the past, people used to be more oppressive but now they are more flexible, and their world views have changed ...While*

religious marriage was obligatory in the past, non-ceremonial (or common-law) marriages are not accepted now, even civil marriages are held in wedding halls and solemnized by the registrars... Changes and transformations that have occurred over time have created differences in practices along with wedding processes...

Discussion and Results

Based on the evaluation of the first criterion regarding chronological thinking, it was observed from the reports prepared by the students and the focus group interviews that while the name of weddings remained constant, their practices underwent significant changes over time. The students expressed a desire for the old customs to be preserved and passed on to the younger generation as a way of remembering the past. In this context, it was determined that students can utilize and differentiate concepts related to chronological thinking skills (before, now, early on today, nowadays, past, in early days). In addition, it was observed that students can evaluate and compare the past (early days) with the present (today).

Based on the evaluation of the second criterion related to chronological thinking skill, it was evident from the reports prepared by the students and the focus group interviews that people's expectations have increased with growing awareness. The changes observed in weddings from the past to the present were attributed to factors such as modernization and higher levels of education. Moreover, it was determined that students can evaluate and interpret history not only in a chronological sense but also in a cultural context.

Based on the evaluation of the third criterion related to chronological thinking skills, it was found in the reports prepared by the students and the focus group interviews that there have been notable changes in age, circumstances, thoughts, and perspectives from the past to the present. These changes can be attributed to the increased access to education, heightened awareness, and improved financial opportunities over time. Based on the students' statements, it was apparent that traditional practices have declined over time, while technology has advanced, leading to the prevalence of ready-made solutions. Moreover, the availability of various settings (such as cafes, discos, etc.) where men and women get together has increased, facilitating social interactions, and fostering greater socialization. In this regard, it was found that the students could comprehend the reasons behind historical events from the past to the present as well as understanding how and why these events occurred.

Based on the evaluation of the fourth criterion related to chronological thinking skills, it was determined in the reports prepared by the students and in the focus group interviews that weddings have persisted throughout time, albeit with changes in

practices. Moreover, there have been shifts in mindsets, improvements in communication opportunities, advancements in modernity, and an increase in the rate of literacy. The statements made by the students indicated that the changes experienced can be attributed to several factors, including higher levels of education, increased financial opportunities, technological advancements, improved communication opportunities, the emergence of cultural differences, and population growth. In this context, it was also determined that the students can ~~reveal~~ identify and analyse the changes and continuities that have occurred over historical time, from the past to the present.

According to the findings from their reports and focus group interviews, students have demonstrated the ability to assess the past and present using the predetermined criteria. Moreover, they have exhibited behaviours indicative of skills related to chronological thinking. In a study conducted by Akçalı and Aslan (2007, p. 84), it was discovered that teaching lessons through local history and engaging in related activities had a positive impact on students' attitudes and improved their perception of time compared to traditional teaching methods. Similarly, Küpüç (2014, p. 45) ~~also~~ concluded in her study that oral history played a significant role in fostering students' comprehension of chronology and their skills in understanding chronological fiction skills. The findings of this study align with the results obtained by Akçalı and Aslan (2007, p. 84) as well as Küpüç (2014, p. 45). İncegöl (2010, p. 97) in her study concluded that oral history played a role in enhancing students' understanding of chronology. Similarly, Kaplan (2005) also concluded in his study that oral history studies had a positive impact on students' historical thinking skills. In addition, Işık (2011, p. 1299) concluded in his study that incorporating task-based learning activities along with primary and secondary sources in history lessons positively impacts historical thinking skills. The results of this task-based study are consistent with the findings of İncegöl (2010, p. 97), Kaplan (2005) and Işık (2011, p. 1299). These results further support the notion that students can demonstrate their chronological thinking skills through the oral history studies conducted in this research.

Based on the analysis of students' reports and focus group interviews, reports and focus group interviews, it was observed that the first criterion pertaining to the perception of change and continuity skills revealed a consistent pattern: gift-giving has persisted over time, albeit with notable shifts in its practices, valuable gifts have become more prevalent in contemporary times, and the perspectives and perceptions of individuals regarding gift-giving have undergone a transformation due to the influence of modernization. In this context, it was also discovered that the students were aware of the changes that have occurred in historical events, and they could

explain both the aspects that have undergone transformation and those that have remained constant throughout different periods of history.

The analysis of the reports prepared by the students and the focus group interviews revealed an assessment based on the second criterion, focusing on the perception of change and continuity skills. It became evident that outdated wedding customs, such as bride price and bride exchange, have been largely discontinued from the past to the present. However, it was acknowledged that these practices, although infrequent, still persist in certain regions. Moreover, it was observed that the students could evaluate the changes that have occurred over time and effectively identify the changes associated with progress and development, as well as decline and regression.

According to the third criterion addressed in the evaluation of the perception of change and continuity skills, it was understood from the reports prepared by the students and the focus group interviews that the students identified the previous generation as the researched period and the current period as the next generation. They were able to present the developments that have occurred during these periods from the past to the present and categorize the stages of weddings based on the respective timeframes. It was also revealed that the students could make periodic classifications while organizing their understanding of continuity and change.

According to the fourth criterion, it emerged from the reports prepared by the students and the focus group interviews that the changes that occurred over time have impacted wedding practices. The modern age has brought about various transformations, leading to an increase in lavishness and extravagance in weddings. However, it was also noted amidst these transformations that people have started to experience a sense of loneliness. In this regard, it was found that students can interpret the changes and continuities in technology, institutions, values, traditions, and beliefs in the organization of the understanding of continuity and change, within a cause-and-effect relationship.

According to the research conducted by Van Oteghen (1996, p. 45), it was revealed that engaging in oral history activities made contributions to the students' change and continuity skills. Similarly, Akçalı and Aslan (2007, p. 85) also found in their study that teaching lessons within the context of local history and incorporating related activities made positive contributions to the students' attitudes compared to the traditional methods. Moreover, these approaches facilitated the development of students' perception of change and continuity skills in conjunction with their understanding of time. In the study conducted by Dere (2017, p. 142), it was concluded that oral history played a significant role in fostering the development of students' perception of change and continuity skills. Likewise, concluded that oral history contributed to the development of understanding of

change and continuity within students. Kabapınar and İncegöl (2016, p. 84) conducted research to explore the implementation of oral history as a teaching method for students at a school level. Their findings indicated that oral history contributed to the development of students' understanding of change and continuity. Significant similarities can be observed between the outcomes of the current study and the study conducted by Kabapınar and Kaya (2013, p. 69) on the topic of weddings and marriages over time carried out with the 6th grade students. Additionally, similarities can be found between the current study and another research conducted by Kaya (2013, p. 163) focusing on occupations and career choices over time, which involved 7th-grade students.

In their research, Dere and Kızılay (2017, p. 315) also concluded that students perceived change and continuity through the implementation of the oral history method. Furthermore, in his study, Kara (2019, p. 184) discovered that students established a link between the past and the present through the use of the oral history, thereby revealing the interplay of continuity and change and developing historical awareness. These results support the finding that students can effectively demonstrate the ability to perceive change and continuity through the utilization of oral history research.

Based on these findings, it is advisable to provide suggestions for researchers undertaking similar studies. In this regard, studies can be conducted at all levels of education, ranging from primary education to higher education, encompassing various fields and subjects. These studies can be designed as group projects that focus on specific regions, providing encouragement, long-term engagement, and methodological diversity. In addition, the establishment of a new field called "cultural mining", which explores human experiences, can be considered. This field can involve recording testimonial narratives from living witnesses to preserve living cultures from extinction across various domains. In addition, oral history studies can be conducted with secondary and higher education students within the scope of evidence-based learning, aiming to enhance their historical thinking skills.

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