Historical Imagination Skills of Preschool Children as Reflected in Their Clay Works*

Research Article

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study was carried out to determine how preschool children worked their imagination skills in historical thinking processes and how they constructed the past in this way. This qualitative study was designed as a case study. The research was conducted in the spring term of the school year of 2015-2016. The study group of the research consisted of 12 children in the age group of five and six studying in a kindergarten in central Sinop, Turkey. The participants of this study were selected using convenience and criterion sampling of the purposive sampling method. The data of this study were derived from the products that children modelled with clay, the records of unstructured interview conducted with children and the participant observer notes of the researcher. Within the scope of the qualitative research method, the clay products that formed the data of the research were analysed descriptively within the frame of research questions, based on Fines's historical imagination category, and by being supported with interview results and participant observer notes. As for the results of the research, children were observed to model with clay such objects as forks, spoons, dishes, fewer cooking cauldrons, egg pans and egg the most from among sociocultural elements that represented the past. The products that children modelled with clay were objects which they experienced generally in their daily lives and/or during museum activities. It was evident that the children presented these objects in a narrative compatible with the historical context in accordance with the actual intended uses of them rather than as fantastic elements in an imaginative fiction. But it was observed that they detached themselves from historical reality in some ways and suffered problems of thinking anachronically by changing concepts when they were imagining some objects with which they did not have much experience.

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Introduction

Imagination is a concept which is functional in education. This concept is closely associated with the word "image" or, in Turkish, "imge". The Turkish Language Association [TDK] (2018) defines the noun "imge" as "Something which is conceived in mind and desired to be realised; imagination, reverie" or, in terms of general appearance, as "impression, image" or, in terms of psychology, as "Reflection of an object perceived externally by the sense organs in the consciousness; imagination, image". Similarly, Descartes explains an image as "a picture which is created by external objects and which makes marks in the brain through senses and nerves" (Cited by Işıldak, 2008, pp. 66). Generally, we know or subsequently learn about many characteristics of an object that are invisible to naked eyes based on experimentation and experiences. This is the content of that object and it is associated with perception. In our minds, we can visualise the images that are recorded in our brain as we need. What we try to visualise is a memory image, which is less distinct than a visual image (San, 2004, cited by Büyükbacak, 2008). However, Plato asserts that an image is "nothing else than a reflection of reality". In the face of these two opposite situations, Mitchell (1986) classified an image such that it would correspond to different fields of information; he associated "images relating to mental perceptions" like dreams and memories with psychology and epistemology; "visual artistic images" with art history as graphical images; "sensory images" with psychology, neurology and physiology; "optical images" that form on surfaces like mirrors with physics, and; "images created in mind" through literary genres with literature as verbal images (Cited by Gür, 2013, pp. 34). With this classification, Mitchell (1986) tried to further resolve the confusion about an image.

The present study will address imagination, which is a concept related to image. Fines (2002) defines imagination as interrelated images and symbols that help us design an object with all its dimensions and reach a new world. Işıldak (2008, pp. 66) defines imagination as the memory-based "ability to establish new relationships among images and to create new concepts and thoughts". Playing an active role in the process of imagination, memory will provide a person with the material necessary for "bringing together, changing and creating something new". Without memory, there will be no imagination (Vygotsky, 2004; Cited by Cunningham, 2015, pp. 3) because memory is a dynamic and functional field that actively calls past experiences, information and images, and engages creative thinking processes. Sartre (2006) mentions that imagination needs memory to call past experiences, information and images. Collingwood (1996) points out, in this context, that a historical imagination is about the evidence collected from historical sources related to a place and time which actually existed in the past. In historical imagination, therefore, the web of fiction in the narratives of a historian is not arbitrary. The web of imagination is carefully connected to the theme of reality that it represents from one to another (Collingwood, 1996, pp. 286-287). Thus, in a process of historical imagination, historians continuously imagine past events, connect a comprehensive and effective list of organisation with events, and make explanations like "it should have been..." or "it could have been...". They restructure an event or situation (Little, 1983).

In summary, historians do an act of re-enactment in historical imagination. Re-enactment provides "a continuity between past and present thoughts, and between historical situations and current situations" (Büyüktuncay, 2014, pp. 54). Collingwood (1946, 1994) argues that when historians are engaged in this process, which he calls re-enactment, their imagination is just fantasy if they cannot show any connection between the pictures they draw and this evidence. Then, the key factor in historical imagination is historians' use of sources as evidence in their imaginative processes (Lemisko, 2004). In this situation, historical imagination "suggests a relationship between interpreting [a historical source(s)] and interpreting the sentiments and thoughts of the persons who set forth that source" (Cooper and Dilek, 2007). Testing such an imagination according to criteria of evidence, Little (1983, pp. 30) defined it as creating a coherent world in

the ring of truth, a method for bringing different information together and reaching intellectual comprehension, a thought-based perception tool and a cognitive activity".

Imagination is a significant factor for children to carry out regular studies in disciplines relating to mathematics and science, express themselves in art and improve their traditional literacy (Egan, 2005), and also for enriching the process of learning as a method and technique of teaching, and for improving historical thinking skills in history education (Collingwood, 1996; Dilek, 2007; Dilek and Alabaş, 2014; Duckworth, 1971; Fines, 2002; Graff, 1999, Jenkins, 1996; Lemisco, 2004; Little, 1983; Nichol, 1996). Graff (1999) asserts that a person's ability of imagination can be improved with applications and training in order for the person to imagine a possibly actual past which that person has never directly experienced and does not know anything about. He states that in acts of historical comprehension, preferences are made from among written or oral sources, films, pictures, and information obtained through media and other means of communication. He remarks, on the other hand, that the past can be learned about partially by subjecting the information obtained from such sources to criticism. He also argues that computerised presentations, oil paintings, photographs, films, historical films, documentary films, sculptures and cultural materials, all of which constitute visual evidence, can also be utilised regularly for improving the skills of historical imagination (Graff, 1999). The fact that the historical imagination skill can make significant contributions to the improvement of the historical thinking processes of secondary school students was demonstrated by a limited number of studies (Dilek, 2009; Ünal and Kalçık, 2016). The situation is similar for the preschool period and only a single study was found (Aktın, 2016). According to Piaget's classification, however, the "use of images" in the cognitive development process begins in the preoperational stage (ages 2 to 7). In this stage, children begin to distinguish "identifiers" (words and images representing objective situations or objects) from meanings (imperceptible situations or incidents which these words and images imply) (Öçalan, 2006, pp. 6-7). In parallel to Piaget's cognitive development approach, the present research aimed to use clay modelling activities in order to identify the historical imagination skills of children in early ages. In connection with this purpose, answers were sought for the following questions:

- What are the historical sociocultural objects that are modelled by children using clay?

- What are the levels of children's skill of historical imagination as reflected in their clay-modelled objects?

Method

A case study design as one of the qualitative research methods was used for the research. A case study is a design that enables to study an event, an organisation or an individual thoroughly and in detail (Glesne, 2013, pp. 30). The "multiple holistic case design" from among case study designs was preferred for the research. This design type was used because it is suitable for addressing each of the objects modelled by preschool children with clay as a situation which is holistic on its own. Usually, "there are multiple situations each of which can be perceived as holistic on its own" in this design (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008, pp. 291). This type of design also enables to obtain data that are comparable to each other. As a result of clay modelling activities, "the data obtained were brought together" and compared to general results (Paker, 2015, pp. 123).

Study Group

The research was carried out in the spring term of the 2015-2016 school year. The study group of the research consisted of 12 children in the 5 to 6-year-old age group studying in a kindergarten in central Sinop, Turkey. Convenience sampling and criterion sampling as purposive sampling methods were used for determining the study group. The reason for preferring convenience sampling is related to the fact that the sample school's location was easily accessible to the researcher (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). In clay

modelling activities, fine motor skills are considered to be a basic skill necessary for children to express their imagination. Therefore, the criterion in this research is for the children to have highly developed fine motor skills. Based on this criterion, two children's unidentified products among the clay-modelled objects were eliminated. The remaining 10 children with their products formed the study group based on criterion sampling. Criterion sampling is the fulfilment of all the situations that meet a set of predetermined criteria" (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008, pp. 112). The products of each of 6 girls and 4 boys who were 60 to 70 months old as determined by criterion sampling formed analysis units. In the research, naming was done to provide information about the products of the study group; the ones made by girls were coded like "F1, F2...", while those made by boys were coded like "M1, M2…", and the researcher was coded as "Rsr.".

Data Collection Tools

The data collection tools of the research consisted of the children's clay modelling activities, the records of the interviews made with the children about these models, and the researcher's participant observer notes.

Clay Modelling Activities: Studies on clay entered literature as clay modelling studies. Lowenfeld is the first person we encounter in this regard. Lowenfeld (1939, 1947) used children's clay products to explain the developmental stage he observed in their drawings. He points out that children will begin their first clay activities by modelling animals and then continue with simple domestic decorative articles, flowers, bowl models and clay houses. He also remarks that they can make cultural items with distinctive features such as Eskimo houses, sleds, Eskimo children wearing fur and Eskimo dogs, as well (Joor, 1907, pp. 549). According to Klein (1999), if the activity offered to children is about pottery making, then they should be led to question the reason for the invention of pottery. Klein attracts attention to the need for allowing children to carefully note each stage of the work they carry out in the process of pottery making. She wants them to be provided with opportunities for shaping and decorating their own pottery. She particularly emphasises comparing the vases made by children, even if products that are very similar to primitive vases will result, to modern vases. She also stresses the necessity of showing children how a potter's wheel works and giving them an opportunity to experience a simple process of wheel making. Klein mentions that it would be beneficial for children to have their potteries sun-dried and baked in oven. In such clay modelling draft works, Arnheim (1974) emphasised, creation of three-dimensional structures is effective in identifying problems and redesigning products. Consequently, as Rice (1901) also mentions, clay work is a learning process that includes not only a dramatic representation of something but also its design, construction, making, drawing and painting. Children are the actual participants of the work they carry out. Those children who are active in the production process might show a tendency to make objects which were used in the past. The point to consider here is that children are discoverers inclined to manifest a new product rather than copying already existing products (Rice, 1901, pp. 520). According to Rice, the historical material presented/made should be connected to the past and present. Producing products in this way, children will be able to interpret the product they make with their own experience. In parallel, Ata (1999) attracts attention to the fact that the differences between past and present works are important for improving children's perspectives and imaginations. Unless the bond between is established, children will not find a meaning in historical subjects that motivate them in their works and help them solve their problems in daily life, and they will not be able to reflect this situation in their works. In this context, through their thoughts and actions, children will be able to establish a relationship between past and present works in the process of developing historical materials. Based on this information and in consideration of the fact that clay modelling activities will be influential on improving children's historical imagination skills, small children were brought together with the sociocultural objects in a museum in the present research.

Interview: The data of this research were collected with the unstructured interview method. In this interview method, according to Glesne (2013), qualitative researchers begin a research with some interview questions. During interviews, they reshape their questions and add new ones. The interview was started by asking the children the question what they made with clay, and new questions were asked depending on the answer they provided. During this interview, an effort was made to provide small children with an opportunity to talk about their images and thoughts.

Participant Observer Notes: The participant observer method as an observation technique was another preferred data collection tool of the research. As the participant observer, the researcher spent time with the children at each stage of the research process and witnessed their work and interview processes (Sönmez and Alacapınar, 2013). In the research she carried out, the researcher took part as an observer in clay activities and as a participant observer during the museum tour and in the interviews made with the children. The fact that the researcher was both an observer and also a participant contributed richly to the field being analysed, the process, and "what we can learn about insider perspectives" (Glesne, 2013, pp. 86).

Data Collection Process

In the research process, a tour in the local Ethnographic Museum containing historical sociocultural objects and figures was planned for improving the children's historical imagination skills before having them carry out the clay activity. Museums have often been considered as places which are suitable for introducing an extensive cultural heritage to children (Howard, 2013) and which will improve their imagination skills. Similarly, McReiney and Russick (2010) stated that with museum education, children in different developmental stages become able to comprehend historical concepts which are difficult to understand. Researchers also reported that children's acquainting with museums at early ages positively influences their "cognitive, social and emotional development" and also provides them with a wide learning frame (Munley, MEM and Associates, 2012, pp. 4). In this context, before starting the application process for the museum tour, necessary permissions were first obtained from relevant organisations and institutions and from the children's families. The study was designed with the iconic and enactive processes designed by Bruner. The children's encounter of the visual historical relics during the museum tour was carried out in compliance with iconic learning, and their embodying this visual evidence with clay was in compliance with the enactive learning model (See Gürkan, 1980, pp. 212). In the application, a four-day education program comprising 10 hours in total was prepared. Before the museum tour, in the classroom on the first day of the application, "Paşa Dede", a wax sculpture of whom is available in the museum, was described to the children as a heroic, courageous Ottoman Pasha. They were shown photographs depicting Paşa Dede's family and their life in their mansion. Then, the children were asked heuristic questions about the objects shown to be in the mansion like "What do you think it is and how do you think it is operated?" to ensure that they think about them. Old and new model houses were made with the children in the classroom environment on the second day of the application. They were requested to make model houses after cutting out the pieces belonging to the old and new houses from the cardboard given to them. A semi-informal drama was performed by children in the classroom on the third day. In the drama, old traditional women's scarves and men's fezzes were placed on the children's heads. A floor dining table was set including a tablecloth, wooden spoons, an old tray, dishes and a coffee set. Before beginning the drama, the children were requested to imagine that they lived in a mansion in very old times. Step-by-step information was provided to them about the conditions of the time (the cultural habits of eating and sitting on the floor, extended families, differences of utensils, differences of women' and men's dressing, etc.). Then, it was explained to them that they were expected to perform a re-enactment and behave accordingly in consideration of those conditions. Starting formally at the beginning, the drama gradually turned into an improvised activity. In the improvisation stage, the boys got out of the mansion to play fighting games,

while the girls preferred to remain at the table to eat and spend time together during the drama. On the fourth and the last day of the application, theoretical information was provided to the children about the rules they must follow in the museum. They were reminded that they could ask what they wonder about to officials. This visit to the Ethnographic Museum was carried out in two groups including one researcher, one academic educator, two kindergarten teachers, two teaching assistants, two cameramen, and 12 children. The researcher and the educator conveyed information to the children about the articles, objects and dioramas they saw in the museum. It was attempted to support the learning efforts of the students by answering their questions. Two small activities were carried out with the children in the museum: The egg frying activity and the ironing activity. The egg frying activity was carried out in the museum's kitchen (the old mansion's kitchen). Bringing the children to the museum's kitchen, they were shown an egg pan with 6 holes, and they were requested to imagine how they could cook eggs in consideration of the kitchen materials used in the past. During the ironing activity, the children were brought to the museum's sitting room, where there was a charcoal iron, and they were requested to imagine how they could iron if they lived in that period when electricity was not used for that purpose. Providing historical empathy, the children were enabled to re-enact the life in the past. After the tour, in the yard of the museum, the children were requested to model the objects they liked the most in the museum using the clays prepared by a teacher and six students from the local Fine Arts High School. In the end of the application, interviews were made with the children about the objects they modelled with clay.

Data Analysis

The data of the research were obtained from the objects that the children modelled with clay, the interviews made with them about these objects, and participant observer notes. The data obtained from the interviews were used to explain the nominal, visual meaning of the objects that the children modelled with clay (what was presented) based on their verbal descriptions (Turgut, 2009, pp. 141). The products made of clay were descriptively analysed based on Fines's historical imagination category and with the support of interview results and participant observer notes.

The below mentioned conceptual categories of Fines (2002) regarding the historical imagination process were utilised to reach reliable results when analysing and interpreting the objects clay-modelled by the children and the data obtained from the interviews (See Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008, pp. 198).

The historical imagination category of Fines (2002, pp. 66):

Static imagination: In this stage, children portray a part of the past as it is. They design their stories and can include many dynamic variables in them. The narratives of their stories might be complex and the timeline might be forward. There might be fantastic elements like magicians and spirits. Rather than explaining the elements they portray, they show what those elements are or what they mean. Children focus on a single task in the process. They take efforts to see and show the product they create. During or at the end of the application process, some questions are asked to children and their answers might not reflect the concept of past time. As a matter of fact, this stage remains limited with students' definition of the images (objects) they make; an egg pan, for instance.

Dynamic imagination: It is the second important stepp. It is a stage in which children use some references to explain and show the definition they made in the previous stage (for example, "it is similar to ...", "it looks like a ..."; for an eggcup, "The one in the mansion, I made it similar to it."). In this stage, the knowledge and experiences of children are included in the process in sequence.

Third stage: It is a more advanced stage than others. A metaphor transforming into a picture is in question in this stage. Children get involved in the subject of work with all their belief and personality, and they apply to imitation. The imitation in this empathetic process is not limited with

working like a beaver, it should also include children's feeling of muscle tearing and sweating. In this stage that is similar to the dynamic imagination, children's metaphors are to be tested. Fines, for example, indicates that a theory can be tested with certain examples like "Now, let's imagine that Hitler does not want to go to war."

Fourth stage: Described as the symbol stage, this can be seen as a state which is difficult to reach because it requires to determine and use suitable words and sentences. There is a comparative pattern and picture that contain old and new materials. Old materials contain new ones in them just like an old wine's turning into new bottles. This is also what historians do all the times. That is, presenting many things already known by making new arrangements on them. Presenting a historical character in the symbols of a stuttering man, angry man, hasty man, or man in love, for instance.

The clay-modelled objects were coded based on Fines's (2002) historical imagination category by the researcher and a field expert independently of each other. The reliability of the coding was ensured in three stages: One-third of the data at the beginning, then two-thirds and then all of them were coded comparatively by two researchers with a review each time. In this process, it was checked whether same words or sentences were coded in the same category, situations involving a "consensus" and "disagreement" between the two researchers were discussed by comparing their coding results, and necessary arrangements were made. For the coding reliability calculation of the research, the reliability formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (2016, pp. 64) (Reliability = Consensus/ (Consensus + Disagreement) was used. In such studies, coding reliability does not often exceed 70%. A reliability around 80% is sought in the next stage. The reliability is expected to be around 90% depending on the size and range of the coding chart. The reliability percentage of the research was found to be 94%. Additionally, triangulation of the different data sources as a qualitative method used for ensuring reliability in qualitative researches was performed: The clay-modelled objects, the records of the interviews made with the children about these models, and the participant observer notes of the researcher. The triangulation applied means "comparing and checking the consistency of the information" obtained from different data tools of the qualitative method. However, triangulation of data sources might not produce a completely consistent result. Therefore, investigating and trying to understand the causes of significant differences will make an important contribution to the credibility of the patterns emerging from different data tools and of the consistency findings in reasonable explanations (Patton, 2014, pp. 559-560). In order to increase reliability, the original objects that the children modelled with clay and that the source photos they took as reference for the modelling were shown, and the data of the interviews made with the children were written down clearly (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008).

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Findings

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Within the scope of research questions, this section presents findings about the historical sociocultural objects that the children modelled with clay and the historical imagination skills they displayed when making these objects.

Findings about the Historical Sociocultural Objects That the Children Modelled with Clay

Table 1. The historical sociocultural objects that the children modelled with clay

Object	Gender										Total (n)
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	M1	M2	M3	M4	
Fork	√			√	√	√	√				5
Spoon	√			√	√	√	√			√	6
Egg	√		√			√					3
Ewer (water can)		√						√			2
Rifle									√		1

Handgun				√	1
Sword				√	1
Bullets				√	1
Cooking cauldron			√	√	2
Dish	√		√	√	3
Egg pan	√	√			2
Frying Pan		√			1
Dish with cover		√			1
Wood burner				√	1
Firewood				√	1
Knife				√	1
Chicken				√	1

Table 1 shows that the girls and boys modelled multiple objects using clay. It was determined that most of the children modelled a spoon (n=6), a fork (n=5), and some of them modelled a cooking cauldron (n=2), an egg (n=2) and an egg pan (n=2). It attracts attention that the children also made bullet, cooking cauldron, ewer, dish, sword, handgun, knife and chicken models. It was seen that, during the clay modelling activities, the children were very interactive in the museum and that they mostly modelled objects like a fork, spoon and dish, which it is believed they associated with their daily life experiences.

Findings Relating to the Children's Historical Imagination Skills in the Objects They Modelled with Clay

Findings Relating to M1's Historical Imagination Skills as Reflected in His Clay Modelling Works

Photo 1. Cauldron, dish and spoons (M1, 61 months old)

Source 1. Cauldron and other cookers

"Rsr.: What are the things here, dear? What did you make?

M1: A cooking cauldron, teacher. And this is a spoon, and this is a dish.

Rsr.: What did you make, then?

M1: A cauldron, and its dish and spoons.

Rsr.: What will you cook?

M1: I will make soup.

Rsr.: Where?

M1: Here (pointing to the cauldron)".

In the dialogues above, when M1 described the products he made, he did not use an expression for implying that the product represented life in the past. It is seen, however, that M1 modelled his products with clay based on the cauldron, the woods under the cauldron, the dish and the spoons (See Source 1) he saw in the mansion (ethnographic museum) that represented the past life. The similarity of these models shaped by M1 to the ones of the past is remarkable. However, M1 told about these historical products that he

made with clay using his knowledge and experience in accordance with the historical context in a soup making activity suitable for the intended uses of those products rather than as fantastic elements in an imaginative fiction. While the fact that M1 did not express a past life suggests the *static imagination* process categorised by Fines (2002), the similarity of the products he modelled with clay to those of the past and his narration show that a *dynamic imagination* is at work.

Findings Relating to F1's Historical Imagination Skills as Reflected in Her Clay Modelling Works

Photo 2. Egg pan (F1, 60 Months Old)

Source 2. Egg Pan

"Rsr. What are these?

F1. Eggs, eggs (F1 had made an egg pan in the yard).

Rsr. Tell us what you made, please?

F1. This is Paşa Dede. There is an egg in his hand (She describes a clay object shaped in his hand). Now, I will make an egg pan here. Paşa Dede will put the egg into it.

Rsr. Will he put the egg into it and then eat it?

F1. Yes.

Rsr. What are the others?

F1. A fork, and this is a spoon.

Rsr. What is the use of them?

F1. Paşa Dede will eat food with them".

In her work, F1 modelled the eggs, the egg pan (See Source 2), the fork and the spoon with clay in a similar appearance to those she saw in the Ethnographic Museum. It is stated in the participant observation notes that F1 was very interested in the egg frying pan during the museum tour and actively participated in the "Egg Frying Activity". In her clay work, F1 benefited from this experience and designed the objects for Paşa Dede's egg frying activity suitably for their intended use and in a design which is compatible with the historical context and reality. Even if F1 did not mention the time concept, her imagination category points to the *dynamic imagination* (similarity, knowledge and experience) stage defined by Fines (2002).

Findings Relating to M2's Historical Imagination Skills as Reflected in His Clay Modelling Works

Photo 3. Ewer (M2, 67 Months Old)   **Source 3.** Ewer

"Rsr. Will you tell us what you made?
M2. A pitcher. This is its handle. This is its lid.
Rsr. What is it good for?
M2. Used for carrying water in old times".

M2 made a ewer with clay. It is stated in the participant observer notes that M2 was surprised in the mansion by the information that people used ewers to carry and drink water, and that people had to carry and heat water in bigger cans to take bath. M2 reflected this ewer that attracted his attention in his clay modelling work. He redesigned the ewer by using his imagination (See Source 3). He was able to figure out that a handle was necessary for carrying it. In the production process, he made a lid on the ewer and decorated the edges of the lid with his own designs working his creative imagination. Therefore, the ewer modelled by M2 somehow differed from its original. Despite this, there are some similarities between the ewer modelled by M2 with clay and the one shown in Source 3. The fact that he was able to tell, in accordance with the historical context, when and for what purpose the ewer was used in the past indicates his utilisation of *dynamic imagination* because he is an actual participant of the work he carried out. Although he failed to express the proper name of the object, he was aware that it was a material that had been used in the past as shown by his statement, "Used for carrying water in old times". So, M2 became a discoverer who worked his creative imagination rather than copying the ewer.

Findings Relating to M3's Historical Imagination Skills as Reflected in His Clay Modelling Works

Photo 4. Weapons (M3, 62 Months)   **Source 4.** Handgun   **Source 5.** Swords   **Source 6.** Rifle

"Rsr. Will you tell us what you made?

M3. I made Paşa Dede's weapons.

Rsr. Which of his weapons did you make?

M3. The rifle, handgun, bullets, and the sword

Rsr. What are they good for?

M3. For fighting, teacher".

Among the objects M3 saw in the Ethnographic Museum, he specially modelled a rifle, a sword and a handgun (See Sources 4, 5, 6) with clay. The objects M3 remembered seeing in the museum are distinctive and different from the ones favoured by others. It is specified in the participant observer notes that M3 loved old times very much and wanted to become a pasha. According to the notes, M3 also assumed the role of a soldier in war during the drama. In parallel to his field of interest, he modelled weapons with their bullets by using his creative imagination skill. The fact that M3 modelled Paşa Dede imagining his weapons and bullets together by considering his warrior identity in accordance with the historical context suggests the *third imagination stage* that contains higher logical thinking and designing processes than the static and dynamic imagination categorised by Fines (2002). However, M3's perception of the handgun, rifle and sword models as if these weapons of the past were modern and without going into details is an anachronistic problem‡. Or, his design of these types of weapons with a model similar to modern ones due to his lack of knowledge is a situation of conceptual change. M3's clay modelling works show that he turned away from historical reality in some respects and encountered some problems when utilising his imagination. It can be claimed, therefore, that M3 is in the stage of *dynamic imagination*.

Findings Relating to F2's Historical Imagination Skills as Reflected in Her Clay Modelling Works

Photo 5. Dish and Water Can (F2, 67 Months) **Source 7.** Ewer **Source 8.** Kitchen Utensils

"Rsr. Will you tell us what you made?

F2. I made a dish, teacher.

Rsr. Why did you make a dish?

F2. For eating.

Rsr. What is that? (Pointing to the ewer)

F2. A utensil for putting water into food".

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‡ Anachronism: It means an erroneous attribution of today's concepts and perspectives to the past. It poses a risk of misevaluation of historical facts and persons (Öztürk, 2011, p. 42).

F2 tried to model with clay some kitchen utensils like a ewer and dish, which can be associated with her daily life experiences, taking as the basis of the objects available in the Ethnographic Museum (See Sources 7-8). While the "water utensil" mentioned by F2 is not completely similar to a ewer, it resembles the ewer in the museum in consideration of its handle and details. F2 did not use the concept of past in dialogues. On the other hand, she defined the objects she made (a dish and a ewer) and explained their functions. The fact that F2 modelled the water utensil within the idea of materials needed for eating including a dish suggests the formation of a historical perception relating to life in the past. The historical imagination process of F2 is neither a static (that complex and forward in time) nor a completely dynamic (presenting a complete knowledge and experience) imagination process. It rather has a quality that can be the first stage of the *dynamic imagination* process.

Findings Relating to M4's Historical Imagination Skills as Reflected in His Clay Modelling Works

Photo 6. Cooking Cauldron (M4, 60 Months)

Source 9. Ewer

"Rsr. What are you doing?

M4. Very simple; we are cooking our chicken.

Rsr. Where do you cook the chicken?

M4. On wood fire, here (pointing to below the cauldron).

Rsr. I don't understand what you are doing? (Bending down)

M4. I'm checking the woods below. Is there fire? All right, there is also a knife. Where was our knife? Here, it is. We will first use this to cut the chicken, which is that one.

Rsr. Enjoy your meal".

The participant observer notes emphasised that M4 had the most fun during the "Egg Frying Activity" in the kitchen part of the museum. According to the notes, M4 also asked many descriptive questions about what the objects he saw in the kitchen were. In fact, he modelled the cooking cauldron (See Source 9) he saw in the Ethnographic Museum along with its ladle inside and woods under it. He imagined these objects that he modelled with clay using reference sources with such expressions like "On wood fire, here". He showed the method he used for cooking that food by pointing to the woods under the cauldron with the expression "the woods below". Although M4 did not use a time concept, he perceived that the

cooking method is different from today. It can thusly be concluded that, in terms of historical thinking skills, M4 has the concept of change. With a successful historical imagination, he cooked the chicken in a big cauldron with a ladle inside and woods under it in accordance with the conditions of the period. M4's feelings and behaviours during the activity of chicken cooking (a historically empathetic behaviour) and the products he modelled point to the third stage fictional *metaphoric imagination* process as being disciplined in accordance with the historical context (transformed into an actual picture). M4 showed a more advanced historical imagination skill than all other candidates.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the first sub-problem of the research, it was seen that the children mostly modelled with clay such objects like a fork, spoon, dish, and, to a lesser extent, cooking cauldron, egg pan and egg from among sociocultural elements that represented past life. It was observed that the children were generally able to work their dynamic imagination for modelling these historical objects similar to their originals. These objects were determined to be basically associated with the children's personal fields of interest, the egg frying activity they carried out in the museum, and their daily life experiences. In parallel to the results of the research, Fines (2002) emphasised the existence of a relationship between experience and imagination. He pointed out that imagination is not possible before having rich experiences.

According to the second sub-problem of the research, the children imagined with clay Paşa Dede's weapons, tools and equipment; the trinity of egg pan, fork and spoon, the interrelated kitchen utensils like the cooking cauldron together with its ladle in, woods under and a pan next to it with a successful historical fiction true to the historical context. In support of the research result, Graff (1999) remarks that historical context presents in a mutually supportive way the elements that contain various historical situations taking place in a certain place and time, that it serves to discipline what historical imagination brings to mind, and that it improves historical comprehension. Similarly, Collingwood (1996) states that each of the sources used in imagination that carries out the process of historical fiction is an a priori imagination relating to the past. He mentions that historical evidence consisting of these a priori imaginations have to be consistent with each other in a fictional narrative. Consequently, the historical objects that the children modelled with clay and the fact that they presented these objects in a narrative compatible with the historical context in accordance with the actual intended uses of them rather than as fantastic elements in an imaginative fiction suggested that a dynamic imagination skill as defined by Fines was at work.

Another important result relating to the second sub-problem of the research is the fact that only one of the children had a skill of fictional, metaphorical imagination. In this imagination, the child transformed the objects he modelled together with clay in accordance with the historical context into an actual picture by dramatizing them with his empathetic thoughts and behaviours in a fictional narrative. In support of the results of the research, Fines (2002) argued that children's imagination skills often show an average level of development and that very few children develop a high level of historical imagination skill. In similar studies, Aktın (2016, 2017) determined that small children whose interests and perceptions are open with developed motor skills use high-level imagination skills with static imagination but that they are able to imagine past life conditions by using only a limited historical empathy skill.

The results of the research generally showed that small children changed the historical objects they modelled with clay before the completion of the imagination process based on their current experiences and creative imaginations. Thus, it was determined that when small children make clay models of objects about which they have little experience, they deviate from historical reality in some ways by a change of concept and that they experience anachronic thinking problems in using dynamic imagination. In a similar study, Aktın (2016) found out in consideration of some pictures she had preschool children draw after a museum tour that children are often unsuccessful in historical imagination. Causes which distort imagination include,

according to Aktın, undeveloped motor skills, change of concepts and anachronic thinking situations observed in drawings, little interaction with historical objects and figures, interests and perceptions being insufficient, the gender factor, etc.

It was determined as a result of the research that it is important for small children to experience and interact with visual sources of history in order to improve their historical imagination skills. Similarly, Duckwort (1971) attracted attention to the fact that children's imaginations should be filled with experiences because just like in the case of a historian, children's historical comprehension and imagination skills also need to be connected to reality. In parallel, Aktın and Dilek (2014) and Aktın (2017) argued that organising visits to museums and historical places and carrying out in-class activities in connection with such places (bringing imitations of historical objects to the classroom, presenting their photos, telling stories about the places to be visited, having children play drama) by preschool teachers, in particular, for improving children's historical thinking and imagination skills will contribute to a more systematic gaining of these skills. It was also argued that children's seeing and examining articles belonging to past periods in such activities like studying historical objects (Seefeldt, Castle and Falconer, 2015) and drama activities about history (Blyth, 1989) can enable them to notice and express the difference between the past and present. Dewey (n.d.) emphasised that, especially when examining past periods, the attention of children has to be focused on differences from the present. Dewey is of the opinion that the "principle of contrast" is as important as similarity in history teaching (Cited by Ata, 1998, pp. 3). Safran and Ata (1998) reported that children become able to easily learn the concepts of change and continuity thanks to the materials displayed in museums. In their research, Zembat et al. (2014) showed that 48 to 54-month-old children concretised abstract past in a narration about themselves, that they successfully used concepts about past in their daily lives, and that their perceptions about past were improvable by comparison with various cultural elements. As for other studies carried out in this context, Coşkun-Keskin and Kırtel (2012, 2016) and Coşkun-Keskin and Daysal Ersoy (2012) found out in their studies, which included sociocultural education for preschool children, that children are able to internalise events and facts of a past period and associate them with their daily lives, that they have a concept of past time, that they can have static and dynamic imagination, and that they can empathise with persons who lived in the past. It is generally believed that historical objects and figures which were used in the past will positively contribute to improving children's imagination skills, to their imagination of the past and a right context, and therefore to the enrichment of their historical comprehension. As a matter of fact, Fines (2002) said that educational environments which involve learning by doing will enable to improve the skill of historical imagination closer to the past, more realistically, and more acceptably.

In the beginning of the 20th century, cognitive theorists claimed that children's historical thinking skills can be expanded slowly and in a controlled manner (Egan, 1982, pp. 3). In our 21st century, Barton (2004) indicated that most of the first learning experiences of children occur in out-of-school environments, in visits made with family to historical spaces like museums, discussions made with peers and through visual media. Considering the opinions and findings in this direction, preschool teachers are recommended to carry out in and out-of-school activities and organise tours to historical local and cultural places which will enable small children to consciously experience/interact with historical figures and objects for improving their historical imagination skills. Teachers can make significant contributions to the improvement of their students' historical imagination skills by organising activities for making clay models of objects like pottery, matching/comparing old and new objects, and drawing or painting historical objects by seeing them/using evidence. Teachers are also recommended to read pictorial storybooks to children, have them watch cartoons and play drama involving history. It can be suggested that teachers should present historical objects and figures to children by establishing an analogical relationship with their daily life experiences in order for children to develop a strong historical imagination. Guiding academicians, preschool teachers, teacher

candidates, authors of children's books and cartoon producers towards activities for improving children's historical imagination skills in the preschool period, and supporting these stakeholders for this purpose can enable to fill a significant gap in this field. Researchers are suggested to carry out a similar study with a bigger sample group. It is believed that some results of the present study which do not fully agree with the imagination categorisation of Fines (like transition from static to dynamic imagination, and transition from dynamic imagination to the third stage) can be tested with new studies and that new intermediary imagination categories might be developed.

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