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Abstract *This case study analyses a video recording of a history lesson taught to a class of eleven year olds in Istanbul. It is part of a larger project in which video recordings of history lessons in Bucharest, Cumbria, (England), Lyons and Geneva have been analysed in order to identify ways in which children are involved in historical enquiry rather than didactic teaching as a basis for comparison, discussion and development. In this lesson pupils work in groups to interpret information in texts, maps and pictures in order to reconstruct it in poetry, art, drama and music. The analysis of the transcript explores ways in which pupils extract information, transfer it to new contexts and express it from different viewpoints. It shows how, in discussing sources, pupils gradually become independent of adult support, how they spontaneously use special vocabulary introduced by the teacher in new contexts and how they use causal vocabulary. It is concluded that pupils are engaged in the process of historical enquiry to the extent that, in an embryonic way, they interrogate sources to construct interpretations which include presenting the information from different perspectives and developing arguments, using specialised vocabulary. The significance of classroom organisation and ethos in developing historical enquiry is considered.*

Keywords: History education, Turkey, Sources, Discussion, Classroom ethos

Context of this case study

The analysis of this lesson is part of an ongoing project, *Teaching History to Ten Year Olds in a Range of European Countries**. The aim of the project is to identify the extent to which ten-eleven year olds in a range of European countries learn history through the process of historical enquiry, irrespective of content, as a basis for comparing similarities and differences and for further development. The researchers agreed that historical enquiry involves asking questions about different kinds of sources, in order to make deductions and inferences about the past (Collingwood, 1939), and so learning that, because evidence is often incomplete and of varying status and is selected and combined to construct accounts of the past, interpretations may vary but be equally valid. The discourse of history is total interpretation of historians in which they reflect their thoughts and biases (Karabag, 2002) as well as historical facts. There is no single, correct view of the past. Learning to question, to form opinions, develop arguments and listen to those of others is central to an open society although history as a discipline has no specific aim for developing democratic attitudes (Dilek, 2002a; Ozturk & Dilek 2003; also see Safran for aims of history teaching). At a meeting of researchers into history education convened by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg (1995) it was agreed that young pupils can engage with historical enquiry in this way, that it is important that they should, before stereotypical ideas develop, and that small scale case studies may be the best way forward.

In this project history lessons considered by the researcher in each country to be typical good practice were video recorded and analysed: three lessons in Bucharest, three in Cumbria, England, one in Geneva, two in Lyon and one in Istanbul. The video recordings were transcribed and translated into English, the common language of the researchers. In the initial analysis the process of historical enquiry underpinning each lesson was identified by listing the questions asked, the sources used to answer them and the specialised vocabulary involved.

In analysing the English, French, Romanian and Swiss lessons this analysis showed that each of the lessons was based on asking questions about sources, using different kinds of historical vocabulary. To this extent the teachers were modelling the process of historical enquiry.

However there were no questions involving opinion or arguing a point of view, there was no extended discussion, (the teachers always spoke far more than the pupils) and different interpretations were neither constructed nor compared.

Secondly the researchers in each country analysed the videos from their own perspective identifying areas of interest, problems arising and areas for development. The Romanian researcher was interested in how a definition of creativity could be interpreted in terms of investigations involving questions about Ancient Egypt (Capita et al., 2000) and in lesson structure (Capita et al., 2001). The Swiss researchers considered how to avoid over simplification when young pupils are involved in historical enquiry (Audigier et al., 2003), responded to by Cooper and Capita (2003).

The first analysis of the Turkish lesson revealed that, as in the other lessons recorded, questions were asked of sources (text, maps and pictures), and that vocabulary specially associated with history was employed. To this extent the Turkish lesson reflected the process of historical enquiry, in the same way as the English, Romanian, French and Swiss lessons did. A second analysis, described in this paper, considers how pupils extracted information from sources and used it to express opinions from different perspectives; the ways in which they discussed and interpreted sources, the vocabulary they used, the way in which they developed an argument using causal language, gender differences, the extent to which they created different interpretations, and evidence of enjoyment of what was, for them, a novel approach to learning history. A cross curricular approach called thematic teaching was used in a longitudinal experimental research in relation to history teaching revealed similar findings (see Dilek, 2002b).

It is interesting that a similar approach was first researched in England by Hallam (1975) and that this was one of the precursors of further research into young pupils ability to learn history through 'active' approaches (Blakeway, 1983; Knight, 1989; Cooper, 1991; Lee, 1996) This research has arisen from and been applied to practice (e.g. Wood and Holden 1995; McAleavy, 1997; Fines & Nichol 1997).

The Turkish lesson

Background
Dursun Dilek, associate professor of history education at the University of Marmara, Istanbul, recorded a lesson taught by one of his student teachers to a class of eleven year olds. Dilek's doctoral research at the University of Warwick, had investigated approaches to the teaching history other than the didactic methods which had been traditionally used in Turkey, although it was not experimental research (Dilek 1999). One difference between the Turkish lesson and the other lessons is that extracts of group dialogue were captured which indicate how the teacher's introductory information linked to the ways in

which pupils discussed the sources in groups, and the resulting presentations. The Turkish lesson was also cross curricular.

Although every country has an education culture in which different interpretations of educational theories may be practised there were striking visual similarities between the Turkish classroom and the other lessons recorded. The classroom could have been confused with the rooms in the French or Romanian videos, except for the crescent on the wall. The pupils too appeared ubiquitous: school uniforms, school bags, stylish jackets; shy, boisterous, extrovert and diligent pupils; the female teacher with long hair, wearing fashionable trousers and sweater. Turkey is a secular state but it was surprising for a British researcher not to see the hijab which is so frequently found in English classrooms. This also shows that how our perceptions may be formed by the need for generalisation in a way trying to understand the phenomena from the cultural point of view that we are related.

Structure
The teacher explained, with the help of two pictures and a map, that the lesson was about the Battle of Ankara, between the Ottoman, Bayezit and the Mongol Timarlane (Timur) in 1403. Bayezit's aim was to recapture Iran and Syria. Timur wanted to destroy the Ottoman State and be Emperor of all Turks and also to capture China.

Pupils were told that there would be five group activities in which they would reconstruct the battle from different perspectives, using sources and that they would share their work at the end of the lesson. The art group would use pictures of weapons and some texts to construct visual interpretations of aspects of the battle. The drama group would use texts to construct a dramatic interpretation, discussion at the meetings of Timur's and the Bayezit's advisors; what was said and how decisions were made. The poetry group could interpret the texts as a poem. The document group, based on information in a text that letters were exchanged between Bayezit and Timur, would write letters which might have been exchanged. The music group would compose a song about the war. Pupils could join the group of their choice. Research has suggested that such small group activities enhance learning since cognition is intrinsically social (Hamlyn, 1982; Bennett & Dunne, 1992; Galton & Williamson, 1992). Ashby and Lee (1987) found that children reached higher levels of understanding when discussing an historical event or problem amongst themselves than they could achieve in their own. So problem-solving process can be accelerated through discussion which also develops critical thinking skills of children (see Akinoglu 2003).

Pace
The video recorded the changes in pace during the lesson. The teacher's direct input was followed by lots of excitement, movement and noise as the groups began their activities. The room then became quieter dominated by reflection and sharing of ideas. Next there was frantic motivation under pressure of time to complete the presentations, followed by the excitement of dressing up – a scarf as a turban for a bespectacled Timur; a girl's cork moustache… Finally, the presentations were watched in admiring silence, with applause at the end. It seems important to allow pupils to initiate changes of pace and mood if they are to be given 'ownership' of their work

and to develop and share their ideas; this is the reality of a social constructivist approach to learning.

Classroom layout
The classroom was set out to encourage discussion. Square tables, (with civilized tablecloths!) were surrounded by benches on four sides. In state schools in Turkey pupils usually sit in rows, but teachers can change these rows to square tables. In this case the teacher set out the classroom in the way most appropriate for this teaching approach

Use of sources

Pupils extract information and transfer it to new contexts
In each group pupils drew on sources to inform their activity. They were able to extract information from a written text, map or pictures and to reconstruct it in another form. Bruner (1963) sees this an essential component of the learning process. The art group found from their text that elephants were an important feature of Timur's army. 'I'm drawing an elephant. I shall create a masterpiece!' one boy exclaimed. A girl pupil found out that the Kara (Black) Tatars changed sides during the battle, deserting Bayezit's side and joining Timur's army. She made this the subject of her picture. A boy drew the subsequent event. 'Timur's enslaving Bayezit!'

The music group sang the song they had composed to the tune of a flute. Their song incorporated much information extracted from the text: where the battle took place, that the initial attack on Timur's forces was repulsed by elephants, that the battle lasted for three hours and ended with the fall of the Sultan Bayezit's horse.

The document group extracted factual information and used it to construct an Imperial Edict from the point of view of Timur. The text stated that, 'Ahmet Celayir, the Emperor of Iraq and East Anatolia and Kara Yusuf, the ruler of Karakoyuns took refuge with Bayezit.'
'My dear enemy Bayezit, (there was discussion about this form of address!), I want you to drive away Ahmet Celayir and Kara Yusuf, whom you are sheltering…'
This pupil, rather than simply repeating information given, has internalised the text, made sense of it, seen its significance from the point if view of Timur and so the implications for causing the war.

Pupils express opinions from the perspective of a given person
The proclamation, read from a paper scroll, demonstrated pupils' ability to present arguments to Bayezit from the perspective of Timur in a coherent way, using appropriate language and images, but also in their own words. In doing this they are analysing causes of the war.

Banging on the desk,

'Ladies and gentlemen I am going to read you Timur's edict,…'Before I go to China on a military campaign you will give me one of your sons whom you love more than yourself. If you attempt something treacherous while I am away I will cut off your son's head. If you do not accept my request, which I know you will not,

war is inevitable. (Here he is seeing the situation from both points of view). I have soldiers and elephants that are able to beat you. If you do not accept these requests you loose your Emperorship and your lands. There will be bloodshed and your lands will be mine. Make your last prayer!'

Members of the drama group discuss from contradictory viewpoints. There are different opinions amongst Bayezit's advisors:

First advisor:' If you ask my opinion Sultan I do not suggest fighting a major battle. I prefer a hit and run. We will send small forces which will damage their army without putting our army at risk.
Another advisor:'Do not be upset Ali Pasha but I say to you my Sultan, I do not like Ali Pasha's idea…The Mongols entered Anatolia and plundered… Therefore I think we should have a major battle and destroy the enemy soldiers.'

There are also different viewpoints amongst his Timur's government:

… 'Be gathered princes and lords. We are going to conquer Anatolia immediately. Prepare war tactics.'
'But sir you must give me a chance to speak….. They have more soldiers than we have.'
'My soldiers always win.'
'But sir I don't understand the reason for war…'
'The reason is that I want to annex the Ottoman lands of my ancestor, Genghis Kahn'.

Pupil discussion and interpretation of sources
The video and transcription captured extracts of dialogue which show how pupils scaffolded their peers' thinking (Bruner, 1966). They clarified and developed each other's ideas and understanding through small group discussion. Although the group discussions could not be captured in their entirety the video recorded the volubility, earnestness and vigour of these discussions. It showed constant examples of pupils sharing ideas, gesticulating, apparently challenging, pressing a point of view and checking back to sources. The transcript did not record the energy of the discussion or that it was going on all the time in each of the groups.

Role of the Adult
  • *Accepting questions from pupils.*
    During the whole class introduction, on several occasions pupils asked if they may ask a question. This had not happened in any of the other lessons recorded and suggests that the student teacher had created an unusually relaxed atmosphere of openness and mutual respect, which is a prerequisite of a discursive classroom.
    'May I ask something?'
    'Yes'
    'Bayezit wants to destroy China and the Ottoman State. Well, how can he manage to destroy both? On the one hand he will attack China and on the other hand he will attack the Ottomans. Isn't he destroyed in this case?'
  • *Cueing to initiate discussion*

Initially during the group work the teacher asked cueing questions to initiate discussion.
Pupil: 'You'll give one of your sons to me as a loan.'
Teacher: 'That's a good suggestion. So what should we do?'
• *Intervening to check understanding*
Teacher: 'Now let's talk for a short time about the drama. The Ottoman war government has met. There were two opposite ideas. What were they?… OK What was the other?'

Pupil/pupil dialogue
Gradually, as the lesson continues, the pupils talk more than the adults. In the following extract they offer multiple suggestions; they reject the teacher's idea and they question each other.

Pupil: 'But teacher, it's not what I want to say. For example the date, the signature. I don't want these. I'll give you the date.
Teacher: 'Understood.
Pupil: 'We'll say - until sunset.'
Pupil: 'When this letter arrives 4 sunsets will have passed!'
Pupil: 'But how will the letter be conveyed from here to there?'
Pupil: How many days does it take to get there by horse'
Pupil: 'We'll give it a week.'

In the following extract pupils correct each other:

Document group:
'Timur has requests from Bayezit. First he wants Bayezit's sons…'
'Do we send the letter from Timur to Bayezit or from Bayezit to Timur?'
'From Timur to Bayezit.'
'How do we start?'
'Dear…? (Laugh)
'No. Write… write… Thunderbolt Bayezit.'
'No! Thunderbolt Bayezit, my dear enemy!'
'You can't say 'dear' to him! Just Thunderbolt Bayezit…

This extract captures collaboration in the poetry group:
 'The Ottoman state is going to war',
'Strongly, bravely it is going to war.'
'Read it all again so far.'
'The year was 1402 – 28th July'.
A new war was being made in the heartland of history',
'then - Going on to war, strongly , bravely going to war.'

Specialised vocabulary
Since the past cannot be directly experienced it can only be investigated and reconstructed through language. Sources do not tell us about the past until inferences and deductions are made from them. Much of the language used to discuss sources and describe the past and changes over time is not language pupils would use in everyday exchanges. There is no single definition of historical concepts. Some are organising ideas which run through human society: power, conflict; others are not exclusively historical:

law, trade (Blyth, 1990). Vygotsky (1962) showed that concepts are learned by trial and error: by hearing new concepts, then having the opportunity to try them out. He said that concept development could be promoted by careful use of significant new concepts by the teacher and that this promotes intellectual growth and discussion. The teacher followed Vygotsky's suggested teaching approach. First she gave information, then she intervened to help children, to scaffold their learning. This is an important process. What children cannot learn by themselves they master with the teacher's assistance. Then, independent of the teacher, they present or perform their work. So with this approach the teacher scaffolds learning using what Vygotsky called, the 'zone of proximal development'.

Words introduced by teacher used spontaneously in group discussion
The teacher's introduction contained 24 words which, although not peculiar to history are concepts frequently used in history. Vocabulary concerned with:

- war, (war, military campaign, commander, empire, capture, expand, destroy),
- culture (culture, customs, language, heritage)
- law (law, punishment, crimes)
- land tenure (empire, border, head of state, emperor, ruler, lands, neighbour, secure, edict).

In the recorded extracts of pupil discussions when no adult was present pupils spontaneously used some of the concepts used by the teacher in the introduction: war, emperor, military campaign, empire, destroy, empire, lands, edict. Pupils were beginning to experiment with some of the specialist language used by the teacher.

Specialist concepts used by pupils but not in teacher's introduction
It is also interesting that they employed vocabulary frequently used in history in their group discussions which may have been derived from the text or from previous knowledge: enemy, treacherous, battle tactics, troops, reason, ancestor, preparations, strategy, strong attack, savage struggle, protect pride, yield to anarchy.

Developing concepts of cause and effect through causal statements
Piaget (1926) identifies a pattern in the development of children's ability to relate a statement to its premise. Young children, he says, leap from a premise to an unreasonable conclusion. Maybe because of their lack of vocabulary adults make no sense at first glance of their conclusions (see Dilek & Sogucakli Yapici, 2003). Next they communicate facts and descriptions. Later the statement is followed by explanations, which become increasingly explicit. Gradually they learn to use words such as 'because'.

There was a number of examples of causal connectives used in group activities. The drama group suggested sending 'a few troops SO THAT our army remains strong'. Someone did not like Ali Pasha's idea 'BECAUSE Mongols had entered Anatolia; THEREFORE we should…' Someone else did not understand the 'REASON WHY…Genghis Khan's treasure was in Anatolia'. 'THEREFORE the Ottoman state should be destroyed…' 'BECAUSE…' 'SO they had to attack'.

In the music group the foot of the Sultan's horse slipped SO it fell and THEREFORE the

battle was lost. Maybe, because the teacher selected and used historical language and because the children were trying to make sense of the language in the texts, they attempted, with the teacher's assistance and through trial and error, to use and write the special vocabulary and causal connections themselves.

Gender
It appeared from the selected extracts of group discussion in the transcript that the girls contributed less dialogue than the boys but the video showed that this was misleading. There did appear to be differences between the nature of the discussion in those groups which were all boys or all girls. Amongst the girls there seemed to be more turn-taking, sharing and quiet reflection while boys appeared to press their view points more forcibly with more expansive body language. Maybe the topic was more interesting for boys than girls, but boys and girls seemed equally involved in the discussion.

Conclusion

Pupils could extract information from a source, make inferences and construct different viewpoints

It was stated at the beginning that historical enquiry involves asking questions about sources and so learning that evidence is often incomplete and therefore that there may be more than one equally correct interpretation of the past. The skills demonstrated in this lesson are a good foundation for such development. Pupils interrogated texts and applied what they learned in new contexts. They demonstrated that they could see a situation from different viewpoints, and could develop contradictory arguments in role. They showed that they could develop a dialogue in a group, expressing different ideas and questioning each other, when no adult is leading the discussion. They reproduced concepts introduced by the teacher spontaneously in new contexts. Consequently, as Ata (2002) points out, the use and re-production of documents are related to both historical approach and educational theory based on the thought that pedagogic (school) history should introduce methods of scientific history in which pupils may develop historical skills.

Closed and open questions
Pupils were not asked, and did not themselves pose open questions during the first part of the lesson. In the introduction to the lesson they are asked only closed questions. 'Who is the person in the picture?' 'Who is Timur?' 'Which Empire did he rule?' 'What is the law of Genghis Khan?' The aim was to introduce the topic and historical characters before the group work. During the group work teachers and also pupils asked open questions, but we could not capture all data unfortunately. Some of the questions touched on in the groups gave rise to open discussion of alternative actions. For example, in the drama group:

'We are going to conquer Anatolia.'
'But sir you have to let me have a chance to speak. The Turks make war with Christians. We don't need to make war with Anatolia….'

This raises the question, given that an important aim of history education set out at the beginning of this paper is to help children to develop and defend an opinion or a point of view, how can we best support them in doing so?

Classroom ethos

There was much evidence in the transcript, (reinforced by watching the video), that the pupils enjoyed learning about the past through active involvement:

'The drama group collects some items for making costumes from the class. A shawl is turned into a turban with the teacher's help. 'O…O Timur', his friend exclaims with mock obeisance.'

'The class applaud the poem and when a member of the music group sings their song there is more applause and requests for an encore'.

The teacher concludes the lesson with:

'Well today children we have enjoyed very much one of the most important wars in history.'

The transcript analysis was looking for cognitive content: evidence of the process of historical enquiry. But the video demonstrates the importance of classroom organisation and classroom ethos in creating the enthusiasm and motivation to engage with sources, in valuing pupils' ideas and trusting pupils, in using adult support to encourage their thinking rather than to control and inform.

The analysis also reveals the need to capture and analyse more small group discussions (Cooper 1996), if we are to discover how interaction develops thinking. Following this analysis we may use microphones for each group to record all dialogues and allow them to work outside the classroom to minimise extraneous noise.

*The Project referred to in this paper, *Teaching History to Ten Year Olds in a Range of European Countries, (on-going project)*
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