

Content Analysis of Fourth Grade Social Studies Book Considering the Social Skills Aspect

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Abstract

The study sought to analyze the content of fourth grade social studies book from William Rummy's Technique considering the social skills perspective. This applied study is descriptive in nature applying content analysis. The population of the study comprised the whole fourth grade social studies book using the whole content as the sample. The data gathering tool was the William Rummy's content analysis technique to examine the text, images, questions and proposed activities in terms of engaging the mind of the learners. The face and content validity was confirmed by the experts and its reliability was estimated using the test- retest method which was about $\alpha=0.85$, respectively. To analyze the data obtained from the book, William Roman Formulas Index and interpretation of the results were used. Based on William Roman's Technique, the text, figures and images, final activities and the book questions in fourth grade social studies reinforce the social skills in students.

Keywords: content analysis, social skills, William Roman's Technique, Social Studies.

1. Introduction

Textbooks in Iran's education system are referred as one of the most important sources of learning. The presence of centered educational system caused textbook-based learning activities for all students in different regions and even children with different abilities, which creates many problems in the country apart from some of the advantages of such a procedure (Malaki, 2002). The most important element of textbook is the content. Textbook content analysis can also include a range of topics related to the content (Hassan Moradi, 2011). Social studies is an important aspect of learning discussing human beings and their interaction with different atmospheres at different times (past, present and future) and the various aspects of this interaction (political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, etc.) (Fallahian, 2012). The main aim of social teaching and education in primary school is to help students have the necessary ability to perform tasks in front of family, friends and neighbors, to respect teachers and school authorities, to abide by the school rules and regulations and respond to everyday needs, and to pay more attention to the development of social skills and increase their interest patriotism in the their country and living environment (Planning curriculum frameworks, 1998). The most important textbooks centerpiece (social studies book) at primary schools pinpoints to the social skills development, values understanding, emotional and mental pressures control that are too high and the least important is associated with health skills (biological and environmental features) which are at low level. Creative thinking skills, self-knowledge, decision-making and responsibility, and having communication skills with others are at average level.

Given that the textbook is one of the most important sources of student learning in each educational system and also plays one of the most important roles in Iran, therefore, conducting research projects in the textbooks in each curriculum, particularly, primary school education which is the most important level in all education systems around the world seems critically imperative necessary, as a result, the main question is “ how can the fourth grade social studies book content be analyzed from William Rummy's Technique considering the social skills perspective?”

2. Review of Literature

Ghasemi and Majidi Parast (2014) in a research entitle as the contently analyzing the social skills in the social training book in first grade of junior high school showed that the self-regulation social skills with a frequency of 21 paragraphs and 12.06 had a larger share compared with the other issues examined in the study. Other social skills such as talking to others and communicating well ranked the second with 8.04. (Ghasemi & Majidi Parast, 2014)

Salehi Omran, Abedini Beltarak, and Mansouri in a research on the content analysis of primary school textbooks on social security components concluded that textbooks must focus on the concept of security, especially social security, but unfortunately textbooks did not emphasize the concept, as they should.

Rivelli (2010) in a research entitled as citizenship education at high school which was a comparative study between Bolzano and Padova (Italy) concluded that 49.5% of them stated that they were not satisfied with the help they received in school for the development of their civic-political education. Only 20.0% of them stated that they took sporadic lectures on civic education during the school year. The research results showed that the interest and historical-political knowledge level of the interviewed students had a strong correlation with what was presented in the school programs (Rivelli, 2010).

Firoozjaeian (2009) conducting a research on the content analysis of the socio-economic skills books in the second grade of pre-professional mentally retarded children in secondary schools based on William Rummy's techniques and province teachers' viewpoints showed that text, image and proposed questions of the book are not presented actively, but book activities presented in an active method which developed and improved students' social and economic skills (Firoozjaeian, 2009).

Sabbaghi Dehkalati (2009) in a research on content analysis of the first year of vocational training based on the techniques William Rummy's and province teachers' viewpoints showed that in the textbook, the text was inactive but diagrams, figures, proposed activates in the text book and final questions were presented actively (Sabbaghi Dehkalati, 2009).

2. Methodology

This applied study is descriptive in nature applying content analysis. The population of the study comprised the whole fourth grade social studies book which has 23 chapters being used totally as the sample. Also, the unit of book analysis for texts includes the number of each lesson, for the images and pictures (the number of illustrations per lesson), for the proposed activity (number of activities proposed in each subject) and for questions about the course (the number of questions presented in each lesson). The data gathering tool was the William Rummy's content analysis technique to examine the text, images, questions and proposed activities in terms of engaging the mind of the learners. The face and content validity was confirmed by the experts and its reliability was estimated using the test-retest method which was about $\alpha=0/85$, respectively. To analyze the data obtained from the book, William Rummy's formulas Index and interpretation of the results were used.

William Rummy's interpretation of content analysis results includes: index of 0: lack of student involvement in educational activities through book content. Index of 1: At half time there is a learner's involvement. Infinity index: in each case, each sentence, image or curve, learners are asked to do some analysis.

Thus, according to William Rummy, a good book which is actively presented is a book with a student involvement between 0.4 and 1.5. In other words, any book which is referred as an active one must provide at least 30% and at most 70% scientific content; otherwise, the book content would be inactive and not appropriate (Soleymanpour, Mojalaj, & Delfani, 2012)

Research findings

1. Based on William Rummy's Technique, the fourth grade social studies textbooks reinforce the social skills in students.

Table 1: Results of the first hypothesis analysis

Class Lesson	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	H	I	j	Total	Indicator Conflict
1	9	10	11	9	2	2	2	1	7	5	58	.18
2	8	5	4	2	3	3	1	2	3	4	35	.47
3	10	3	4	5	2	2	3	3	4	1	37	.45
4	5	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	17	.4
5	3	1	2	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	9	.5
6	3	1	2	2	-	1	1	2	-	-	12	.5
7	13	10	12	9	5	4	3	3	6	10	75	.34
8	6	4	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	22	.53
9	4	1	2	1	2	-	2	1	-	2	15	.62
10	6	5	3	2	1	2	2	-	2	3	26	.31
11	4	2	4	1	1	2	1	2	1	6	24	.54
12	15	10	11	10	3	5	5	3	9	11	82	.34
13	6	5	3	4	1	2	3	2	1	2	29	.44
14	9	8	3	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	34	.36
15	2	3	4	5	1	1	1	2	-	2	21	.35
16	6	5	4	3	2	4	5	2	1	3	35	.72
17	8	4	3	4	4	2	2	4	3	3	37	.63
18	8	3	6	4	3	2	2	3	2	5	38	.55

19	5	3	2	3	2	2	-	2	1	-	20	.46
20	4	5	3	2	2	2	2	1	4	2	27	.5
21	3	2	2	2	3	2	1	-	2	1	18	.66
22	3	3	4	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	19	.36
23	10	12	11	11	4	3	4	6	3	1	65	.38
Total	150	107	104	84	50	45	46	46	55	68	755	.42

The whole book had 755 text units out of which 445 units sat in the inactive category and 187 units are grouped in active category and 123 units were placed in ineffective category.

The learner's involvement index in the text is calculated by the following formula:

$$\frac{e+f+g+h}{a+b+c+d} = \frac{187}{445} = 0/42$$

involvement coefficient=

Given that the learner's involvement coefficient with fourth grade social studies textbook is 0/42, it indicates that the student is involved in learning and active learning in students has been established. Therefore, the hypothesis was confirmed, that is, based on William Rummy's technique, fourth grade social studies texts enhance the social skills in students.

2. Based on William Rummy's techniques, images related to the content of the fourth grade social studies book reinforce the social skills in students.

Table 2: Results of the second Hypothesis analysis

Class Lesson	A	B	c	d	Total	Indicator Conflict
1	1	-	-	-	1	0
2	6	4	1	-	11	0/66
3	5	2	1	1	9	0/4
4	3	-	-	-	3	0
5	3	3	-	-	6	1

6	3	1	-	1	5	0/33
7	3	1	1	1	6	0/33
8	4	1	-	-	5	0/25
9	2	1	1	-	4	0/5
10	5	4	2	-	11	0/8
11	7	3	1	2	13	0/42
12	7	3	-	1	11	0/42
13	3	1	-	-	4	0/33
14	1	-	-	-	1	0
15	4	1	1	1	7	0/25
16	5	2	1	1	9	0/4
17	9	4	1	1	15	0/44
18	6	5	2	2	15	0/83
19	3	2	-	-	5	0/66
20	26	10	15	9	60	0/38
21	4	2	-	-	6	0/5
22	2	2	-	-	4	1
23	5	4	1	2	12	0/8
Total	117	56	28	22	223	0/47

The book has 223 the image units among which 117 units were considered inactive and 56 units were put in active category and 50 units were placed in ineffective category.

The learner's involvement index in the images and pictures is calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{involvement coefficient} = \frac{b}{a} = \frac{56}{117} = 0.47$$

Since the learner's involvement coefficient with fourth grade social studies images and pictures is 0.47, it points toward the fact that images are actively presented causing the students to be involved. Therefore, the hypothesis was confirmed, that is, based on William Rummy's technique, fourth grade social studies images and pictures enhanced the social skills in students.

3. Based on William Roman's Technique, the fourth grade social studies book final activities enhance social skills in the students.

Table 3: the analysis of the third hypothesis result

Class Lesson	N	a	Indicator Conflict
1	3	2	0/67
2	3	3	1
3	4	3	0/75
4	3	1	0/33
5	3	-	-
6	2	3	1/5
7	5	2	0/4
8	4	2	0/5
9	2	3	1/5
10	3	1	0/33
11	3	2	0/67
12	4	-	-
13	2	4	2
14	3	-	-
15	2	1	0/5

16	3	2	0/67
17	4	5	1/25
18	5	-	-
19	2	2	1
20	3	-	-
21	2	1	0/5
22	2	1	0/5
23	7	2	0/29
Total	74	40	0/54

The book has 40 activity units with 74 page analysis. The learner's involvement index in activities is calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Involvement coefficient} = \frac{a}{n} = \frac{40}{74} = 0/54$$

As the learner's involvement coefficient with fourth grade social studies activities is 0/54, it brings to light the fact that activities are actively presented causing the students to be actively involved. Therefore, the hypothesis was confirmed, that is to say, based on William Rummy's technique, fourth grade social studies activities develop the social skills in students.

4. Based on William Roman's Technique, the fourth grade social studies book questions develops social skills in the students.

Table 4. The results of fourth hypothesis analysis

Class Lesson	a	b	c	d	e	Total	Indicator Conflict
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
2	1	-	-	-	-	1	0

3	1	1	-	-	-	2	0
4	-	-	-	1	-	1	0
5	1	1	-	1	-	3	.5
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
7	1	-	-	1	1	3	1
8	-	1	-	1	-	2	1
9	2	-	2	-	-	4	1
10	1	-	-	1	-	2	1
11	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
12	1	1	2	1	-	5	1.5
13	1	1	1	-	-	3	.5
14	1	-	-	1	-	2	1
15	-	1	1	-	-	2	1
16	1	1	-	-	-	2	1
17	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
18	1	1	1	-	-	3	.5
19	1	-	1	-	1	3	1
20	1	-	-	-	-	1	0
21	-	1	-	1	-	2	1
22	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
23	1	1	1	1	-	4	1
Total	15	10	9	9	2	45	0/72

The whole book has 45 question units. 25 were inactive units but 18 units were placed in the active category and the rest (2 units) were ranked as ineffective. The learner's involvement index in questions is calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Involvement coefficient} = \frac{c + d}{a + b} = \frac{18}{25} = 0.72$$

As the learner's involvement coefficient with fourth grade social studies questions is 0.72, it shows that questions are actively presented making the students be actively involved. Therefore, the hypothesis was confirmed, that is, based on William Rummy's technique, fourth grade social studies questions develop the social skills in students.

Discussion and conclusion

As previously stated, the textbook is one of the most important sources of students' learning in any educational system and Iran is not an exception and textbooks play one of the most important roles in curricula. In other words, Iran educational activities are centered within the framework of textbook and most activities and educational experiences of both students and teachers will be organized around them. This fact has caused scholars and researchers to evaluate school education courses and levels to suit the students' needs. So in this study, the fourth grade social studies book from the perspective of social skills based on William Rummy's Technique was analyzed. Based on William Rummy's technique, the results showed that, text, pictures and images, final activities and questions in fourth grade social studies book reinforced the social skills in students because, according to William Rummy, a good book which is actively presented is a book with a student involvement between 0/4 and 1/5, in other words, the books which sit out of these two limits will be considered inappropriate. Thus, since the involvement coefficients of the studied book were within the given limits, the book actively involves the students in learning. The finding of the study is consistent with research findings by Khaje Mahalleh (2010) indicating that based on William Rummy's techniques the proposed activities in the third year social study book actively involved students in their learning and caused their active learning (Khaje Mahalleh, 2010). Also, the finding is in line with the study results by Firoozjaeian (2009) showing that the activities of socio-economic books skills in second year of secondary school were provided actively (Firoozjaeian, 2009). Moreover, the finding of the study is congruent with the results of the study by Sabbaghi Dehkalati (2009), which showed images and charts, expected activities and final questions is actively provided in vocational training book (Sabbaghi Dehkalati, 2009). Despite these similarities, the finding of the study has some incongruences with the results of the study by Khaje Mahalleh (2010) which showed civics textbook is not actively provided for teaching social skills based on William Rummy's techniques (Khaje Mahalleh, 2010). The finding also contradicts that of Firoozjaeian (2009) which showed text, images and questions of socio-economic skills book of the second year of secondary school are not actively presented (Firoozjaeian, 2009). Moreover, the finding of the study is not compatible with the study by Sabbaghi Dehkalati (2009) showing that vocational training text book content is not actively offered based on William Rummy's technique.

Therefore, it is suggested that the Office of the curriculum textbooks development in Ministry of Education utilize a more comprehensive analysis and consideration in writing the newest edition of the book in order to consider social skills component.

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