



Preservice Elementary School Teachers' Opinions Related to Oral History as a Teaching Method in Social Studies

Sınıf Öğretmeni Adaylarının Sosyal Bilgiler Dersinde Bir Öğretim Yöntemi Olarak Sözlü Tarih Hakkındaki Görüşleri

Sahin DÜNDAR, Trakya University Faculty of Education, sahindundar@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT. In this study, preservice elementary school teachers' opinions regarding oral history studies as a teaching method in social studies were examined. The data were collected from 93 preservice elementary school teachers in a faculty of education at one public university. The study was carried out using a basic qualitative research strategy. The data were collected from participants by means of a questionnaire which included closed-ended (with yes and no options) and open-ended questions. In the study, it was found that none of the preservice elementary school teachers conducted any oral history study previously and most of the preservice elementary school teachers (N=89, 95.7%) felt efficacious in having their future students conduct oral history studies in their social studies classes. Most of the preservice elementary school teachers (N=90, 96.8%) indicated that they wanted to use oral history as a teaching method in their social studies classes because of abundant benefits to the students. Moreover, they thought that elementary school students might encounter some difficulties/obstacles in conducting oral history studies.

Keywords. Oral History, Social Studies, Social Studies Teaching Course, Preservice Elementary School Teachers

ÖZ. Bu çalışmada sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının sosyal bilgiler dersinde bir öğretim yöntemi olarak sözlü tarih çalışmalarına ilişkin görüşleri incelenmiştir. Veriler, bir devlet üniversitesinin eğitim fakültesinde öğrenim gören 93 sınıf öğretmeni adayından toplanmıştır. Çalışma temel nitel araştırma stratejisi kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmada veriler kapalı uçlu (evet-hayır seçeneekli) ve açık uçlu sorular içeren bir anket yoluyla elde edilmiştir. Çalışmada, öğretmen adaylarının hiçbirinin daha önce herhangi bir sözlü tarih çalışması yürütmediği ve çoğu öğretmen adayının (N=89, %95.7) kendilerini sosyal bilgiler derslerinde öğrencilerine sözlü tarih yaptırma yeterli gördükleri bulunmuştur. Çoğu öğretmen adayının (N=90, %96.8) bu yöntemin öğrencilere birçok yararı olduğunu düşündüklerinden dolayı kendi sosyal bilgiler derslerinde sözlü tarih yöntemini kullanmak istedikleri tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, öğretmen adaylarının sözlü tarih yürütürken öğrencilerin çeşitli zorluklarla karşılaşacaklarını düşündükleri belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Sözlü Tarih, Sosyal Bilgiler, Sosyal Bilgiler Öğretimi Dersi, Sınıf Öğretmeni Adayı

ÖZET

Amaç ve Önem: Araştırmalar göstermektedir ki sözlü tarih sosyal bilgiler dersinde çok az kullanılan yöntemlerden biridir (Aydemir & Akpınar, 2012; Özür, 2010). Aynı zamanda, ders kitabına dayalı öğretmen merkezli sosyal bilgiler öğretimi uygulamaları da öğretmenler arasında yaygın olarak görülmektedir (Akgül, 2006; Aydemir & Akpınar, 2012; Bailey, Shaw, & Hollifield, 2006; Bolinger & Warren, 2007; Burstein, Hutton, & Curtis, 2006; Çelikkaya & Kuş, 2009; Finkelstein, Nielsen, & Switzer, 1993; Hootstein, 1999; Johnson, 2007; R. Kaya & Güven, 2012; Lintner, 2006; Russell, 2010; Taşkaya & Bal, 2009; Wood et al., 1989). Bununla birlikte Turner'ın (2004) iddia ettiği gibi "toplumların hızlı bir şekilde değişmesinden dolayı günümüzde sosyal bilgiler dersini öğretmek geçmişten daha zordur. Bu da öğretmenlerin sosyal bilgiler öğretiminde farklı yaklaşımları düşünmelerini zorunlu kılmaktadır" (s. 1). Bu çalışmada, sosyal bilgiler dersinde sözlü tarih yöntemine ilişkin sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının görüşleri incelenmek istenmiştir. Bu genel amaç çerçevesinde aşağıdaki sorulara yanıt aranmıştır:

Araştırma Sorusu 1: Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının sosyal bilgiler öğretimi dersini almadan önceki öğrenim hayatlarında sözlü tarih çalışmasına ilişkin deneyimleri nasıldır?

Araştırma Sorusu 2: Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının sosyal bilgiler derslerinde sözlü tarih yöntemini kullanma konusundaki yeterlik algıları nasıldır?

Araştırma Sorusu 3: Sosyal bilgiler öğretimi dersinde sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yürüttükleri sözlü tarih çalışmaları, gelecekte kendi sosyal bilgiler derslerinde sözlü tarih yöntemini kullanma yeterliliklerini nasıl etkilemiştir?

Araştırma Sorusu 4: Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının öğretmen olduklarında kendi sosyal bilgiler derslerinde sözlü tarih yöntemini kullanma ya da kullanmama istekleri üzerinde etkili olan faktörler nelerdir?

Araştırma Sorusu 5: Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının sosyal bilgiler derslerinde sözlü tarih çalışmasının öğrencilere yararlarına ilişkin düşünceleri nelerdir?

Araştırma Sorusu 6: Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının öğrencilerin sözlü tarih çalışması yaparlarken karşılaşılabilecekleri zorluklar/engellere ilişkin düşünceleri nelerdir?

Araştırma Sorusu 7: Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının öğrenciler sözlü tarih çalışması yaparlarken karşılaşılabilecekleri zorlukları/engelleri gidermek için öğretmenlere yönelik çözüm önerileri nelerdir?

Yöntem: Bu çalışma nitel araştırma stratejilerinden temel nitel araştırma stratejisi kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir (Merriam, 2009). Temel nitel araştırma stratejisi eğitim araştırmalarında yaygın olarak kullanılmaktadır ve bu stratejinin “genel amacı insanların yaşamlarını ve deneyimlerini nasıl anlamlandırdıklarını anlamaktır” (Merriam, 2009, s. 23). Çalışmada veriler bir devlet üniversitesinin eğitim fakültesinde 2013-14 akademik yılı bahar yarıyılında sosyal bilgiler öğretimi dersini almakta olan 93 sınıf öğretmeni adayından toplanmıştır. Araştırmada veriler kapalı uçlu (evet-hayır seçeneği) ve açık uçlu sorular içeren bir anket yoluyla elde edilmiştir. Anketteki soruların bazıları önceki çalışmalardan alınmış/uyarlanmıştır (İncegöl, 2010; M. Kaya, 2013), bazıları ise araştırma amaçlarına uygun olarak araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanmıştır. Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarından daha önce herhangi bir sözlü tarih çalışması gerçekleştirmedikleri sosyal bilgiler öğretimi dersinin rutin sürecinde informal olarak öğrenilmiştir. Bunun üzerine öncelikle sınıf öğretmeni adaylarına ilgili literatür (İ. H. Demircioğlu, 2005; Kabapınar, 2012; Moyer, 1999; Sarı, 2007; Siler, 1996) temelinde sözlü tarih konusu araştırmacı tarafından kısaca anlatılmıştır. Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarına sözlü tarihe ilişkin kısa bilgilerin verilmesinin ardından onlardan gruplar halinde ya da tek olarak sözlü tarih çalışması yapmaları istenmiştir. Öğretmen olduklarında ilkököl dördüncü sınıflarda sosyal bilgiler dersini okutacaklarından dolayı, sınıf öğretmeni adaylarından ilkököl 4. sınıf sosyal bilgiler programındaki (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı [MEB], 2009) kazanımları temel alarak herhangi bir konu seçmeleri istenmiştir. Sosyal bilgiler programındaki (MEB, 2009) her kazanım sözlü tarih çalışması için uygun olmasa da, sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının tüm kazanımları sözlü tarihe uygunluğu noktasında gözden geçirmeleri için araştırmacı onları belirli kazanımlara yönlendirmemiştir. Sonuç olarak, 96 sınıf öğretmeni adayından 92’si iki ya da üçlü gruplar halinde, dört tanesi de yalnız olarak sözlü tarih çalışmalarını günlük hayatta karşılaştıkları kişiler (örneğin, yaşlı akrabaları, esnaflar, emekli öğretmenler, kıdemli öğretmenler, ev hanımları vb.) ile gerçekleştirmişlerdir. Sözlü tarih süresince katılımcılar ihtiyaç duyduklarında araştırmacıdan dönüt almışlardır (Huerta & Flemmer, 2000). Ancak, deneysel araştırmalarda olduğu gibi spesifik, sistemli, planlı ve kontrollü bir müdahale olmamıştır (Creswell, 2008, 2009). Sınıf öğretmeni adayları yaptıkları sözlü tarih çalışmalarını teslim ettikten sonra yukarıda ifade edilen anket yoluyla veriler toplanmıştır. Sözlü tarih çalışması yürüten 96 sınıf öğretmeni adayından 93’ü anket doldurmuştur. Bu araştırmanın amacı dışında olduğu için araştırma kapsamında sözlü tarih çalışmalarına ilişkin değerlendirme yapılmamıştır. Çalışmada kapalı uçlu soruların analizi için frekans ve yüzde hesaplamaları yapılmıştır. Açık uçlu sorular ile elde edilen veriler üzerinde ise içerik analizi yapılmış ve kodlar ve temalar geliştirilmiştir (Creswell, 2008, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001). İçerik analizinde, her bir soru için katılımcıların verdikleri yanıtlardan kodlar oluşturulmuş ve kodlara ilişkin frekans hesaplamaları yapılmıştır. Güvenirliğin sağlanması amacıyla yanıtların kodlanması araştırmacı tarafından dört aşamada gerçekleştirilmiş ve yanıtların kodlanmasında kararsızlığın olduğu durumlarda ikinci bir kişinin görüşlerine başvurulmuştur (Miles & Huberman, 1994). İlk aşamada, tüm katılımcıların açık uçlu sorulara verdiği yanıtlar dikkatle okunarak araştırma amaçları doğrultusunda geçici kodlar oluşturulmuştur. İkinci aşamada, her bir katılımcının yanıtı birinci aşamada oluşturulan kodlardan uygun olan(lar)ına işlenmiş ve gerekli görüldüğünde geçici kodlarda değişiklikler yapılmıştır. Üçüncü aşamada, ikinci aşamada oluşturulan nihai kodlar ile kodlama kontrol edilerek tekrarlanmıştır. Son aşamada, bir hafta sonra üçüncü aşamadaki kodlar kullanılarak kodlama tekrarlanmış ve Miles ve Huberman (1994, p. 64) tarafından önerilen formül kullanılarak güvenilirlik hesaplanmıştır. Bunun sonucunda güvenilirliğin sorulara göre .92 ile .97 arasında değiştiği bulunmuştur. Kodlama işlemi tamamlandıktan sonra benzer özellikteki kodlar araştırmacı

tarafından temalar altında toplanmıştır. Bunu takip eden süreçte temaların isimlendirilmesine ve kodların temalar altında gruplandırılmasına nitel veri analizi konusunda deneyimli başka bir araştırmacı ile görüş birliği içinde son hali verilmiştir. Bu aşamada ihtiyaç duyulduğunda kodlar tekrar gözden geçirilmiştir.

Bulgular: Çalışmada, öğretmen adaylarının hiçbirinin daha önce herhangi bir sözlü tarih çalışması yürütmediği bulunmuştur. Bazı katılımcılar sosyal bilgiler öğretimi dersine kadar böyle bir yöntemin adını duymadıklarını belirtmiştir. Çoğu sınıf öğretmeni adayının (N=89, 95.7%) kendilerini sosyal bilgiler derslerinde öğrencilerine sözlü tarih çalışması yaptırmada yeterli gördükleri bulunmuştur. Çoğu öğretmen adayının (N=90, 96.8%) bu yöntemin öğrencilere birçok yararı (örneğin, anlamlı ve daha iyi öğrenmeyi sağlaması, işlenen konuya ilişkin birinci elden bilgi sağlaması, öğrencilerde çeşitli becerilerin gelişmesini desteklemesi vb.) olduğunu düşündüklerinden dolayı kendi sosyal bilgiler derslerinde sözlü tarih yöntemini kullanmak istedikleri tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, öğretmen adaylarının sözlü tarih yürütürken öğrencilerin çeşitli zorluklarla (örneğin, görüşmelerin gerçekleştirilmesinde, görüşülecek kişi bulmada, görüşme sorularının hazırlanmasında vb.) karşılaşacaklarını düşündükleri belirlenmiştir.

Tartışma ve Sonuç: Araştırma bulguları göstermektedir ki çalışmaya katılan sınıf öğretmeni adayları önceki öğrenim hayatlarında herhangi bir sözlü tarih çalışması yürütmemişlerdir. Bu durum Türkiye’de sosyal bilgiler derslerinde (Akgül, 2006; Aydemir & Akpınar, 2012; Çelikkaya & Kuş, 2009; R. Kaya & Güven, 2012; Taşkaya & Bal, 2009) ve tarih derslerinde (Büyükboyacı, 2013) öğretmen merkezli öğretim yöntemlerinin en sık kullanılan yöntemler olduğu; buna karşılık, sözlü tarihin sosyal bilgiler derslerinde (Aydemir & Akpınar, 2012; Özur, 2010) ve tarih derslerinde (Büyükboyacı, 2013) en az kullanılan yöntemlerden olduğu düşünülürse şaşırtıcı değildir. Bununla birlikte araştırma sonuçlarına göre, çoğu sınıf öğretmeni adayının kendilerini sözlü tarih çalışması yaptırmada yeterli görmesi ve bu yöntemi kendi derslerinde kullanma yönünde olumlu algılar taşımaları umut vericidir.

INTRODUCTION

As a part of citizenship education, aiming to raise citizens equipped with democratic values needed in the democratic societies, social studies, basically, has a very crucial mission in schools (Kabapınar, 2012; Turner, 2004; Wade, 2002). As goals of social studies curriculum, students gain “knowledge”, “skills”, “values and beliefs” (Maxim, 2006, p. 18) and the virtues of “productive citizens” in social studies that help students effectively adapt to the society in which they live (Wood et al., 1989, p. 5-6). Subject matter of social studies is directly related to children’s social life which makes it exclusive from other school subjects and also could provide opportunities for amusing learning environments for students (Maxim, 2006, p. 5). However, research shows that social studies is neither perceived as much important as mentioned in academic papers, textbooks nor is it thought likable, useful or preferable compared to other school subjects by students (Chapin, 2006; Chiodo & Byford, 2004; Dundar & Rapoport, 2014; Dünder, Güvendir, Kocabıyık, & Papatga, 2014; Goodlad, 1984; Greenblatt, 1962; Haladyna & Thomas, 1979; Herman, 1963; Inskeep & Rowland, 1965; McGowan, 1983; Schug, Todd, & Beery, 1982; Stodolsky, Salk, & Glaessner, 1991; Wolters & Pintrich, 1998). Furthermore, studies carried out to explore the “backburner” state of social studies (Houser, 1994, p. 17) found that teacher-centered social studies instruction as opposed to active learning contributed to students to develop undesired perceptions or/and attitudes toward social studies (Chiodo & Byford, 2004; Dünder et al., 2014; Russell & Waters, 2010; Schug et al., 1982; Stodolsky et al., 1991). These studies reveal that how students feel for social studies is closely related to teachers’ teaching strategies/styles. At this point, oral history as a teaching method in social studies could help students develop positive perceptions and overcome students’ adverse thoughts for social studies.

Oral history in the social studies classes

Oral history could be defined as “a recorded interview of an individual or group of individuals by an historian, researcher, or another interested individual doing the interview” (Butler, 2008, p. 34). During oral history, an interviewer directs questions to the people who witnessed and

experienced the past event(s) that is interest to him/her and records the story of these people (Butler, 2008; Huerta & Flemmer, 2000; Siler, 1996). An oral history involves the experiences of the ordinary people that students encounter in their daily life which is an important factor that makes learning past and social events exciting, fun, meaningful, and permanent for students and takes students out of textbooks to the real life (Ames & Diepstra, 2006; Banks, 1997; Busby, 2011; Busby & Hubbard, 2007; Huerta & Flemmer, 2000; Kabapınar, 2012; Siler, 1996). Oral history applications in social studies necessitate students' active engagement. Since students learn about people's daily life by actively involving in learning process through oral history, it increases students' motivation and interest in social studies resulting in deep learning (Busby, 2011; Busby & Hubbard, 2007; Chee, 2004; Chick, 2006; Huerta & Flemmer, 2000; Kabapınar, 2012; Lattimer & Kelly, 2013; Naylor & Diem, 1987; Penyak & Duray, 1999; Siler, 1996). Oral history provokes intellectual and emotional development helping students learn in depth about content, obtain a variety of skills and values of social studies curriculum (Chee, 2004, p. 214).

A variety of benefits of oral history to the students was found in many earlier research. For example, Penyak and Duray (1999) found that oral history studies conducted by students support students' learning and develop empathy skills. In an experimental research with 7th graders, Sari (2007) found that students conducting oral history studies (experimental group) over scored control group in achievement test. Moreover, qualitative data also showed that oral history studies (1) improved students' skills such as "organizing the information", "distinguish the fact from the thought", "finding the relevant information among irrelevant information", "better understanding previous generation and appreciate them", (2) improved students' confidence to conduct oral histories, and (3) improved students' attitudes towards the topic studied (Sari, 2007, pp. 167-280). A study by İncegöl (2010) conducted with 5th graders found that oral history studies conducted by students increased students' interest in elderly for writing history, it helped them gain knowledge about oral history and its importance in understanding the past. It was also found that students improved their knowledge about the topic studied and developed change and continuity perceptions by oral history studies. Moreover, students developed positive attitudes towards conducting oral history, and they learned by having fun, they were socialized and developed self-confidence and interviewing skills. Nevertheless, students reported to have experienced some difficulties in conducting oral history studies such as interviewing (technical difficulties such as camera, run out of paper etc.), presenting their oral history studies, finding people to interview, group works, understanding the study (İncegöl, 2010, p. 73). Similarly, M. Kaya (2013) conducted a study with 7th graders and with their parents and found that oral history studies conducted by students developed positive attitudes in students towards history. Because of oral history studies, students developed perceptions of history that it is amusing, not boring, and not difficult. They appreciated the value of ordinary people's observations to write a history; they also learned about oral history and developed positive attitudes towards conducting an oral history study. It was also found that oral history helped students improve their knowledge about the topic studied, connect present and future, and gain change and continuity perception skills. However, students mentioned some difficulties that they experienced while conducting oral history. These included "gathering information from the internet, books", "writing footnote", "communication problems in the group work", "writing in the computer", "losing interview questions", "interviewee did not want to be voice recorded", "short answers to the questions", "finding sources", "finding interviewee" (M. Kaya, 2013, p. 101). A study by Kabapınar and Koç (2013) with 5th grades found that conducting oral history studies helped students gain knowledge about the topic, perspectives, and perceptions of change and continuity. They also found that oral histories promoted skill development in students such as interpretation, comparison, analysis, and synthesis (Kabapınar & Koç, 2013). Positive impact of conducting oral history on students' learning social studies, higher order thinking, and their attitudes towards oral history and social studies were also reported in other studies (Busby, 2011; Busby & Hubbard, 2007).

In some studies carried out independent of any lesson, a number of benefits of oral history were also reported. For example, in their study, Yang, Chen, and Chen (2002) found that oral history studies conducted by students promoted student learning, improved students' interviewing, communication, language, question creating, planning, empathy, conducting a research project skills, knowledge of designing a home page, made learning exciting experience, helped students make new

acquaintances and communicate with the elderly “in an enjoyable and informative manner”, see “connections between ‘past, now and future’” and “awakened their historical consciousness” (p. 276). Moreover their research also showed that oral history studies developed multiple perspectives, positive attitudes in students towards oral history studies, teamwork, learning history, and provoked curiosity to learn more. However, students had some challenges such as “lack of professional skills and time limits, problems with a language barrier, interviewee’s health and technical difficulties” (Yang et al., 2002, p. 275).

In a study, Lattimer and Kelly (2013) found that conducting oral history studies made learning joyful and improved students’ self-efficacy beliefs, self-confidence, responsibility feelings, knowledge of the material, skills such as research, writing, decision making, and communication, and developed positive attitudes towards oral history. Nevertheless, while conducting oral histories, students experienced some difficulties, for example, in interviewing, scheduling, and writing (Lattimer & Kelly, 2013, pp. 480-483).

Oral history in method courses

Since social studies and history teachers are expected to use oral history as a teaching method in their classes, oral history should be taught in social studies and history method courses effectively in teacher education programs. As asserted by Busby (2011) “experiencing oral history projects firsthand is vital for preservice teachers if they are to implement this strategy in their own classrooms. Without such experiences, these future teachers will be unable to fully support and guide their elementary students” (p. 183). In this framework, some research was carried out in method courses to evaluate the impact of oral history studies on preservice teachers.

For example, the study by Torrez (2010) found that oral histories conducted by preservice teachers in elementary social studies methods course helped them develop self-confidence in using technology in conducting oral histories and positive attitudes towards history and conducting oral histories. In the study by E. Demircioğlu (2016), preservice history teachers conducted oral history studies as a part of the special teaching methods course. In the study, after conducting oral history studies, participants thought that they gained knowledge and skills about how to do oral history and how to use oral history in their classes effectively. Also, they developed positive attitudes towards oral history, they recognized the value of oral history in teaching, and they believed that oral history method in history classes has many positive effects on students such as promoting active learning and research skills, making history lessons enjoyable, helping students see the different perspectives and socialize (E. Demircioğlu, 2016).

Banks (1997) carried out a study with undergraduate students in a secondary social studies methods course. The students were assigned to conduct an oral history study as part of the course. It was found that oral history studies increased the students’ content knowledge and helped the students develop positive attitudes towards oral history and motivation to do more oral histories and to use this method with their own students in the future (Banks, 1997).

Similarly, Busby and Hubbard (2007) conducted a study in a social studies methods course. In their study, the elementary preservice teachers provided guidance to fourth grade students to carry out oral histories. The study showed that oral history studies increased preservice teachers’ attitudes towards using oral history as a teaching method, social studies teaching efficacy, and interest in history. Moreover, oral history studies helped them learn the topic in-depth (Busby, 2011; Busby & Hubbard, 2007). In a study, Johnson (2007) used oral story in the social studies methods course to teach students “to realize the subjectivity of all storytellers of history” (p. 199). It was found that oral story along with discussions on different perspectives based on the oral story “raised many participants’ critical consciousness about social studies teaching” (Johnson, 2007, p. 199).

As seen in aforementioned studies, oral history studies have a number of benefits to be used as an instructional method in social studies. However, to gain these benefits of oral history, first of all there is a need for teachers who are willing to have their students conduct oral history studies and believe positive influences of the oral history as a teaching method. Nevertheless, research shows that teachers rarely use oral history as a teaching method in social studies (Aydemir & Akpınar, 2012; Özür, 2010); on the other hand, teacher-centered social studies instruction based on text-books is most common among teachers (Akgül, 2006; Aydemir & Akpınar, 2012; Bailey, Shaw, & Hollifield,

2006; Bolinger & Warren, 2007; Burstein, Hutton, & Curtis, 2006; Çelikkaya & Kuş, 2009; Finkelstein, Nielsen, & Switzer, 1993; Hootstein, 1999; Johnson, 2007; R. Kaya & Güven, 2012; Lintner, 2006; Russell, 2010; Taşkaya & Bal, 2009; Wood et al., 1989). As Turner (2004) argued “since society is changing rapidly, teaching social studies is even more of a challenge today than it was in the past. Teachers really need to think about different approaches to teaching the social studies” (p. 1).

In the light of literature, the main aim of this study was to examine preservice elementary school teachers’ opinions about oral history studies as a teaching method in social studies. In this framework research questions were as follows:

Research Question 1: *How are preservice elementary school teachers’ experiences related to oral history studies in their school life prior to the social studies teaching course?*

Research Question 2: *How are preservice elementary school teachers’ self-efficacy perceptions to use oral history method in their own social studies classes?*

Research Question 3: *How did the oral history study that preservice elementary school teachers conducted in the social studies teaching course impact their efficacy beliefs to use this method in their own social studies classes in future?*

Research Question 4: *What are the factors that impact preservice elementary school teachers’ motivations to use or not to use oral history method in their own social studies classes when they become a teacher?*

Research Question 5: *What are the opinions of preservice elementary school teachers about the benefits that students would have from conducting oral history studies in social studies?*

Research Question 6: *What are the beliefs of preservice elementary school teachers about difficulties/obstacles that elementary school students might encounter while conducting oral history studies?*

Research Question 7: *What are the solutions of preservice elementary school teachers for teachers to eliminate difficulties/obstacles that students might encounter while conducting oral history studies?*

METHOD

Research Model

In general, this study used qualitative research approach. Although there are many types of qualitative research strategies, “basic qualitative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, narrative analysis, and critical qualitative research” are mostly used (Merriam, 2009, pp. 21-22). Among these, basic qualitative research is commonly used in educational research, and its “overall purpose is to *understand* how people make sense of their lives and their experiences” (Merriam, 2009, p. 23).

Focusing on understanding how preservice elementary school teachers made sense of oral history in relation to motivations to use, benefits to students, difficulties might be faced by students, this study was performed using a basic qualitative research strategy (Merriam, 2009).

Participants

In the study, the data were collected from 93 preservice elementary school teachers attending a social studies teaching course in a faculty of education at one public university at the end of spring term in 2013-14 academic year. Of the 93 participants, 65 (69.9%) were female and 28 (30.1%) were male. The mean age of the participants was 22.03 years ($SD = 2.31$).

Instrumentation

In the present study, the data were gathered by a questionnaire which included closed-ended (with yes and no options) and open-ended questions. Some questions in the questionnaire were adapted and/or adopted from previous studies (İncegöl, 2010; M. Kaya, 2013), and some were constructed by the author in terms of the purpose of this study. Questions used in the questionnaire were as follows:

1. *Have you ever conducted any oral history study in your school life except for the oral history study that you conducted in the social studies teaching course?” (1) Yes; (2) No. If you had conducted please explain: “when?”, “where?”, “why?”, “about what?”, “with whom?”.*

2. a. Do you see yourself efficacious in having your students conduct oral history studies in your own social studies classes? (1) Yes; (2) No

b. How do you evaluate the impact of the oral history study that you conducted in the social studies teaching course on your efficacy to have your students conduct oral histories in your own social studies classes? Please explain.

3. Do you want to have your students conduct oral history studies in your own social studies classes when you become a teacher? (1) Yes; (2) No. Please write your reasons for the answer.

4. What kind of benefits do you think students would have from conducting oral history studies in social studies? Please explain.

5. What difficulties/obstacles do you think that elementary school students might encounter while conducting oral history studies? Please explain.

6. What do you think that teachers could do to eliminate difficulties/obstacles that students might encounter while conducting oral history studies? Please explain.

Data Collection

In a social studies teaching course's routine process, it was informally learned from preservice elementary school teachers attending this course that they had not conducted any oral history previously. Thereupon, based on the related literature (İ. H. Demircioğlu, 2005; Kabapınar, 2012; Moyer, 1999; Sari, 2007; Siler, 1996), participants were lectured briefly about oral history by the researcher. Following the brief lecture about oral history, preservice elementary school teachers were required to conduct an oral history study as a group or by their own. Since they will be teaching social studies in the 4th grades as an elementary school teacher in future, they were asked to choose any topic for their study based on the acquisitions (standards/objectives) given in the social studies curriculum for grades 4 (Ministry of National Education [MEB], 2009). Although every acquisition is not appropriate for an oral history study in the social studies curriculum (MEB, 2009), preservice elementary school teachers were not directed to specific acquisitions since the researcher wanted them to examine all acquisitions in terms of appropriateness for the oral history studies.

As a result, out of the 96 preservice elementary school teachers, 92 participants as a group, consisting of two or three group members, and four participants as alone conducted their oral history studies with people they encountered in their daily lives (e.g., elderly relatives, tradespeople, retired teachers, experienced teachers, homemakers etc.). Fifty-two participants conducted their oral history studies in "Science, Technology, and Society"; 40 participants in "Culture and Heritage"; and four participants in "Production, Distribution, and Consumption" learning themes (MEB, 2009). During oral history studies, preservice elementary school teachers were supervised by and received feedbacks from the researcher when needed (Huerta & Flemmer, 2000). However, there were no specific, systematic, planned, or controlled interventions as in the case of experimental studies (Creswell, 2008, 2009).

After preservice elementary school teachers completed and handed in their oral history studies, the data were collected from them by the abovementioned questionnaire. Ninety-three preservice elementary school teachers out of 96 conducting oral history studies completed the questionnaire. Because it was beyond the aim of the current research, no assessment for oral history studies was done within the scope of this research.

Analysis of the Data

Frequencies and percentages were calculated for the closed-ended questions. A content analysis was performed on the data collected via open-ended questions, and codes and themes were developed (Creswell, 2008, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001).

In the content analysis, codes were developed out of participants' answers for each question, and frequencies were calculated for each codes. For reliability, coding was performed in four steps by the researcher, and when there was an uncertainty about the coding for a specific answer, opinions from a second person was taken (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In the first step, tentative codes were created in the direction of research questions perusing answers of all participants to open-ended questions. In the second step, for each question, each participant's answer was assigned into appropriate code(s) which were created in the first step, and when needed, changes were made on

the tentative codes. In the third step, using final codes developed in the second step, coding was controlled and repeated. Lastly, a week later using the same codes in the third step, coding was repeated and “code-recode reliability” was calculated using the formula [number of agreements/(total number of agreements+disagreements)] proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 64). The reliability was found to be ranging from .92 to .97 in terms of the questions.

After codes were developed, similar codes were grouped under themes by the researcher. Following this, naming of the themes and assigning codes into these themes were finalized with an agreement with an outside researcher who is experienced with qualitative data analysis. In this step codes were also revised if needed.

FINDINGS

When possible, findings were given in tables. Tables were also supported with excerpts from answers to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire. For the confidentiality of the participants, codes such as *PSELST1* (*Preservice Elementary School Teacher 1*) were used in lieu of actual names.

Findings about preservice elementary school teachers’ experiences related to oral history study prior to the social studies teaching course

It was found that none of the preservice elementary school teachers participating in this study conducted any oral history study prior to the social studies teaching course.

Findings about preservice elementary school teachers’ self-efficacy perceptions to use oral history in their own social studies classes

Out of 93 participants, 89 (95.7%) perceived themselves as efficacious; however, only 4 (4.3%) thought they were not efficacious to have their prospective students conduct oral history studies in their own social studies classes.

Findings about the impact of the oral history studies conducted in the social studies teaching course on preservice elementary school teachers’ efficacy beliefs to use this method in their own social studies classes

Content analysis results of preservice elementary school teachers’ opinions about the impact of the oral history study conducted by them on their efficacy to have their own students conduct oral histories were given in Table 1.

Table 1. *Preservice elementary school teachers’ opinions about the impact of the oral history study conducted by them on their efficacy to have their own students conduct oral histories (N=93)*

Themes	Codes	<i>f</i>
Positive Impact	Provided detailed/better learning	62
	Saw the difficulties that students might experience	24
	Provided permanent learning	6
	Examined all social studies standards in terms of an oral history	1
No Impact	First oral history study	1
	Interest is more important	1

As seen in Table 1, participants’ opinions about the impact of the oral history study conducted by them on their efficacy to have their own students conduct oral histories were grouped under six codes as *provided detailed/better learning*, *saw the difficulties that students might experience*, *provided permanent learning*, *examined all social studies standards in terms of an oral history*, *first oral history study*, and *interest is more important*. These codes sorted into two themes as “Positive Impact” and “No Impact”.

Most of the students (N=91) thought that oral history studies positively impacted their efficacy to use this method in their own social studies classes. Most of them thought that oral history studies helped them learn the oral history method in detail/better (f=62) which was followed by oral

histories helped them to see the difficulties that their students might experience while conducting oral history studies (f=24) and provided permanent learning about oral history studies (f=6).

One of the preservice elementary school teachers commented that by conducting oral history she learned the oral history better, and she would use this experience to motivate her students:

"I have learned the process better after doing it. As a teacher, to know what kind of difficulties students might encounter, what points are needed to be paid attention to while conducting an oral history study will contribute to me a lot. Now, I can control the process better. After all, I can motivate the students. I think there is a lot of fun in conducting oral history. I can encourage my students by saying that I also conducted oral history while a student."(PSELST76)

One of the preservice elementary school teachers wrote that learning about oral history by conducting an oral history helped her to learn it in detail, and it will help her to teach students this method better. In addition, she commented as following, feeling that doing an oral history in university years is late:

"With the oral history study we did, I have learned about it in depth, so that it will help me teach it to my students accurately... It was the first time I have conducted an oral history. I can tell that they will not have done first time at the university."(PSELST78)

Some of the participants emphasized the superiority of the conducting an oral history over just learning it from books.

"In the social studies teaching course, if we have just talked about the oral history topic and passed it without conducting it ourselves, I would not think that I would learn very much. However, because we practiced it, I think I will become efficacious for oral history studies that I will have my students conduct."(PSELST20)

"Since there is a huge difference between learning from books or hearing and doing, I will benefit from it while I will have it conducted."(PSELST50)

"We can learn about what an oral history is on books, I mean we can learn theoretically. But, I think doing is more important in better learning. Experience is always more important, we cannot achieve something with only knowledge without experience. Oral history studies we did ourselves will have a great impact on the oral history studies we will have our students do and we will have it conducted by our students with the ease."(PSELST92)

As understood from the excerpts above, these preservice elementary school teachers think that theory is not sufficient to learn. However, learning by doing helps in learning better.

Another preservice elementary school teacher mentioned that she heard oral history studies first time at the university. She commented as follows:

"I have heard the oral history method first time in the university and experienced it because of the oral history study given in the social studies teaching course. I have realized that it is very useful method when used with appropriate topics and standards. I had not difficulty too much in doing the oral history study, but I succeeded it when I put effort on it. Based on my experiences from my own study, I think I will have my students conduct this study in my own class when I become a teacher."(PSELST44)

Some of the participants explained the oral history studies' impact on their efficacy as follows, emphasizing they had not conducted any oral history studies up to that point, and it was their first oral history studies.

"I had not conducted any oral history studies before... Now, I can guess which part will be difficult for my students since I did it myself... I can answer my students' questions correctly... I can act according to their ages and guide them effectively." (PSELST15)

"I could not teach my students oral history if I did not do it myself previously. When I will have my students conduct oral history studies, I can predict what kind of difficulties they may encounter and guide them accordingly." (PSELST21)

"Before conducting an oral history in this class, I have not even known that this activity is conducted in elementary schools. I think that conducting this study is important for our profession because we can now anticipate wherein our students will have difficulty and what they will encounter when we assign this kind of task."(PSELST70)

"I have not conducted any oral history and known about it before. But, now, I know how to guide my students, what kind of difficulties they may face while conducting oral history. If you want it to become effective, you cannot have it done unless you did it yourself."(PSELST38)

One of the participants commented that he heard about oral history studies but had no idea how to conduct and learned it by the oral history study assigned in the social studies teaching course:

"I have heard about oral history method, but I have had no idea about how to do. With the oral history I have conducted in this course, I have learned the steps of an oral history. I can use it in my own classes when appropriate."(PSELST32)

However, two participants did not think positively about the impact of the oral history study conducted by them on their efficacy. One of them expressed his opinion as: *"...impact of our interest is much more"* (PSELST25). The other commented as following:

"...since this is my first experience, I am not efficacious completely. It could be repeated. The method needs to be understood completely." (PSELST19)

Findings about factors that impact preservice elementary school teachers' motivations to use or not to use oral history in their own social studies classes when they become a teacher

Out of 93 participants, 90 (96.8%) considered to use the oral history as a teaching method in their social studies classes; on the other hand only 3 (3.2%) indicated they did not want to use it. Content analyses results for reasons of preservice elementary school teachers who want to have their own students conduct oral histories in their own social studies classes were presented in Table 2.

As seen in Table 2, reasons of preservice elementary school teachers to use oral histories in their future social studies classes were thematised as "Student Related Reasons" and "Teacher Related Reasons". Preservice elementary school teachers' motivations to use oral history method are mostly student-related. Only three reasons were generated under the theme of teacher related reasons.

Most of the preservice elementary school teachers wanted to have their own students conduct oral histories in their own social studies classes because they believed that oral history provides meaningful and better learning for students (f=29), provides firsthand information to students about the topic studied (f=22), improves students' communication (f=22), research skills (f=21), and provides permanent learning for students (f=21).

In general, findings show that participants want to use oral history mostly because it provides meaningful, better, permanent, active learning, firsthand information and helps students gain a variety of skills such as communication, research. For example a preservice elementary school teacher commented that oral history helps students link the subject to real life and this provides better learning:

"Because for mastery learning it would not be very effective just talking or reading about the topic from the book. Students need to link the topic to the real life. In this context, this method is to the point and very effective."(PSELST11)

Another student mentioned that she wants to have her students conduct oral histories since oral history is an important experience and provide permanent learning:

"I think it is an important and a lasting experience. However, I would be cautious for choosing simple topics since students' ages will be small."(PSELST12)

Another student asserted that oral history causes permanent learning because of interchange between interviewer and interviewee:

"While conducting this study, students will talk to first-hand source personally which, in return, will make learning about the subject they searched more permanent for them."(PSELST7)

Table 2. Reasons of preservice elementary school teachers who want to have their own students conduct oral histories in their own social studies classes (N=90)

Themes	Codes	f
Student Related Reasons		
	Provides meaningful and better learning	29
	Provides firsthand information	22
	Improves communication skills	22
	Improves research skills	21
	Provides permanent learning	21
	Helps socialization	12
	Promotes active learning	11
	Opportunity to make comparison between past and today	10
	Makes learning fun	8
	Provides opportunity to see the different point of views	8
	Improves curiosity about the topic studied	8
	Helps in learning about past	5
	Increases self confidence	5
	Increases sense of responsibility	5
	Increases interest in social studies	4
	Improves skills in working in collaboration	4
	Helps in gaining disciplined study skills	3
	Improves questioning skills	3
	Improves empathy skills	2
	Improves comparison skills	2
	Improves technology use skills	2
	Helps in gaining scientific habits	1
	Develops critical thinking skills	1
	Teaches valuing different point of views	1
	Gives opportunity to link the subject to the real life	1
	Teaches using evidence for the claims	1
	Makes learning the topic easy	1
	Develops creative thinking skills	1
Teacher Related Reasons		
	Gives opportunity to get to know students by family history	1
	Liked it as a social studies teaching method	1
	Have efficacy to use	1

One of the participants commented that lecturing is a way to teach but not effective for permanent learning. However, use of oral histories provides permanent learning.

"We can transfer the information to students with direct instruction, but in this way permanent and meaningful learning do not occur. We can provide permanent and meaningful learning with oral history."(PSELST92)

The comments of one of the participants summarize reasons, highlighting that she wants to use oral history because it supports students' skill development and provides active learning:

"My first aim to have my students conduct oral histories will be to foster skill development in students and to make them active learners and develop their point of views."(PSELST47)

Another participant comments that she wants to give opportunity to her students to develop their research skills by having the role of an historian:

"Yes, I will be an elementary school teacher in the near future, I will have my students do this study and I would like them to experience this method. Because, in the oral history study, students do not only do their homework, but they also assume a role of historian... It helps students develop a researcher identity."(PSELST44)

One of the participants suggested that although oral history is time taking activity, she wants to use it:

"Even though it takes so much time, when I will be a teacher I would have my students do oral histories because I believe it develops students' cooperative working skills, research skills, and social skills. I think it would be fun, interesting study for students."(PSELST33)

It seems the fact that oral history is time taking activity does not scare her, yet she believes advantages are more than disadvantages.

One of the participants commented about how oral history generates different perspectives and helps students:

"With this method experiences of various people at a variety of age groups pass to the people who conduct an oral history and it gains different perspectives."(PSELST32)

Out of 93 participants, 3 (3.2%) indicated that they did not want to have their students conduct oral histories in their own social studies classes when they would become elementary school teachers. It is understood from their comments that they do not want to use this method because they think that it is difficult to conduct for students. One of these participants indicated she had difficulty conducting oral history and thought elementary school students would also have difficulty:

"Even we had difficulty in doing this homework. I don't want my elementary school level students to have that much difficulty... Some people did not accept video or voice recording, they did not want to be interviewed. We needed to find different people. One person interviewed did not take us seriously, answered superficially... So, I don't think to have my students do oral histories."(PSELST53)

The other participant did not want to use oral history because she thinks that it is a difficult task for students, but students do not take in turn so much:

"I don't. I think that even though it is too challenging study, contributions are very low. I would prefer another method that, I think, contributes to students more."(PSELST43)

One participant mentioned that she was not sure whether to have her students conduct oral histories because she thought *"oral history takes a lot of time to complete."* (PSELST6)

Findings about preservice elementary school teachers' opinions about benefits of oral history studies to students in social studies classes

Content analysis results of preservice elementary school teachers' opinions about benefits of oral history studies to students in social studies classes were given in Table 3.

As seen in Table 3, a total of 33 benefits of oral history to students were generated from preservice elementary school teachers' opinions, and they were gathered under five themes as "Skill Development", "Knowledge Development", "Personal Development", "Positive Attitudes towards Social Studies", and "Value Learning".

The most repeated opinions under the skill development theme included communication (f=33), research (f=27), and questioning skills (f=12). Sample sentences from participants were presented below:

"It develops their communication skills. It teaches them to study according to a plan."(PSELST83)

"It will help in learning the topic completely and increase communication with other people."(PSELST27)

"Students' interview skills develop, they can communicate with people. It improves research skills. Learning becomes permanent."(PSELST30)

"They learn by asking people, their communication skills develop. Their research skills develop."(PSELST65)

One of the participants emphasized research and evidence use skills. She also thought oral history studies provide students opportunities for socializing:

"It gains research, evidence use skills... It provides opportunities for socialization." (PSELST10)

Table 3. Preservice elementary school teachers' opinions about benefits of oral history studies to students in social studies classes (N=93)

Themes	Codes	f
Skill Development		
	Improves communication skills	33
	Improves research skills	27
	Fosters questioning skills	12
	Promotes cooperative study skills	11
	Improves comparison skills	11
	Teaches students how to interview	8
	Teaches disciplined/planned study	6
	Improves report writing skills	5
	Improves interpretation skills	5
	Promotes critical thinking skills	3
	Develops evidence use skills	3
	Promotes empathy skills	2
	Develops technology skills	2
	Improves drawing conclusion skills	1
	Develops language skills	1
	Promotes decision making skills	1
	Develops creative thinking skills	1
Knowledge Development		
	Makes learning permanent	26
	Provides meaningful/better learning	22
	Teaches about the past (history)	20
	Gives opportunity to learn from the firsthand source	17
	Promotes active learning	11
	Helps in seeing different points of view on the topic studied	10
	Helps in linking the topic to the real life	6
	Helps in realizing the change	4
	Makes learning the subject easy	1
	Provides learning from other students' presentations	1
Personal Development		
	Increases students' self-confidence	17
	Helps students socialize	14
Positive Attitudes towards Social Studies		
	Increases students motivation, curiosity, and attention	14
	Provides fun learning	5
Value Learning		
	Improves sense of responsibility	13
	Helps in learning to respect others	1

One of the preservice elementary school teachers commented that students' research skills would develop with oral history studies by learning research process:

"I think students will gain skills such as data gathering, data analyzing, and data interpretations." (PSELST57)

Some of the participants thought that oral history studies promote cooperative study skills in students. For example:

"If they conduct oral history studies as groups, their cooperative working skills will develop..." (PSELST58)

"They become more active. If they conduct this study with their friends, they will learn working in cooperation..." (PSELST66)

Some of the participants thought that oral history studies help students develop comparison skills. For example:

"They learn new information by comparing different people. It helps them socialize." (PSELST26)

"They would receive different answers from different age groups to the topics they study. It gives them opportunity to make comparisons."(PSELST64)

"It provides effective and permanent learning, develops research skill. They learn comparing past and today."(PSELST28)

The most repeated opinions under the knowledge development theme were the belief that oral history provides permanent (f=26) and meaningful/better learning (f=22).

In their comments, some of the participants emphasized the importance of learning from the people as a primary source experiencing any event in the past. For example:

"They will have received the information from first-hand sources. Along with the teacher support, students' learning from the people who witnessed the events and documents make learning permanent."(PSELST14)

"I think they will better understand and learn the topic. Instead of learning from a text-book or the Internet, they will interview with people who have experiences about the topic. I think this will be more beneficial to students than a text-book or Internet."(PSELST62)

Some think that students would have a chance to see multiple perspectives because of oral histories as exemplified below:

"By doing an oral history, [students] reach feelings, thoughts and comments of a variety of people about an issue."(PSELST54)

One of the participant explained how an oral history helps students link social studies to the real life environments:

"Social studies is a lesson that is integrated with environment where students live in. With oral history, students will have transferred social studies into their social environment which is also one of the aims of social studies."(PSELST45)

The opinions under the personal development theme were believes that oral history increases students' self-confidence (f=17) and helps students socialize (f=14). Some examples were presented below:

"The fact that students become active in this study gains them self-confidence."(PSELST49)

"I think that oral history study will gain self-confidence to students."(PSELST37)

"It develops their communication, creative thinking skills. It provides socialization. It increases their self-confidence and sense of responsibility. It promotes curiosity." (PSELST71)

The opinions under the positive attitudes towards social studies theme were believes about positive impact of oral history on students' motivation, curiosity, and attention towards topics studied (f=14) and fun learning (f=5).

"Learning about events from the people who experienced them motivates students, increases their interest in the lesson." (PSELST49)

"It will provide benefits such as permanent, fun, interesting and unforgettable learning."(PSELST75)

The most repeated opinion under the value learning theme was the belief that oral history improves sense of responsibility in students (f=13).

"Preparation, process and evaluation help students gain a sense of responsibility..."(PSELST34)

"Since each one is responsible for each other, they become aware of their own responsibilities."(PSELST22)

Findings about difficulties/obstacles that preservice elementary school teachers think elementary school students might encounter while conducting oral history studies

Results of the content analysis of preservice elementary school teachers' opinions regarding difficulties/obstacles that students might encounter in conducting an oral history were presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Preservice elementary school teachers' opinions about difficulties/obstacles that students might encounter in conducting an oral history (N=93)

Themes	Codes	f
Preparation		
	Finding an interviewee	47
	Preparing the interview questions	39
	Finding appropriate place for interview	3
Application		
	Conducting an interview	50
	Interviewee's resistance to the voice or video recording	30
	Technical difficulties	9
	Interviewee's negative attitude to share her/his belongings (picture etc.)	7
Reporting		
	Documenting oral history	9
Presenting		
	Presenting findings before classmates	2
Lack of Material and Time		
	Not having needed equipment	9
	Not having sufficient time	3
Students' Personal Features		
	Working in groups	5
	Having anxiety because of oral history	4
	Studying disciplined	1

As seen in Table 4, participants' opinions regarding difficulties/obstacles that students might encounter in conducting oral histories were grouped under 14 codes and 6 themes. The first four themes, namely, "Preparation", "Application", "Reporting", and "Presenting", were named in terms of the stages of conducting an oral history that were identified by Kabapınar (2012, pp. 268-269).

Finding an interviewee (f=47) and *preparing the interview questions* (f=39) under the preparation theme, *conducting an interview (communication, getting information about the topic etc.)* (f=50), *interviewee's resistance to the voice or video recording* (f=30) under the application theme, *not having needed equipment* (f=9) under the lack of material and time theme, and *working in groups* under the students' personal features theme were the most mentioned difficulties.

Some of the participants commented how students could face difficulties to find an appropriate interviewee for an oral history study:

"I think they could have difficulty in finding people who wants to help them in their oral histories. That could be finding appropriate people for the topic. For example, finding people whose ages are appropriate or it could be difficult to find volunteers to interview."(PSELST33)

"I think the topic is important. It could not be possible to find interviewees for every topic."(PSELST14)

"An oral history is directly related with the topic. Sometimes it can be a problem that people reject, do not agree for interviewing or appropriate people cannot be found to interview."(PSELST45)

"They can have difficulty in choosing the people for the study. Students who are not well-connected cannot be active in this kind of activity. So they may not conduct oral history with proper people."(PSELST63)

Some of the preservice elementary school teachers commented about difficulties in preparing the interview questions. They emphasized the importance of asking right questions to get the related information and of support while constructing questions. To exemplify:

"While conducting interview, new questions could come up to be asked. At that moment, students may have difficulty about what to ask."(PSELST43)

"First of all, I think they will have difficulty to prepare questions because they will need to produce appropriate questions to get the full and sufficient answers."(PSELST76)

"Because the age groups are small, I think the questions which are needed to be asked will not be created. They will need help in preparing good questions."(PSELST77)

Some of the participants commented how students could face difficulties during interviewing. Some highlighted that interviewee can digress from the topic:

"While being interviewed, interviewee can depart from the topic and students may not direct the interview."(PSELST7)

"People can often wander away from the topic. Students can have difficulty in managing the interview."(PSELST93)

In conducting interview, some emphasized the importance of being patient for students to get the related information from interviewees:

"Students can have difficulty in listening patiently and getting answers to their questions."(PSELST48)

"They need to be patient. Sometimes, it is not that much easy to get answers to the questions."(PSELST78)

Some stressed the importance of recording of interview and commented about possible negative effects if interviewee did not accept voice or video recording:

"They could have difficulty with interviewees. For example, some might not agree with voice recording. If so, it would be difficult to write everything coming out from the mouth."(PSELST62)

"If interviewee does not consent to voice recording, it will be very difficult to keep everything in mind and take notes."(PSELST60)

Some of the participants thought that students' not having needed equipment to conduct oral history studies could be a difficulty/obstacle. For example:

"Students may have limited resources which prevent voice recording and video recording."(PSELST26)

"They may have difficulty in finding people for oral history, they may also have lack of material for oral history." (PSELST74)

Some of the participants thought that students could have difficulties/obstacles while conducting oral history studies when students work as a group. For example:

"... some students may not perform their responsibilities." (PSELST1)

"... there may be problems that not every member in a group shows the same kind of attention." (PSELST69)

Findings about preservice elementary school teachers' solutions to eliminate difficulties/obstacles that students might encounter while conducting oral history studies

Content analysis results of preservice elementary school teachers' opinions regarding what teachers could do to eliminate difficulties/obstacles that students might encounter in conducting oral history were presented in Table 5.

As seen in Table 5, preservice elementary school teachers' opinions regarding what teachers could do to eliminate difficulties/obstacles that students might encounter in conducting oral history were grouped under 18 codes and 6 themes.

More than half of the participants (f=51) mentioned about constant *guidance and feedback* during oral history studies to eliminate difficulties/obstacles that students might encounter in conducting oral history. This was followed by *give clear and concise instructions* (f=18), which is under making understandable theme, *find interviewees* for students (f=17), under providing support theme, and *show samples* (f=16), under making understandable theme.

Table 5. Preservice elementary school teachers' opinions regarding what teachers could do to eliminate difficulties/obstacles that students might encounter in conducting oral history (N=91)

Themes	Codes	f
Providing guidance and feedback	Give guidance and feedback continuously	51
Making understandable	Give clear and concise instructions	18
	Show samples	16
	Inform about the possible difficulties	14
	Inform about how to conduct interview	11
	Inform about oral history	11
	Make some practice related to oral history	5
Providing support	Find interviewees	17
	Inform interviewees about the importance of oral history for students	10
	Provide voice or video recorder for students	6
	Contact parents and have their support for oral history	6
	Make arrangements for interview (consent, place etc.)	4
	Prepare the interview questions for students	2
Encouraging students	Motivate students (talking about benefits of oral history etc.)	8
	Be patient and tolerant towards questions from students	6
	Explain importance of group working to the students	1
Being a mediator among group members	Supervise the distribution of the responsibilities in group studies	2
Providing sufficient time	Allow sufficient time for oral history studies	2

In general, it seems that participants' opinions regarding what teachers could do to eliminate difficulties/obstacles that students might encounter in conducting oral history mostly focused on making understandable the oral history for students. Sample sentences were presented below from participants' answers:

For instance, one of the participants emphasized the importance of guidance and clear instruction as follows:

"To help students overcome difficulties, teachers should help them continuously. At each step, the teacher should guide them. The teacher should tell them what to do clearly and concisely while conducting oral histories."(PSELST8)

To make the oral history understandable for students, some of the participants pointed out samples related to oral history studies to be given in the class. For example:

"An oral history study similar to the one to be conducted can be presented to the students in the classroom."(PSELST77)

Preservice elementary school teachers also suggested that teachers can make some practice in classrooms before oral histories are carried out to make oral history understandable for students. For example:

"Teacher can ask some of the students to do an oral history with her/him before the class. This kind of dramatization could help them understand better."(PSELST76)

"Teacher can have students make practice voice and video recording, can give sample reports to the students."(PSELST36)

Some of the participants thought some of the barriers could be overcome by having support from parents both as technical and as finding interviewees. Examples were given below:

"We can get support from parents for the materials like camera, voice recorder. Also, parent support can be taken in finding appropriate people in the close neighborhood to conduct an oral history."(PSELST81)

"We can overcome the problems like finding material and finding and choosing people to interview by including parents in learning process and getting help from them."(PSELST61)

"Students may not have mobile phones which is most likely because they are younger. They can get support from their families like cell phones, voice recording device."(PSELST38)

On the other hand, two of the participants were pessimistic in their answers, and they thought teachers could not do anything to eliminate difficulties/obstacles in students' oral history studies. One of them commented as follows:

"Only obstacle is the attitudes of the interviewee. There is nothing that a teacher could do about this."(PSELST23)

As seen in her answer she considered the interviewee's attitudes in an oral history important barrier in that there is nothing that a teacher could do.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed to discover preservice elementary school teachers' opinions about oral history as a teaching method in social studies. Findings of the present study revealed that none of the preservice elementary school teachers conducted any oral history study previously, and some participants expressed that they have not heard oral history until the social studies teaching course. Similarly, in a study by M. Kaya (2013), students' parents also indicated that they did not conduct any oral history studies during their academic life (M. Kaya, 2013). Given that in Turkey, teacher-centered teaching methods (i.e. lecturing and question-answer) are the most frequently-used methods in elementary social studies classes (Akgül, 2006; Taşkaya & Bal, 2009), middle school social studies classes (Aydemir & Akpınar, 2012; Çelikkaya & Kuş, 2009; R. Kaya & Güven, 2012), history classes (Büyükboyacı, 2013), and oral history is one of the least used teaching methods in social studies (Aydemir & Akpınar, 2012; Özü, 2010) and in history classes (Büyükboyacı, 2013), this research finding is not surprising.

Most of the preservice elementary school teachers (N=89, 95.7%) feel efficacious in having their future students conduct oral history studies in social studies classes. Given that none of the preservice elementary school teachers in this study did not conducted any oral history study previously, it might be asserted that oral history studies conducted by the participants of this study, social studies teaching course in general or other courses they attended during their education at the university helped them develop self-confidence to use oral history in their own social studies classes in the future.

In the study, it is understood from participants' answers that oral history studies provided them with opportunities such as detailed/better, permanent learning, and these opportunities contributed to developing deep understanding of oral history as a teaching method in social studies. Since deep learning in a social studies teaching course positively predicted social studies teaching self-efficacy (Dündar, 2015) and successful learning experiences regarding to teaching enhance self-efficacy beliefs in teaching (Palmer, 2006) this finding is not surprising. Moreover, these findings are in agreement with other research which showed positive impacts of oral history on preservice teachers conducted in methods courses such as gaining content knowledge and knowledge about oral history, self-confidence in conducting oral history, self-confidence in using oral history as a teaching method, positive attitudes towards history, oral history and using oral history as a teaching method in their own classes, and seeing different perspectives etc. (Banks, 1997; Busby, 2011; Busby & Hubbard, 2007; E. Demircioğlu, 2016; Johnson, 2007; Torrez, 2010). However, Akbaba and Kılcan (2014) did not find any significant difference between oral history attitude scores of preservice teachers who conducted oral history studies and those who did not conduct any oral history studies during their undergraduate education. On the other hand, they found that preservice teachers who learned about oral history and examined sample oral history studies had more positive attitudes towards oral history compared to those who did not learn about oral history and examined sample oral history studies (Akbaba & Kılcan, 2014). In this study, it seems that preservice elementary school teachers are willing to expand their teaching skills by experiencing oral history in social studies methods courses.

Most of the participants (N=90, 96.8%) indicated that they wanted to use oral history as a teaching method in their own social studies classes. They want to use it because they believe oral history provides meaningful and better learning, provides firsthand information to students about the topic studied, helps students develop skills (e. g., communication, research, working in collaboration, disciplined study, questioning, empathy, comparison, using technology, critical and creative thinking). Moreover, when participants were asked about benefits of oral history studies to students in social studies classes, they also mentioned a variety of benefits. Communications skills, research skills, permanent learning, meaningful learning are among many others. These findings may be of importance from two points: (1) It was well-established that teacher beliefs and attitudes concerning teaching strategies or methods impact their practices; if they have positive beliefs or attitudes about a strategy or method, they are most likely to use the strategy or method in their classrooms (Kriek & Stols, 2010; Kuzborska, 2011; Lumpe, Haney, & Czerniak, 1998; Zacharia, 2003). (2) Moreover, participants' opinions about benefits of oral histories to students are in concurrence with the literature which might mean they have a realistic viewpoint. It is asserted that oral history as a teaching method has plentiful benefits to students by which students may not gain teacher-centered teaching methods (Ames & Diepstra, 2006; Banks, 1997; Busby, 2011; Busby & Hubbard, 2007; Chee, 2004; Chick, 2006; E. Demircioğlu, 2016; İ. H. Demircioğlu, 2005; Dutt-Doner, Allen, & Campanaro, 2016; Huerta & Flemmer, 2000; İncegöl, 2010; Kabapınar, 2012; Kabapınar & Koç, 2013; M. Kaya, 2013; Lattimer & Kelly, 2013; Naylor & Diem, 1987; Penyak & Duray, 1999; Sarı, 2007; Siler, 1996; Torrez, 2010; Yang et al., 2002).

Participants think that students may encounter some difficulties/obstacles in conducting oral histories. Difficulties in interviewing, in finding interviewees, in preparing questions, and interviewee's resistance to the voice or video recording are among most mentioned difficulties/obstacles. In addition, more than half of the participants mentioned the importance of guidance and feedback in all steps of oral history to overcome barriers that students may encounter. The difficulties/obstacles that could be experienced by elementary school students mentioned by preservice elementary school teachers are similar to the difficulties that were indicated by participants in other studies (Busby, 2011; İncegöl, 2010; M. Kaya, 2013; Lattimer & Kelly, 2013; Yang et al., 2002). The study shows that preservice elementary school teachers participating in this study are aware of the difficulties that elementary school students may experience during oral history studies and of students' possible needs while conducting oral histories which are an important agent for effective social studies instruction (Conklin, 2007). Furthermore, they have already explored the crucial role of guidance and feedback in elementary students' oral history studies. In fact, when conducting oral history studies, elementary school students need guidance, encouragement, and sometimes samples of oral histories from their teachers (Lattimer & Kelly, 2013). In this challenging process, appropriate guidance helps elementary students complete their oral history studies successfully (Huerta & Flemmer, 2000, p. 111).

In conclusion, it is promising that most of the preservice elementary school teachers in this study feel themselves efficacious in having their own students conduct oral histories and they have positive perceptions to use this method in their own social studies classes.

Suggestions for Teacher Educators and Future Research and Limitations

Teacher educators teaching social studies methods in teacher education programs should take some points into consideration: (1) Being exposed to the teacher-centered social studies learning, preservice teachers may not have experienced the teaching methods, for instance oral history, emphasized in social studies teaching courses during their elementary school years (Burstein, 2009; Busby, 2011; Busby & Hubbard, 2007; Lanahan & Yeager, 2008; McCall, Janssen, & Riederer, 2008; Owens, 1997; Slekar, 2005, 2006), (2) They may not have opportunity to observe the teaching methods emphasized in social studies teaching courses during school experience or student teaching courses (Lanahan & Yeager, 2008), and (3) as Johnson (2007) claimed that "In social studies teacher education, it is common to promote the use of oral stories and histories to seek multiple perspectives and historical thinking in the classroom. However, preservice teachers are given few opportunities to internalize this idea" (p. 197).

For future research, it would be interesting to assess the opinions of elementary school teachers using the oral history method in their social studies classes.

In the current study, the data were collected through writings of the participants to the questions, which might have limited participants to express their thoughts in detail compared to an interview.

This study focused on the preservice elementary school teachers' opinions about the oral history as a teaching method in social studies; neither did it focus on oral histories that were produced by them nor the social studies teaching course's impact on their opinions. Therefore, experimental studies could be carried out for these purposes.

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