Abstract

Since the 80’s there has been a rethinking in History teaching in which it proposes the usage of different cultural languages in classroom. At the same time, image began to be used more often as evidence of the past. We have situated our study in this context taking into consideration the importance of mediatory objects as far as building historical knowledge. We propose a consideration upon the proper use of images -especially historical paintings as documents and school historical source- as mediatory objective for the learning History contents. The Reading of paintings permits construction of historical knowledge. The first contact with the work, the identification of the theme, the consideration upon the elements presented, that is, the awareness of what is seen, and, the interpretation of the fact presented in the work and its contexture, are fundamental operations that provide concomitant reading and understanding of the work as well as construction of knowledge. We observed positive outcomes referring to the use of painting in class when we came up with a research work with high school students. These students studied the subject “the discovery of Brazil” through the historical paintings named “The Discovery of Brazil” (1922) and “Indians on board of Capitania” (c. 1900) by Oscar Pereira da Silva, “First Mass” (1861) by Victor Merelles and “The elevation of the Cross” (1879) by Pedro Peres. A painting narrates and tells of a story. Upon drawing conceptual maps the students built a narrative around the studied subject by organizing the information and the historical concepts, thus demonstrating they understand the history narrated in the paintings. They also related them with the information disposed in other texts as well as dialogued with previous knowledge.

Keywords

Teaching of History, Historical painting, building of knowledge