Wiews of the Novice Teachers Regarding Planning and Implementing the Plan

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to determine the views of the novice teachers related to preparation and implementation of the lesson plan. In this research, in the qualitative research, using interview out of data collection techniques in the qualitative research, by selecting a small number of teachers from different branches. In the qualitative analysis obtained after the interviews have content analysis method been used. As a result of the studies, it has been understood that all of the teachers believe its benefit and necessity. They denoted that it leads them, provides self confidence, makes students attend to the lesson. Yet, very few teachers plan with the aim of readiness for the lesson; most of them find it enough to use the ready plans and the adviser book; they make changes on the plans when they think it is necessary; they view preparing a different lesson plan as waste of time. According to the results of research that can suggest: By determining a flexible administrative mentality, teachers should get initiative in issues such as teachers’ plans’ being prepared and practiced.

Keywords: Novice teacher, planning, implementing plan

1. Introduction

If you don't not know where you are going, it is very difficult to get there. This research focuses on the views of the novice teachers regarding planning and implementing the plan. Therefore, one of the issues to be taken within the context of theoretical framework is the planning. The teachers, according to the reflective decision-making model, have to take decisions about three basic instruction functions (Cooper, 2003). These are planning, implementation and evaluation (Cooper, 2003). Plan is a problem or a studying guide, prepared by the teachers with the participation of the students, on which to provide them with knowledge, skill, habit and values individually or in groups (Taşdemir, 2006). It is actually a kind of course of action. It is an important part of teaching period which is a process including the interaction between teacher’s teaching strategies and the student’s interpretation efforts. The aim of the plan is to determine the steps or the ways to be followed in the material which is going to be taught. Naturally, planning is the best way to organize a lesson or a unit within the frame of a plan (Sprinthall and Sprinthall, 1990).

An effective curriculum and effective instruction require effective planning (Henson, 2006). During the well planned and well managed classes students are satisfied with their own work, and also develop cooperation (Savage, 1988). Activities which are not planned cause works to continue randomly, they cause troubles, loss of time and effort; they remove education and teaching from their actual aim. A good planning gives the opportunity to run the teaching activities in a smooth and regular way. A teacher who plans his works in advance does not face any difficulties in the classroom; he works with confidence and complacency, reaches his goals via the shortest way by achieving a productive work. (Yaşar, 1998)

Teachers can develop their planning skills by making use of their own experiences. However, first of all, the teacher should believe in the necessity of the planning the teaching activities. The teacher's rough
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Planning, not allocating enough time for the planning may cause the programmes not being able to be implemented effectively and also many problems in the process of teaching (Oğuz, 2009).

In Azizoğlu's research (1989) it is stated that a significant part of the primary school teachers don't think it is necessary to do a lesson planning and that they feel that they are not efficient in lesson planning (cited in Oğuz, 2009). It has been observed also in the study done by Taşdemir (1995) that the primary school teachers find their planning efficiency "partly efficient" In Conkel's and Imwold's research (1992) teachers regard the lesson planning as the most important factor for effective teaching. In Yıldırım's and Öztürk's research (2002) some of the teachers have found lesson planning difficult and time consuming, and they have proposed the lesson plans be prepared by people other than teachers or foundations, ready plans be used and the plans be standartised. Some studies show that more experienced teachers are more efficient lesson planners (Walls, Nardi, Von Minden and Hoffman, 2002) and that as the teachers' experiences increase they tend to include more lesson subjects in their lesson plannings and also that woman teachers tend to take students' features more into consideration in their lesson planning (Yıldırım and Öztürk, 2002; both cited in Oğuz, 2009).

Another focusal point of this research is the novice teachers’ points of views on the implementation of the planning. No matter how ideally a curriculum is developed, in the end the most important element during the implementation is the teacher himself. If the teacher plans the class, lesson etc. activities in accordance with the principles of the curriculum being implemented, but doesn’t practise it as planned, it isn’t possible for that curriculum to be successful (Taşdemir, 2006). How often have we heard people say, ‘the plan was good but implementation was poor. Plan must be implemented in the classroom if it is to make an impact on student learning. In some curriculum development projects, implementation is not been given due consideration; not realising that innovations need careful planning and monitoring. Successful implementation of curriculum requires understanding the power relationships, the traditions, the roles and responsibilities of individuals in the school system (www.col.org/stamp/module13.pdf).

Some researches has shown that some teachers experience problems in planning and putting them into practice, and don’t comply with the principles of planning efficiently (Yıldırım, 2003; Kılıç, Naḷçaci ve Ercoskun, 2004; cited in Oğuz, 2009). In that respect, to determine the novice teachers’ views on the preparations and implementation of the lesson plans can be of help in developing their professional efficiency, in their realizing an effective teaching, in the achievement of their students and in providing feedback for teacher training system. That’s why, the aim of the study is to determine the views of the novice teachers related to preparation and implementation of the lesson plan.

2. Method

In this research, using interview out of data collection techniques in the qualitative research, by selecting a small number of teachers from different branches maximum variation sampling was used to gather in-depth and detailed information. The aim here is to form a sample relatively and to reflect the diversity of the individuals who could support the problem being worked on in a maximum way in this sample (Yıldırım, Şimşek, 2005).

Twenty novice teachers who have been appointed to Hatay province and who are at their first year have been interviewed. Trainee teachers’ contact information has been gathered by communicating with the Provincial Education Directorate. All of the participants work at goverment schools. Interview-Form made up of the questions for the novice teachers related has been prepared. Five semi-structured, mostly open-ended questions have been posed to the teachers during the interview. The data have been collected regarding the importance of the plan, the problems experienced in the implementations of the plan and suggestions. To create a form with high validity, a detailed literature review was done before the questions in the interview were prepared and probable questions were determined. Necessary corrections
were made in the form prepared by considering the aim of the study by getting expert opinion. The interviews which were first tape recordings were transferred to the regular written form.

In the qualitative analysis obtained after the interviews have content analysis method been used. When used properly, content analysis is a powerful data reduction technique. Its major benefit comes from the fact that it is a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding. It has the attractive features of being unobtrusive, and being useful in dealing with large volumes of data. The technique of content analysis extends far beyond simple word frequency counts (Stemler, 2001). The main goal in content analysis is to reach notions and relations which will be able to explain the datum gathered. Notions take us to the themes. Thanks to the themes, we can organize the facts better and make them more understandable. (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008) The coding obtained from the content analysis was grouped under 5 main themes. These themes are The Importance of The Plan, Preparing and Practicing Lesson Plan, Benefiting from Ready Plans, The Troubles Occurring in The Phase of Practicing and Evaluating Plan and Suggestions. Also, the quotations which will support these pieces of coding which occur have been determined, too. The novice teachers who developed the opinions were coded as “T”. When having direct citations instead of using the names of the participants codes like T9, T3, etc. (for example T9 refers to the 9th teacher in the crude data texts) were used.

LeCompte and Goetz (1982) point out that the reporting of collected data in detail and the explanation of how the researcher achieved the results are among the most important criteria in a qualitative research for the provision of validation (cited in Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005). The findings of the study, therefore, are presented in detail without adding any interpretation and often by giving direct quotations and are discussed later on in the study. But in cases where the statement is too long, only the most important parts were cited preserving the participants’ own words and style.

In order to guarantee the reliability of the results different coders should code the same text in the same way or the same coders should code the same text at different times in the same way (Weber, 1990; cited in Stemler, 2001). A reliability enabling way was carried out in this study. The codifications, for the reliability work, have been done by another expert and the codifications have been compared. The coding for reliability work was done by 2 other experts, too and the pieces of coding were compared. Consistency between the coders was found .76.

3. Findings and Comments

In this part, novice teachers’ views towards preparing and practicing lesson plan are included. These views are presented under different themes.

The Importance of The Plan
All of the teachers about this theme indicated that they believe that plan is really necessary, it leads the teachers, it provides regularity in the class, it leads the teaching period, it provides them with self-confidence, it makes students attend the lesson, it is the guide in the teaching environment and it leads the teaching steps. One example from teacher quotations about this theme is given below:

... Planning provides teacher with self-confidence and gets student to attend to the lesson. (Ö3)

Preparing and Practicing Lesson Plan
All teachers about this issue stated that they continue practicing the plan by using the frame plan and adviser book, but when they think it is necessary they make amendments on the plan. Very few stated that they lay the groundwork for lesson plan. One teacher talked about his point of view in this topic in that way:

...I usually stick to the adviser book, and I sometimes can make amendments on it towards practicing it. (Ö2)
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Benefiting from the Ready Plan
Under this theme, teachers stated that they also do not need to prepare a lesson plan and it is waste of time. They denoted that the flexibility to make changes on the existing frame plans and the adviser book is enough for them. One teacher’s opinion about ready plan is like that:

...I think teacher needn’t do it himself. Does the teacher have that background? A flexible frame program should definitely exist. (Ö6)

The Troubles Occurring in The Phase of Practicing and Evaluating Plan
Teachers listed the problems they see as obstacles: Negative approaches of education supervisors, negations stemming from parents and the environment, physical problems in the class, inadequacy of time and technological bases, equipment problem, teachers who do not believe its necessity, who are unqualified or inexperienced, and teachers whose motivation is low; clumsy school directors, students whose success level is low and problems related to lesson content. One of the teachers who stated his opinion about this theme said that:

... Students’ lack of foreknowledge and inadequacy of technology have been preventing me to practice the plan. Most because of their lack of previous knowledge... (Ö10)

Suggestions
For the practice to be much more productive, teachers suggested that there should be administrative mentality which will let for the changes, implementing of the equipment should be done, families should be educated, the plan should be related to real life, motivation of both teachers and students should be raised, teachers’ workloads should be decreased, the administrator should improve himself. A teacher denoted his views:

... The most important one is that parents do not care their child, that’s why families should be given education. Meanwhile the directors should increase the motivation at school. (Ö7)

4. Discussion and conclusion
As a result of the studies, it has been understood that all of the teachers believe plans benefit and necessity. They denoted that it leads them, provides self confidence, makes students attend to the lesson. Yet, very few teachers plan with the aim of readiness for the lesson; most of them find it enough to use the ready plans and the adviser book; they make changes on the plans when they think it is necessary; they view preparing a different lesson plan as waste of time. However, teachers must typically have a solid idea of where their courses are headed in order to teach them effectively. Plan is one of the best ways for teachers to look objectively at what needs to be taught over the course of a semester or year, then organize an effective way to get from beginning to end.

Apparently, most of the teachers use the ready plans without making any changes on it. Whereas, a plan prepared by someone else can only be a guide. Either; plans should be prepared by taking some things into account such as characteristics of teacher’s own class, his students’ readiness levels, physical conditions of the class and the school, condition of the equipment they have, the methods and techniques that the teacher will use; or changes should be applied on the ready plans. Yaşar (1998) indicates that planning and working with plans are essential to be successful. He says that when the teachers starting to work recently plan their lessons, they will feel much comfortable and secure and they will prompt their knowledge, skills and creativeness to make students grow better.

When the problems in the phase of plan’s being practiced and evaluated that teachers depict are examined, it has been found out that some of these problems are because of the supervisors and school directors. Supervisors and administrators are in charge of guaranteeing that a government’s educational
policies be implemented as dictated by their legal duties. Teachers, on the other hand, expect more efficient advisory services from supervisors and administrators. Therefore, significant differences may arise between the roles of supervisors and administrators, and the teachers’ expectations from supervisors and their perceptions about education. In fact, supervision should turn into guidance rather than to be an approach which is supervision based on control.

Some problems such as school’s or the class’ physical condition, curriculum or problems stemming from the students; or some outer factors such as parents and environment are the situations which can cause troubles for teachers in planning. Also, although most of the teachers believe the benefit of the plans, they did not hesitate to say that one of the most important obstacles in front of going to the lesson as prepared or with plans is themselves. Somehow, it is significant that they self-criticize on behalf of themselves or their colleagues.

One other problem stated by teachers is that the time is not enough. Yaşar (1998) propounds that this problem can be ended by using the plans prepared in advance. He says that working with plans helps the time determined for teaching period to be used more economically and wisely. He also says that it will help the classroom activities to be more regular and productive. Starting from the views which teachers present in terms of lesson plans’ being prepared and practiced to be more productive, we can say:

1- By determining a flexible administrative mentality, to be sure that teachers can get initiative in issues such as teachers’ plans’ being prepared and practiced
2- Providing the equipment at schools
3- Parents’ being informed about education and teaching at times
4- Attempting to raise teachers’ and students’ motivation
5- Diminishing the workloads of teachers
6- Directors’ improving themselves are essential to be done.

References


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