

An Application for Persuasive Communication Instruction in Turkish Education

Ahmet Asar*, Salih Gülerer

Faculty of Education, Uşak University, Uşak, Turkey

Corresponding author: Ahmet Asar, E-mail: asar4267@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: April 13, 2021

Accepted: July 15, 2021

Published: July 31, 2021

Volume: 9 Issue: 3

Conflicts of interest: None

Funding: None

Publication Note: This study was carried out as a doctoral thesis prepared by Ahmet ASAR and executed by Assoc. Prof. Salih GÜLERER.

ABSTRACT

The learning outcomes concerning the characteristics of persuasive communication are specified within Turkish curriculum from 4th grade onward. Depending on the field and purpose, persuasive communication exhibits different characteristics. Turkish language education program addresses such general characteristics of media texts as cultural transmission, interpretation, elucidating, entertaining and persuading. In Turkish courses, activities regarding the characteristics of persuasive education are not implemented. Therefore, this particular study primarily aimed to provide activities concerning persuasive communication instruction with the aim of assisting secondary school students analyze and interpret media texts. In this mixed methods study, the data were collected through literature review, pre-post test and course activities towards persuasive communication used in education, public relations, advertisement and propaganda. The activities were carried out with 14 voluntary students attending 7th grade in a Turkish state school. Pre and post-test activities were assessed by two experts. The results were keyed into SPSS 18 program. The data were analyzed via paired sample t-test and Wilcoxon Test together with students' opinions. Based on students' performances evaluated prior to, during and after the activity, it has been concluded that learning towards the characteristics of persuasive communication occurs with a significant level. As a result, teaching the characteristics of persuasive communication in Turkish lessons should be considered.

Key words: Turkish Education, Persuasive Communication, Propaganda, Ads, Public Relations

INTRODUCTION

Persuasive communication is used in almost every aspect of life. With the development of communication tools, individuals are faced with a lot of information in daily life (Cialdini, 2017). In this case, it is important to know that persuasive communication exhibits different characteristics, depending on the field and purpose. For example, propaganda is a one-way communication. It is uncritical, non-democratic, and can use any information, true or false, for its intended purpose. Ads are similar to propaganda in terms of communication. But it is different from propaganda from a commercial point of view. Public relations are democratic and can be criticized. A democratic form of communication is used in education. Critical thinking and empathy are taught in education. Persuasion, which is also seen as the adoption of an idea or action, thus becomes the purpose behind every communication. A mother who directs her child to do homework and a brand that advertises shampoo use persuasive communication. The success of communication is also evaluated with its persuasiveness (Oyman, 2012, p. iv).

Erad (2018, p. 39) articulates that persuasion process, a general term, can be identified depending on perspectives, time, situation and place. The fact that persuasive

communication styles are named differently is due to numerous features such as historical background of concerning communication styles. Rusu and Herman (2018) associate this situation with various factors as the goal of communication, the involvement of manipulation in communication and the degree of manipulation. In addition, Rusu and Herman (2018, pp. 118- 125) states that until the end of the First World War, propaganda was perceived as a part of political activity whereas, after the war, it was given different names as psychological operations and information operations in the army; strategic communication or political communication in politics; public relations and public affairs in the institutional sphere; advertising in the commercial space and public diplomacy in the diplomatic space. According to Güllüoğlu (2009, pp. 505-520), public relations activities were considered as propaganda until Nazi propaganda. Robinson (2017, p. 50) notes that propaganda, public relations, strategic communication, political communication, public diplomacy, psychological operations, perception management and information management are the terms perceived as the array of euphemisms used to describe persuasion and influence campaigns. Besides, he classifies persuasive communication as organized political persuasion with the involvement of intended manipulation and

organized persuasive communication without manipulation. The goal of the communication a mother uses to persuade her child to do his/her homework involves persuasion. As such, the purpose of the communication used to achieve its own goals such as modifying and shaping public's opinions or getting them to act in a certain way is related to persuasion. Nevertheless, as stated by Ayhan (2007), Domenach (1961), Güllüoğlu (2009) and Qualter (1962), persuasive communication has different characteristics depending on the field and purpose.

Propaganda, Ads, Public Relations, Education

Qualter (1962) points out that the tools and techniques developed by traders to induce people to buy their products date back earlier than propaganda and adds that propaganda emerges with the political use of certain techniques which are used to advertise and, then, evolves into an art entailing specialty. Domenach (1961) states that propaganda and advertising concurrently progress and that propaganda, advertising and politics use mutual methods, albeit emphasizes that propaganda benefits from advertising techniques with a greater extent. Qualter (1962) and Domenach (1961) acknowledge that propaganda and advertising attempting to use the same methods have different goals. Walton (1997) and Geçikli (2012, p. 268) maintain as follows: Propaganda is unidirectional and biased. It offers only one option and is without alternative. It involves hyperbole and does not always goodwill and honesty. It uses a great deal of repetition to persuade. It is a conscious activity targeting both the individual and public. It can be constructive as well as deceptive or devastating. It spreads selected information (Geçikli, 2012, p. 268). As a communicative discourse, propaganda is a unidirectional type of communication which includes two parties, the transmitter who conveys an idea and the receiver to whom an idea is addressed. It employs information in favour of one party and its success or failure depends on its ability to get the public to act in a certain way. It requires targeting behaviours based on desired opinion and perspective and it entails commitment; in addition, it poses discriminant characteristics as proponents and antagonists (Walton, 1997). Indeed, advertising benefits this type of communication to introduce a product and to convince the public to buy it.

Güllüoğlu (2009) distinguishes between public relations and propaganda and claims that public relations rely on certain principles as trust and honesty, saying that this profession is sometimes misunderstood by the public and highlighting the presence of misapplications in public relations through examples. Ayhan (2007) accentuates that the most important elements that distinguish propaganda and public relations is due to the fact that public relations are true, honest, tolerant, questionable, reciprocal, continuous and constructive and notes that the goal of the process is to persuade the public by using communication tools.

The persuasive language used in education is different from that of propaganda and advertising. Propaganda and education are significantly alike in terms of shaping opinions; therefore, there is tendency to consider the two concepts

same. In fact, since education is based on thinking and discussion, it is unlikely to ignore and suppress the truth. This situation distinguishes between education and propaganda. Propaganda attempts to convince the public for a determined solution instead of seeking for one. This can be explained through education and propaganda. Moreover, if desired, education and educational materials can be converted into the tools of propaganda (Qualter, 1962). Although each step taken by individual towards the goal is seen as a success considering individual differences, as pointed out by Ellul (1973), propaganda does not satisfy with partial success and accept argument. According to Qualter (1962), both have distinctive characteristics; however, education and propaganda, contrary to common belief, are not different concepts. Propaganda occurs when false information is deliberately taught for an intended deception. Nevertheless, when the information is believed to be true and taught to students, this may, then, be regarded as both education and propaganda. Again, the activity in which the goal is to modify attitudes in a certain way regardless of reliability of the information is called as propaganda. The criteria in education are based on the fact that whether the information is true or false whereas the criterion of propaganda relies on the purpose of why the information is taught.

According to the literature, organized persuasion techniques are mainly used in propaganda, advertising, public relations and education. The characteristics of persuasive communication depend on the goals of each field. Secondary school students are expected to be aware that the media texts they read or listen exhibit different features based on the field and purpose the persuasive communication is employed in order to make assessments in terms of cultural transmission, interpretation, elucidating and persuading.

Persuasive Communication in Turkish Course Curriculum

The learning outcomes entailing to know the characteristics of persuasive communication are specified within Turkish curriculum (2019). These outcomes have been specified starting from 4th grade to 8th grade:

The learning outcome stating that 'Students will be able to assess the content of what they read/listen (MoNE, 2019, pp. 30-43)' has been included in listening field of the curriculum of 4-5-6-7th grades. Accordingly, 4th grade students are required to investigate such texts as advertisements or public service announcements in terms of consistency and to make inferences about their goals and target audiences. Furthermore, 5th grade students are expected to determine implicit meanings in media agents such as cartoons and to investigate them in terms of consistency. Similarly, 6th grade students are expected to determine messages and implicit meanings in advertisements and to investigate them in terms of consistency. Ultimately, 7th grade students are required to investigate media texts in terms of consistency and to make inferences about their goals and target audiences.

The learning outcome stating that 'Students will be able to assess media texts (MoNE, 2019, pp. 32-47)' has been included in reading field of the curriculum of 4th to 7th grades.

Hereunder, 4th grade students are entailed to deliver an opinion as to the goals and target audiences of media texts. Students at grades 5, 6 and 7 are expected to evaluate the messages conveyed by the Internet, television etc. The learning outcome included in reading field of 8th grade curriculum states that ‘Students will be able to analyze media texts’ (MoNE, 2019, p. 49). Therefore, students are asked to determine whether the goals of media texts are cultural transmission, interpretation, elucidating, entertaining and persuading.

Among speaking strategies expected from 8th grade students to apply in the field of speaking in curriculum is persuasive speaking strategy. In order to acquire this learning outcome, a student must first analyze the relationship between the problem/issue to be solved and the goal of communication. Since persuasive communication styles in media texts exhibit differences based on the field and purpose, acquiring this learning outcome requires the identification of persuasive communication styles. The contents of media texts in public relations and advertisement must be assessed in different ways as those fields employ different communication methods with the aim of persuasion. According to National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC) (2000), behavioural indicators of critical thinking include the indicators aiming these acquisitions. The learning outcome specified in NPEC (2000) stating that ‘Recognize the relationship between the purpose of a communication and the problems or issues that must be resolved in achieving that purpose’ (NPEC, 2000, p. 15) clearly signifies the need to be aware of the relationship between the styles and goal of communication. The current study presents a lesson activity and its results aiming to teach the characteristics of persuasive communication used in propaganda and advertising with the intended involvement of manipulation and in public relations and education without manipulation to 7th grade students. Through these activities, individuals are hoped to recognize the relationship between language use in communication and the goal of the communication in the texts they read or listen by learning the characteristics of persuasive communication and to have a better understanding of those texts. Nowadays, literacy is beyond basic literacy skills. Concepts such as visual reading, media literacy, and critical reading have emerged these days (Kaplan & Çıfci, p.317). In addition, concepts such as critical writing, persuasive speaking, and persuasive writing can be associated with the concept of literacy. For this reason, teaching persuasive communication styles to students should be considered as advanced literacy skills that refers to understanding truly what is being said and what is being writing.

Objective and Research Questions

In the current study, it is aimed to find an answer to the problem of ‘Do 7th grade students have the ability to be aware of the relationship between the goal of the communication and the problem to be solved and issues to achieve this goal?’ To this end, the following questions have been addressed:

1. What is the students’ readiness levels regarding different characteristics of persuasive communication depending on the field and purpose?

2. Is awareness raised among students on different characteristics of persuasive communication during application process?
3. Do the students’ knowledge levels upon the characteristics of persuasive communication show differences prior to and after the activities?
4. Are the students’ opinions in line with the differences prior to and after the activities?

METHOD

Research Design

Embedded mixed- method design, one of mixed method research which is the combination and integration of qualitative and quantitative methods in the same study, was employed in the present study. In mixed- method design, the researcher integrates both qualitative and quantitative data. The open- ended and close- ended data set are collected and analyzed in this method. In this way, the limitations of both are minimized. In embedded mixed- method research, qualitative and quantitative data are gathered and analyzed concurrently (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The design is also called as triangulation design (Büyüköztürk et al., 2013).

Participants

In the current study, typical case sampling illustrating what is typical, normal or average for a particular phenomenon was used. The study was carried out with fourteen 7th grade students volunteering to participate and attending a state school in Turkey in 2020- 2021 academic year.

Research Instruments

The pretest-posttest, lesson plan, learning outcome and activities prepared in line with the opinions of three field experts who worked in the field of critical thinking and propaganda.

Students’ Performance

The students’ performances in the activities consisting of open- ended questions were assessed by two teachers. Performance scores were obtained from arithmetic mean of the scores given by two teachers. However, the activities composed of close- ended questions were scored by researchers.

Data Collection Procedure

In order to conduct the study, approval was obtained from Ethical Committee of Uşak University. Initially, pretest concerning the characteristics of persuasive communication was carried out. Following the pretest activity, instructional activities on the characteristics of persuasive communication were conducted. The activities were fulfilled as follows:

1. Pretest was completed with an aim to identify students’ readiness levels on persuasive communication.

2. 'What I Know?' and 'What I Learned?' activities were carried out in order to evaluate students' readiness levels at the beginning of the lesson and their acquisition levels at the end of the lesson. These activities were formed by inspiring from K-W-L strategy developed by Ogle (1986).
3. Following 'What I Know?' activity, below- mentioned issues were addressed and the students were asked whether persuasive communication used in those fields exhibit the same characteristics.
 - Teacher's attempt to persuade his/her students to give information about a certain topic.
 - The use of persuasive language in advertising to induce people buy a product.
 - A public relations expert's informing about vaccine in a hospital.

Through pictures and communication schemes related to the topic, students were encouraged to explore the differences of persuasive communication styles and guided speaking activity on the topic was carried out.
4. Following speaking and discussion activities, in 'Investigating Communication Styles depending on Field and Purpose' activity, students were asked to relate given communication characteristics to the fields of propaganda, advertising, public relations and education.
5. At the second stage of the above- mentioned activity, students were asked to which field- among public relations, visual arts, propaganda and education- the communication style presented in the picture belongs.
6. The pretest in C part of the same activity was performed as an activity.
7. Students' views on lesson process and activities were gathered through interview form.
8. Post-test was conducted five weeks after the activities.

Data Analysis

The pretest data set was loaded and described in SPSS program. Whether the data showed normal distribution was investigated. A paired samples t- test was used in those showing normal distribution; however, Wilcoxon test was employed in those not having normal distribution. The difference between the pre- test exactly included in the activities and post-test was analyzed through t- test. In addition, the comparisons between 'What I Know?' activity performed at the beginning of the lesson and 'What I Learned?' activity at the end of the lesson were made. Total scores of activities and pre and post-test scores were compared and assessed; inferences were made with students' views.

As for the comparison between pretest and C part of Investigating Communication Styles depending on the Field and Purpose' activity, points were converted to 100 points grading system and the evaluations were made. Total score of C part of afore- mentioned activity were assessed as 26 points.

The contents of 'What I Know?' and 'What I Learned?' activities were the same and compared with one another. The points were converted to 100 points grading system. Although 'What I Know?' activity was not included in

general scoring, 'What I Learned?' activity was included in general activity scoring out of 40 points. Pretest and activities were scored by two experts. For open- ended questions, mean score of both experts' scoring was computed. Krippendorff's Alpha test was used for interrater reliability. No interrater difference was observed as there were not enough answers in 'What I Know?' activity. However, in the item scoring of 'What I Learned?' activity, Krippendorff's Alpha coefficient yielded following results respectively: $\alpha = 0.96$, $\alpha = 0.98$, $\alpha = 0.9912$, $\alpha = 0.68$. The evaluation rubric for each activity was presented in Findings section.

FINDINGS

Students' Readiness Levels Regarding Different Characteristics of Persuasive Communication

For the first sub- question, the answer to the question of 'What is the students' readiness levels regarding different characteristics of persuasive communication depending on the field and purpose?' has been sought. In pretest activity, the following 14- item matching test, the answer of which was provided on the right, was used. 'All' and 'None' options were added in order to minimize the likelihood of choosing the right answer by chance in matching test. Each paired matching item was considered as 2 points and each single matching item as 1 point. In paired answers, choosing only one item was evaluated as 1 point. Total score of pretest was 26 points. The items and their responses have been shown in (Table 1).

Table 2 displays total scores obtained from each item and success rate on the basis of item.

As seen in Table 2, the highest success belongs to Item 11. It can be posited that students' awareness levels on the communication style used in advertisements were high. According to Item 5-6-7, it can be said that students' awareness levels on the fact that education and public relations are considered on behalf of mankind were high. On the contrary, when success rates on the basis of item are generally evaluated, it may be inferred that students lack information about the characteristics of persuasive communication.

Awareness of Different Features of Persuasive Communication in the Education Process

For the second sub- question, the answer to the question of 'Is awareness raised among students on different characteristics of persuasive communication during application process?' has been sought. To this end, activities concerning persuasive communication were examined.

During 'What I Know?' activity, the students were requested to write what they know about the characteristics of persuasive communication used in public relations, education, propaganda and advertising.

Persuasive communication in public relations must be established on trust and honesty; it must be free and open to criticism. Eight of the students stated that they did not know. St. 4 asked what public relations are, saying that 'Is it something that the public tells their problems to an expert?' Other

students said that it is about gathering information about the public or getting in touch with the public. Students were not able to gain scores in this section.

The fundamental characteristics of persuasive communication used in education are trust and honesty; it is aimed to teach critical thinking, to develop sympathy and to convey ideas. One of the students said that s/he did not know. St. 12 explained the communication style used in education saying that ‘Persuasive language is used in education. For example, imagine a teacher saying that maths is important for all jobs and fields; if we do not learn maths, we do not succeed in any jobs or fields.’ In the activity, no student was able to give the expected answer. The answer given by St. 12 was evaluated as 5 points by both raters.

The characteristics of persuasive communication used in advertising are considered as being unidirectional, not open to sympathy and criticism and commercial –based. When asked the characteristics of persuasive communication in

advertising, three of the students stated that they did not know the answer. Other students’ responses are mostly related to the definition of advertisement. St. 2 mentioned about the characteristics of communication styles used in advertisements saying that any method to reflect or even exaggerate a product’s best features could be used. St. 2 added that persuasive speaking was used in advertisements and the goal was to convince the customer buy the product. Those responses were given 5 points by both raters.

The characteristics of propaganda are expressed as being unidirectional, not open to sympathy and criticism and related to any purpose. When asked the characteristics of persuasive communication used in propaganda, twelve students said that they did not know the answer. St. 11 noted that it meant standing up against the situations regarded as unfair. However, St. 14 said that as s/he knew, it meant agitating with posters in the streets. Those answers were not given points by both raters.

Following ‘What I Know?’ activity, those issues below were elaborated and discussed through brainstorming and guided speaking.

- Teacher’s attempt to persuade his/her students to give information about a certain topic.
- The use of persuasive language in advertising to induce people buy a product.
- A public relations expert’s informing about vaccine in a hospital.

After speaking and discussion activities were completed, students were requested to match the characteristics of communication with the fields in ‘Investigating Communication Styles depending on Field and Purpose’ activity.

Item 1: It uses the methods developed by traders to get the public buy their products. (Advertisement)

Item 2: It is conducted on behalf on the individual or society. It is open to criticism. It is a dual communication. (Public Relations)

Item 3: It uses multi- directional communication methods in a liberal environment. Its main purpose is to teach critical thinking and sympathy. (Education)

Item 4: It is unidirectional. It is not open to criticism. It can use any kind of information, right or false, for its purpose. It aims to persuade at all costs. (Propaganda)

Item 1 was given the wrong answer by St. 7 and St. 9. Item 2 was given the wrong answer by St. 5, St. 9, St. 12 and St. 14. Item 3 was given the wrong answer by St. 12 and St. 14. Item 4 was given the wrong answer by St. 4, St. 5 and St. 7.

As seen in Table 3 the success rates of the students are above 70 percent.

Table 1. Pre-post test: Investigating communication styles depending on field and purpose

1	Information can be biasedly used for a positive or negative goal.	Propaganda, Ad
2	Communication is unidirectional.	Propaganda, Ad
3	Information is processed and, then, presented for a unidirectional goal.	Propaganda, Ad
4	It is not questionable. It is not suitable for sympathy.	Propaganda, Ad
5	Information is only used for positive goals.	Education, Public Relations
6	Multi- directional and free communication is preferred.	Education, Public Relations
7	The teaching of critical thinking and sympathy is aimed.	Education
8	Mutual understanding and trust are essential.	Education, Public Relations
9	Facts are objectively revealed.	Education, Public Relations
10	The individual, society and mankind’s interest is prioritized.	Education, Public Relations
11	People can be manipulated through emotional exploitation.	Propaganda, Ad
12	It only serves for a certain group’s interests.	Propaganda, Ad
13	It can capitalize on the polysemy of the words.	Propaganda, Ad
14	It differs from the communication used in propagadanda in that it is commercial.	Ad

Table 2. Pretest scores and success rates on the basis of item

Item No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Mean
Item Whole Point	28	28	28	28	28	28	14	28	28	28	28	28	28	14	26
Students’ Total Point	4	5	3	4	8	7	7	6	5	4	10	6	6	3	5.57
Success Rate %	14	18	11	14	29	25	25	21	18	14	36	21	21	11	22.44

In the second part of the ‘Investigating Communication Styles depending on Field and Purpose’ activity, students were asked to which fields, among public relations, visual arts, propaganda and education, the communication style presented in the picture belonged. All students except St. 9 were able to choose the right answer that was propaganda.

As seen in Table 4 the success rates of the students are above 90 percent.

In the third part of the above- mentioned activity, a matching test which was used as a pretest at the beginning of teaching activities was implemented as lesson activity.

When compared pretest scores and scores of the 3rd section of the above- mentioned activity (Table 5), it can be inferred that students’ learning levels have significantly increased. The mean score which was determined as 5.57 in pretest was observed to rise to 15.64. Moreover, success rate was seen to rise from 22.44% to 61.22%. It may be concluded that students’ learning levels on the characteristics of persuasive communication have significantly increased. Item 5-6-7 and 11 that students got the highest scores during pretest implementation were again among the items students got higher scores. Moreover, Item 14 that students gave the right answer with the rate of %11 was observed to be the one students showed a marked improvement with the rate of 79%. Besides, it was seen that their awareness on the characteristics of persuasive

communication in advertising and education was high during the activities.

The responses given to the ‘What I Learned?’ activity at the end of the lesson are provided below.

When asked about persuasive communication used in public relations, two students said that they did not exactly know. A student gave an irrelevant answer, saying that it was something about sympathy, respect and etc. among trades-people. Six students’ responses were able to gain full score from both raters. St. 12 said that it was to inform the public and open to criticism. This answer was evaluated as 8 points. Other responses are as follows:

- There is critical thinking. It is questionable. There is sympathy. Information can be used for any goal. Facts are or are not objectively revealed. It depends on the individual. [St.4]
- It is the communication style where there is mutual trust, empathy is taught, the audience is informed and all facts are told. [St.6]
- The individuals’, contacted by an institution, being sympathetic and supportive towards us. [St.7]
- It means being in communication with the public. Communication is free. [St.8]

The responses show that a couple of students consider persuasive language used in public relations together with the characteristics of persuasive language in education.

When asked about the characteristics of persuasive communication in education, three students were seen to give an irrelevant answer, stating that it meant being educated in a school or a similar place. Four students were able to give right answers regarding the characteristics of persuasive communication in education. Other responses are as follows:

- Persuasion techniques are used, it is attempted to persuade. No false information is given, it is multi- directional. [St.3]
- There is critical thinking. Information can be used for different goals. There is sympathy. Facts are objectively revealed. It is questionable. [St.4]
- The goal is to educate the student well. No false information is given. It is liberal. [St.5]
- It is the communication style where there is mutual trust, empathy is taught and the audience is informed. [St.6]
- It means teaching certain information without any force or constraint over anybody. [St.8]
- Education is democratic. [St.11]
- It is not used for negative goals. It teaches sympathy. It is open to criticism. [St.13]

Table 3. ‘Investigating communication styles depending on field and purpose’ 1st activity scores and success rates on the basis of item

Item Answer	Ads	Public Relations	Education	Propaganda
Item Whole Point	6	6	6	6
Students Item Points Mean	5.14	4.29	5.14	4.29
Success Rate %	85	71	85	71

Table 4. ‘Investigating communication styles depending on field and purpose’ 2nd activity scores and success rates on the basis of item

Item Answer	Propaganda
Item Whole Point	10
Students Item Points Mean	9.28
Success Rate %	92.8

Table 5. The scores of the 3rd section of ‘Investigating communication styles depending on field and purpose’ activity and success rates on the basis of item

Item No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Mean
Item Whole Point	28	28	28	28	28	28	14	28	28	28	28	28	28	14	26
Students Total Point	13	19	8	18	21	20	10	16	18	14	20	13	18	11	15.64
Success Rate (%)	46	68	29	64	75	71	71	57	64	50	71	46	64	79	61.22

According to the responses, it can be alleged that students have learnt the characteristics of persuasive communication used in education.

A student was observed to give an irrelevant answer concerning persuasive communication in advertising. However, three students were able to give the right answer. Other responses are as follows:

- It is a kind of unidirectional and commercial- based communication where the speaker speaks on behalf of self interests, exploits audiences' emotions and conceals the product's negative features. [St.2]
- It is a kind of unidirectional communication where the speaker speaks for his/her interests by exploiting audiences' emotions. [St.6]
- It is a kind of communication by which people are convinced to buy a certain product through short videos. [St.7]
- It means demonstrating the product's good sides to the customers while concealing its negative sides. It is unidirectional. [St.8]
- It is unidirectional; it can be used for both positive and negative goals. Only positive information about the product which is advertised is mentioned. It is commercial. [St.10]
- It is about persuading the people for the product by praising it in advertisements. [St.12]

In the light of the responses, it can be posited that students know about the characteristics of persuasive communication used in advertisements.

When asked about persuasive communication used in propaganda, four students were able to give the right answer. A student was observed to give an irrelevant answer. Other responses are as follows:

- It is unidirectional. It is not open to criticism. It is not suitable for sympathy. [St.1]
- Any kind of information is possible. It is not open to criticism. [St.5]
- It is a kind of unidirectional communication where the speaker speaks for his/her interests by exploiting audiences' emotions. [St.6]
- It is similar to advertisement and unidirectional. It is not open to sympathy and criticism. Only good sides are mentioned. [St.10]
- It is not different from advertising. [St.14]

In the light of the responses, it may be concluded that students have learnt about the characteristics of persuasive communication used in propaganda.

Table 6 presents students' mean scores in 'What I Learned?' activity based on both raters' evaluations.

The students' responses to the open- ended questions indicate that their learning on the characteristics of persuasive communication has been realized with a rate of 58.75%.

Students' Knowledge Level of the Characteristics of Persuasive Communication before and After the Activities

For the third sub- question, the answer to the question of 'Do the students' knowledge levels upon the characteristics of persuasive communication show differences prior to and after the activities?' has been sought. For this aim, the difference between total scores of the activities carried out regarding persuasive communication and pre and post-test was investigated. In addition, the difference between 'What I Know?' and 'What I Learned?' activities was analyzed. Prior to the analyses, it was decided which type of analysis, parametric or non- parametric, would be used by examining whether the data showed normal distribution. Since sampling population is below 30, Shapiro- Wilk test was preferred in order to examine whether the research data showed normal distribution.

'What I Know?' activity which was implemented at the beginning of the lesson and 'What I Learned?' activity which was applied at the end of the lesson were compared and the difference was analyzed. 'What I Know?' activity scores were observed not to normally distributed based on Shapiro-Wilk analysis ($W=0$; $p<.05$). Therefore, activities were analyzed through Wilcoxon test which is non- parametric equivalent of paired samples test.

As shown in Table 7, it was revealed a significant difference in favour of positive ranks between the scores of the activity on the characteristics of persuasive communication depending of the field applied before and after teaching activities ($z=-3.301$; $p<.001$). It can be concluded that learning regarding the characteristics of persuasive communication was significantly realized during teaching activities.

Whether the scores of pretest and the 3rd Section of 'Investigating Communication Styles depending on Field and Purpose' activity, which was a repetition of pretest, showed difference was investigated in the second assessment. To this end, whether the scores were normally distributed was examined. Since, Shapiro- Wilk test result of pretest was found as $W=.437$; $p>.05$ and that of 3rd section of above- mentioned activity as $W=.234$; $p>.05$, the data were accepted to be normally distributed. Therefore, research data were analyzed through paired samples t- test, which is a parametric analysis test.

Table 8 shows the paired samples t- test results which indicated a significant difference between the scores of pretest

Table 6. 'What i learned?' Activity scores and success rates on the basis of question

Item Id	Public Relation	Education	Ads	Propaganda	Mean
Item Whole Point	10	10	10	10	10
Students Item Points Mean	5.85	6.14	5.71	8.85	5.87
Success Rate %	58	61	57	58	58.75

and activities ($t=-5.485$, $p<.05$). The mean scores of pretest ($M=5.93$) and activities ($M= 15.64$) were found to be significantly high. As a result of brainstorming and guided speaking activities and a relevant presentation carried out with 7th grade students, it was shown that students' learning towards the fact that persuasive communication exhibited different characteristics depending on the field and purpose was considerably achieved.

The third assessment was carried out through the comparison between activities' total scores and pretest scores. Scores were initially converted to 100 points grading system and the normal distribution of the data was investigated. As Shapiro-Wilk test result of pretest was determined as $W=.539$; $p>.05$ and that of activity total scores as $p=.423>.05$, the data were accepted to be normally distributed. Therefore, research data were analyzed through paired samples t- test, which is a parametric analysis test.

According to the results of paired samples t- test (Table 9), a significant difference between pretest and the scores gained in the activities ($t=-8.061$, $p<.05$) was found. Mean scores of the activities ($M= 69.43$) was observed to be

Table 7. Wilcoxon test results regarding 'What i know?' And 'what i learned?' Activities

What I Know? What I Learned?	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	p
Negative Ranks	0	.00	.00	-3.301	.001
Positive Ranks	14	7.5	105.00		
Ties	0	-	-		
Total	14				

Table 8. Paired samples t-test results of pre- test and 3rd section of 'investigating communication styles depending on field and purpose' activity

Variables	M	df	SD	SEM	t-Test	
					t	p
Pretest Scores	5.93	13	2.868	.766	-5.485	.000
3 rd Section Scores	15.64	13	7.510	2.007		

Table 9. T- test results of total scores of pretest and teaching activities

Variables	M	df	SD	SEM	t-Test	
					t	p
Pretest Scores	22.79	13	11.074	2.960	-8.344	.000
Activity Scores	69.43	13	20.221	5.404		

Table 10. Pretest and post-test mean scores and success rates

Item No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Mean
Item Whole Point	28	28	28	28	28	28	14	28	28	28	28	28	28	14	26
Item Total Point	20	21	17	20	20	18	8	21	15	15	21	14	19	12	17.21
Success Rate %	71	75	61	71	71	64	57	75	54	54	75	50	68	86	66

higher than mean scores of pretest ($M= 22.79$). In the light of the difference between pretest and total scores of the activities, learning towards the characteristics of persuasive communication was significantly achieved.

For the fourth assessment, pretest scores and posttest scores carried out five weeks after teaching activities were compared (Table 10).

Whether the scores were normally distributed was analyzed. It was observed that the data did not show normal distribution since Shapiro- Wilk test result of pretest was found as $W=.539$; $p>.05$ and that of post-test as $W=.047$; $p<.05$. Accordingly, activities were analyzed through Wilcoxon Test which is non-parametric equivalent of paired samples test.

It was revealed that there was a significant difference between pretest and post-test ($z=-3.301$; $p<.001$) in favour of positive ranks (Table 11). It is seen that there is a significant difference in favor of positive rank in the degree of ($z=-3.301$; $p<.001$) between the pretest and post-test. The fact that Wilcoxon results of pre and post-test are similar to those of 'What I Know?' and 'What I Learned?' activities is remarkable.

Consequently, the analyses on teaching activities, pretest and post-test have indicated that the activities concerning the characteristics of persuasive communication are effective. Besides, the fact that post-test data obtained five weeks after teaching activities have yielded similar results as the analyses conducted during activity process has shown that permanent learning was achieved.

Student Opinions on Activities

St. 1, St. 2, St. 11 and St. 12 volunteered to participate in semi- structured interview concerning the characteristics of communication used in propaganda, advertising, public relations and education. The data obtained from interviews are as follows:

The students were requested to make their own evaluations on the activities regarding communication styles. St. 1 articulated that the information gathered through those activities would facilitate their lives. St. 2 stated that those activities were beneficial as they learnt about the type of communication in possible situations and how to respond to certain kind of communication. St. 3 said that the activities were alright. However, St. 4 emphasized that assessing students' knowledge levels prior to and after the activities was effective. The students were asked whether activities were appropriate for their levels. All of the students stated that the activities were appropriate for their levels. On the contrary, St. 3 noted that s/he was able to understand the activities; however, added that they were a bit confusing.

Table 11. Wilcoxon test results of pretest and post-test

What I Know? What I Learned?	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	p
Negative Ranks	0	.00	.00	-3.301	.001
Positive Ranks	14	7.5	105.00		
Ties	0	-	-		
Total	14				

Students were asked whether they were able to participate in activities at sufficient levels. All the students stated that they participated in activities at sufficient levels. Students were also asked which activities aroused their interests and why. Their responses were as follows:

St. 1 said that s/he was engaged in all the activities; however, added that the most interesting points for him/her, in a negative way, was the fact that propaganda and advertising were unidirectional types of communication as degeneration of people and improbable promises made him/her angry. St. 2 stated that the activities appealed to him/her. In addition, St. 3 emphasized that the most interesting point for him/her was the communication style used in advertisements, education, public relations and propaganda. St. 4 said that they were all needed as they were beneficial.

Students were asked whether there were any activities which did not arouse their interests and, if any, why. Three students said that there were not; nevertheless, St. 2 stated that s/he enjoyed certain activities more. In addition, students were asked whether the activities were different from the ones in their lessons and, if any, requested to identify the differences. Their responses are as follows:

St. 1 said that they were different and they used forms in that lesson. St. 2 agreed with St. 1 and added that they did not have their lesson based on the curriculum. St. 2 also highlighted that they were not conducted as an ordinary school lesson and they talked during the lessons. St. 3 stated that the activities were different since they learnt different words, they did not even hear of, while they learnt about the certain subjects in lessons. However, St. 4 said that the activities were not different in that they generally asked questions in lessons as in activities.

When students were asked whether the activities regarding communication styles were interesting, they identified them as interesting. St. 1 stated that propaganda aroused him/her interest whereas St. 2 said that s/he was engaged in the activities as s/he learnt about the techniques used in communication.

Students were asked whether they thought that the teaching activities concerning advertisements and propaganda would be useful in their daily lives and which fields they could be useful. Their responses are as follows: St. 1 said that s/he definitely thought they would be useful and added that they were able to encounter with a different situation when they bought a product which advertised very well on television. St. 1 also stated that we did not believe those improbable promises and were able to think objectively and critically as their teacher told them about this topic. St. 2 emphasized that s/he would be more careful about the products

in advertisements in particular and noted that s/he would behave towards the people based on the techniques they learned in the lesson. St. 3 said that the activities would be useful and stated that they would be more careful about the news on television or the products which were advertised. St. 4 said that s/he was able to persuade people or would not be cheated by the ones who tried to convince him/her.

According to students' views, it has been revealed that they were satisfied with learning about the use of persuasive communication depending on different styles and goals. The students stated that activities were generally suitable and comprehensible for their levels. On the contrary, a student disagreed, saying that the activities were a bit confusing. Students noted that they were able to attend the activities sufficiently, activities were interesting and different from their lessons. The fact that persuasive communication is used in daily life and learning about its different styles and goals depending on the field is beneficial is emphasized. Students stated that they would persuade other by learning and recognizing the characteristics of persuasive communication and protect themselves against certain communication styles consisting of manipulation such as advertisements and propaganda

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the current study, aiming at revealing different characteristics of persuasive communication depending on field and purpose, students exhibited success with a rate of 22.44% indicating that students did not have sufficient information. However, when compared the characteristics of communication used in propaganda and the characteristics of communication used in education, public relations and advertisements, it can be asserted that the students were more informed about the communication used in education, public relations and advertisements.

When investigating the scores of 'What I Know?' activity included in teaching activities a week after pretest, similar results as those of pretest were yielded. The topic was supported by visual materials and students' learning levels on the topic during the activities carried out following speaking and discussion activities were indicated to significantly increase.

When evaluating the 1st section of 'Investigating Communication Styles depending on Field and Purpose' activity, students were able to give right answer with a rate of 78.58%. In the 2nd part of the above-mentioned activity, 13 students (92.8%) said that the communication style in the given picture belonged to propaganda. In the 3rd part, pretest was implemented as an activity and students showed success with a rate of 61.22%. According to the results of 'What I Learned?' activity carried out at the end of the lesson, students showed success with a rate of 58.75%.

Through discussions and speaking activities, students who did not enough information about the characteristics of persuasive communication were encouraged to explore the subject. The activities consisting of matching, multiple choice and close-ended questions allowed students to gain a deeper understanding.

According to Wilcoxon test results of ‘What I Know?’ and ‘What I Learned?’ activities, a significant difference ($z=-3.183$; $p<.001$) in favour of ‘What I Learned?’ activity was found. When compared pretest and the 3rd section of ‘Investigating Communication Styles depending on Field and Purpose’ activity, which was equivalent to pretest, the score of the latter ($M= 15.64$) was significantly higher than that of pretest ($M= 5.93$). According to pretest and paired samples t- test result of 3rd section of the above- mentioned activity, a significant difference ($t=-5.485$, $p<.05$) was determined. Based on paired samples t- test results, there was a significant difference ($t=-8.344$, $p<.05$) between pretest and the scores obtained in all activities. Pretest success scores ($M= 22.79$) were higher than activity scores ($M= 69.43$).

Through brainstorming and guided speaking activities carried out with 7th grade students and relevant presentations, it was observed that learning on different characteristics of persuasive communication depending on the field and purpose was significantly achieved. The students’ views are in line with this result.

Consequently, certain acquisitions entailing the recognition of persuasive communication style in reading and listening have been included in Turkish language education curriculum (2019). Persuasive speaking strategy is included in speaking field. Students are requested to identify the goals and target audiences of such media texts as advertisements, public service announcements and the messages on television or the Internet. Besides, the students are expected to investigate those texts in terms of consistency and unearth implicit meanings. In order for students to acquire these acquisitions, they are required to know the different characteristics of persuasive communication depending on field and purpose.

The present study carried out with 7th grade students on the characteristics of persuasive communication has shown that the students did not have enough information concerning persuasive communication styles. Okur et al. (2013) noted that the concept of persuasion was included in mother language course materials in Australia until 10th class level. Okur et al. (2013) articulated that course materials used in both primary and secondary schools were not sufficient for persuasion. Konuk and Beyreli (2018, p. 181) highlighted that persuasive writing widely included in most countries’ curricula was also included in Turkish language education at primary school level, but not at secondary school level.

The acquisition stating that ‘individuals will be able to recognize the relationship between the purpose of the communication and problems or issues that must be resolved in achieving that purpose (NPEC, 2000, p. 15) should be included in Turkish language education curriculum. In line with this acquisition, different characteristics of persuasive communication depending on the field and purpose should be taught. Based on this acquisition, different characteristics of persuasive communication depending of the field and purpose should be taught.

REFERENCES

Ayhan, A. (2007). *Propaganda Nedir?* Litera-Türk yayınları.
Beyreli, L. & Konuk, S. (2018). A Research on the Improve-

- ment of Persuasive Writing Skill of Sixth Grade Students in Secondary School. *Education & Science/ Eğitim ve Bilim*, 42(193). <http://dx.doi.org/10.15390/EB.2018.7520>
- Büyüköztürk, Ş., Kılıç Çakmak, E., Akgün, Ö., Karadeniz, Ş., & Demirel, F. (2013). *Bilimsel Araştırma Yöntemleri*. Pegem Akademi.
- Cialdini, R. B. (2021). *İknanın Piskolojisi (Y, Fletcher, trans.)*. MediaCat. 2001.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Sage Publications.
- Domenach, J. M. (1961). *Siyasi Propaganda*. Remzi Kitabevi.
- Ellul, J. (1973). *Propaganda the Formation of Men's Attitudes*. Vintage Books.
- Erad, D. (2018). Video Games as a Propaganda Tool: Representation of the USA (Master's thesis). Middle East Technical University.
- Geçikli, F. (2012). Propaganda, From Past to Present. *Istanbul University Faculty of Communication Journal*, 9, 265-279. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/iuifd/issue/22880/244659>.
- Güllüoğlu, Ö. (2009). A Theoretical Assessment of the Relationship between Public Relations and Propaganda. *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Meslek Yüksekokulu Dergisi*, 12(1-2), 505-520.
- Kaplan, K. & Cıfci, M. (2020). Propaganda özelinde görsel olanı eleştirel okumak. *International Journal of Turkish Literature Culture Education*, 9(1), 316-335.
- MoNE (2019). *Turkish Course Curriculum 2019*. MoNE
- NPEC. (2000). Definitions and Assessment Methods for Critical Thinking, Problem Solving and Writing. U. S. Department of Education.
- Ogle, D. (1986). K-W-L: A Teaching Model That Develops Active Reading of Expository Text. *The Reading Teacher*, 39, 564-570.
- Okur, A., Sügümlü, Ü. & Göçen, G. (2103). Persuasive Speech And A Comparative Study (Australia Mother Tongue Training Course Materials And Turkish Sample). *Electronic Turkish Studies*, 8(8). <http://dx.doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.4960>
- Oyman, M. (2012). Önsöz. *İkna Edici İletişim* (1st. ed., pp. 2-19). T.C. Anadolu Üniversitesi Yayını.
- Qualter, T. H. (1962). Propaganda Teorisi ve Propagandanın Gelişimi. *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, 35(1), 255-307.
- Robinson, P. (2017). Learning from the Chilcot report: Propaganda deception and the ‘War on Terror’. *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies*, 11(1-2), 46-73. https://doi.org/10.1386/ijcis.11.1-2.47_1
- Rusu, M. L. & Herman, R. (2018). The Implications of Propaganda as a Social Influence Strategy. *Bulletin Scientific*, 23(2), 118-125. <https://doi.org/10.2478/bsaft-2018-0015>
- Walton, D. (1997). What Is Propaganda, And What Exactly Is Wrong With It? *Public Affairs Quarterly*, 11(4) 383-413.