

Opinions of Prospective Primary School Teachers about Reflection of Micro Teaching Method on their Music Teaching Skills

By

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Abstract

This is a qualitative study conducted in order to evaluate the opinions of prospective primary school teachers about reflections of micro teaching method on music teaching skills. Study group of the research is composed of 50 prospective teachers taking music teaching course at the primary school teaching department of the Education Faculty at a university located in Mediterranean region of Turkey during spring semester of 2012-2013 academic year. Opinions of the prospective teachers have been collected by way of personal information form and an opinion form composed of seven open ended questions. According to findings derived from the study and opinions of the prospective primary school teachers, it is thought that micro teaching applications help music teaching skills of the candidate teachers develop. Under the light of study results, it is suggested that micro teaching activities be given room in the music teaching courses taken by primary school teachers during pre-service period and undergraduate education so that they can increase their experiences related to music teaching and get prepared for the profession.

Keywords: *Micro teaching method, music teaching, music education, prospective primary school teacher, music course*

1. Introduction

Today, teaching is accepted as a profession requiring specialization knowledge and skills. Teacher is the basic factor of the qualitative development. It is suggested that there is a positive and high correlation between quality of teacher quality of the human who is trained as a product of the education system (Çoban, 2011).

It may be said that pre-service training occupies a significant dimension in order for the teachers to be trained in a qualified and adequate manner. Ennis (1994) has stated that pre-service teacher training is extremely important in terms of introductory behaviors of profession, and within this process, teachers of the future who are flexible, have learnt to learn and gained the competence of teaching need to be raised. The basic point of the pre-service training is teaching programs of the faculties raising teachers (Çaycı, 2011:2).

In Turkey, process of raising primary school teachers is completed at the education faculties in 8 terms. Prospective primary school teachers are expected to gain general professional competencies as well as acquire skills and competencies developed specifically for the respective field. One of the specialization field competencies determined in Turkey by Ministry of National Education Teacher Raising and Training Directorate-General which became effective in 2008 is “arts and esthetics.” This field of competence covers possession by students of basic knowledge about fine arts (music, painting), and their ability of using the same in process of learning artistic activities (MEB, 2008: 10). One of the artistic courses taken by the prospective primary school teachers at the undergraduate education of education faculties while they are at primary school teacher raising process is music course. In the 3rd term of the undergraduate program, music courses are given as 1 hour of theory and 2 hours of practice while at the 4th term under the name Music Teaching, are given as 1 hour of theory and 2 hours of practice.

Although Primary School Music curriculum (2006) states that music courses can be given at the 1st -2nd and 3rd grades by the primary school teachers and, as from the 4th grade, by the music teachers, under the

circumstances of our nation, music courses are given by the primary school teachers in the first five years of the education due to reasons such as lack of music teachers.

“Primary school considered as the basic education is the most important education process directing the entire life of the child ranging which stretches as far as to profession selection in the future. Therefore, this increases responsibility of the teacher guiding the students at the 1st stage process of primary school” (Özmen, 2009:5). Foundations laid at the primary school may carry deep and long-lasting marks. Therefore, position of primary school teachers who make children meet music at school and give them the first music education is special and different.

The most important dimension of the music education at primary school is music teaching. This process is the process of thinking regulating and forming the musical learning. It is important for prospective primary school teachers to acquire musical knowledge and skills, skills of applying the theoretical knowledge they learn and to be raised as teachers qualified in these matters during the class teacher raising process.

In order for teacher to guide the activities that need to be conducted at the classroom, it must be ensured that, at pre-service education, theoretical knowledge needs to be combined with the practice knowledge and competence. In a qualitative study conducted by Altun and Şahin (2009: 29) with 20 primary school teachers, it has been concluded that theoretical knowledge of the primary school teachers related to program as well as their knowledge on practices stipulated by the program must be available in order for programs applied to be effective. Micro teaching method is one of the practices arranged which is an effective tool between theory and practice and is planned in order to strengthen the theoretical knowledge with the practices and enables candidate teachers experience teaching.

The aim of micro teaching is enabling prospective teachers transfer knowledge and skills acquired by them to practice, making them try various skills and gain experience, developing research skills, increasing their self-confidence decreasing their level of anxiety, and offering them a chance of self-evaluation (Galanouli, Murphy & Gardner, 2004 quoted by: Güven, 2011:206)

As a result of researches, (Akalin, 2005; Amobi 2005; I’Anson, Rodrigues & Wilson, 2003; Kpanja, 2001; Ostrosky, Mouzourou, Danner, and Zaghlawan 2013; Peker, 2009a; Subramaniam, 2006; Şen, 2009) it has been observed that micro teaching is beneficial in terms of solving problems experienced by prospective teacher while getting prepared for the class, presenting and covering the course, gives positive results in adaptation to profession, preparation of class plan and acquisition of class management skills, and is effective in decreasing anxiety of the candidate teachers, and understanding use of different methods according to covering of the course .

Contribution of micro teaching to development of students and the fact that no study on music teaching skills of prospective primary school teachers by way of micro teaching has been encountered is the starting point of the study. Objective of study is evaluating the opinions of prospective primary school teachers about reflections of micro teaching method on music teaching skills.

2. Methodology

This is a qualitative study conducted in order to evaluate opinions of prospective primary school teachers about reflections of micro teaching method on music teaching skills.

Data Collecting Tool

At this study, opinions of the prospective teachers have been collected by way of personal information form and an opinion form composed of seven open ended questions . “Open ended research questions enable the researcher to deal with the phenomenon he is willing to study with a flexible approach...

Important variables may be ignored with the close ended questions” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Participants freely answer the questions with the open ended questions. Advantage of these types of questions is ability to gain more and detailed information about the subject matter (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz and Demirel, 2009). Therefore, an opinion form comprised of open ended questions has been used as the data collection tool in this study.

Study Group

Study group of the research is composed 50 prospective teachers taking music teaching course at the primary school teaching department of the Education Faculty at a university located in Mediterranean region of Turkey during spring semester of 2012-2013 academic year.

Implementation Stages:

Study has been conducted within a period of 10 weeks during the spring semester in the academic year 2012-2013 by taking into consideration the following processes:

- By giving the prospective teachers subjects contained in the primary school music teaching program, they have been asked to draw up a 30-minute lesson plan about this subject.
- Prospective teachers shared the lesson plans and implementation activities prepared by them with the lecturer and they prepared the lesson plan based on the feedback they have received.
- While prospective teacher is doing his presentation, the fellow prospective teachers have taken the role of students in the classroom.
- Course narration by students has been recorded by camera.
- Prospective teacher who has watched the record of narration has done self-criticism.
- Evaluation of the lessons have been made together in the classroom, videos recorded have been watched and lecturer has provided suggestions and feedbacks.
- Prospective teachers covered the lesson they prepared for the second time in a classroom before their fellow candidate teachers. Presentations have been recorded by camera.
- Following the second presentation, records taken have been watched again and an evaluation has been made.
- Opinions of the prospective teachers regarding lessons have been taken with the form composed of three personal details and seven open ended questions as prepared by the researcher.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of quantitative data derived from the study, frequencies and percentages have been employed, and qualitative data derived from the answers given to open ended questions have been evaluated by using the content analysis. All of the answers given by the candidate teachers to the open ended questions have been read and answers and frequencies have been recorded as new answers have been encountered, all answers and frequencies have been established.

3. Findings

Demographic features of the prospective primary school teachers taking part in the study are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic features of prospective primary school teachers

		N	%
Gender	Female	31	62
	Male	19	38
	Total	50	100
Type of high school one graduated from	General High School	36	72
	Vocational High School	-	-
	Anatolian High School	14	28
	Other	-	-
	Total	50	100
Whether or not music training has been received prior to university	Those who have received	14	28
	Those who have not received	36	72
	Total	50	100

When table 1 is examined, it is seen that 62% of the study group is female and 38% is male. When distribution of prospective teachers according to high school type they graduated from is examined, it is observed that 72% of them are graduates of general high school, 28% of them are graduates of Anatolian High School. Students who have received music education prior to university comprise 28% of the study group and those who have not comprise 72% of the study group.

Table 2. Difficulties encountered by the prospective primary school teachers while they are preparing for micro teaching application in the music teaching

	f
Limited period of time	25
Reducing the subject to be covered to level of student	20
Access to resources	20
Difficulties as to how subject is to be transferred	15
Material preparation and assuring material diversity	15
Difficulties caused by lack of experience	10

When table 2 is examined, prospective primary school teachers have listed the difficulties encountered while preparing for micro teaching in music teaching as limited time (f=25), reducing the subject to be covered to level of student (f=20), access to resources (f=20), difficulties as to how the subject is transferred (f=15), material preparation and assuring diversity of materials (f=15) and difficulties caused by lack of experience (f=10).

Table 3. Opinions of the prospective teachers about teaching music prior to presentation

	f
I was anxious about teaching music	25
I thought teaching music is extremely difficult	15
I was uneasiness and anxious since it was a field I did not think I was good at	10
Teaching music requires knowledge, skills and experience. I was quite worried about handling this task	10
I thought it is so easy	5

When table 3 is examined, it is observed that, prior to presentation, the prospective primary school are worried about teaching music (f=25), they think that teaching music is extremely difficult (f=15), they are uneasiness and anxious since this is not a field they feel they are competent at (f=10), since teaching music requires knowledge, skills and experience, they are worried about handling this task (f=10). Number of students who think teaching music is easy is 5.

Table 4. Opinions of the prospective teachers about teaching music after presentation

	f
My self-confidence increased.	20
My perspective upon music has changed	15
I figured out that preliminary knowledge about a subject is extremely important and necessary.	15
I could not believe in myself, I got rid of all prejudices	12
Difficult but it can be done.	10
We are required to be knowledgeable about music in order to teach it.	10
It would be more beneficial if branch teachers taught music.	3
It was more difficult than teaching theoretical lessons.	2

As can be seen in table 4; prospective primary school teachers , after presentation, have stated that they are more self-confident (f=20), their perspective about music has changed (f=15), preliminary knowledge about a subject matter is extremely important and necessary (f=15), they could not believe in themselves and they got rid of their prejudices (f=12), music teaching is difficult yet can be done (f=10), and they need to be knowledgeable about music teaching (f=10) . Number of students pointing out that music courses should be given by the branch teachers is 3, and number of students thinking that it is more difficult than teaching theoretical lessons is 2.

Table 5. Opinions of prospective teachers after they watch video records

	f
I have had the chance of determining my deficiencies and evaluating myself objectively	32
I was so excited	18
I had the chance of correcting my mistakes	13
I realized that I need to improve myself	12
I should pay more attention my gestures, mimics and words I use.	10
I found myself incompetent	8
I could have performed better	7

When table 5 is examined, it is observed that most of the candidate teachers (f=32), after watching the video records, think that they have had the chance of determining their deficiencies and objectively evaluating themselves. The other thoughts of the candidate teachers are as follows: they look extremely excited (f=18), they had the chance of correcting their mistakes (f=13), they have realized that they are in need of self-improvement (f=12), they have to pay more attention to gestures, mimics and words they use (f=10), and they have found themselves incompetent (f=8). Number of students saying that I could have performed better is 7.

Table 6. Positive and negative aspects of micro teaching according to prospective teachers

	f	
Positive aspects	35	Gaining experience
	30	Preparation for the profession
	15	Reviewing mistakes and preventing repetition of the same
	15	Observing the difficulties that can be encountered in teaching life
	15	Improvement of narration skills
	10	It helps overcome one's excitement
	5	It enables the one to learn while teaching
Negative aspects	30	No negative aspect
	15	Limited period of time
	5	Excitement
	5	Anxiety experienced in front of the camera

As can be seen in table 6, prospective teachers have predominantly described the positive aspects of micro teaching method as gaining experience (f=35) and preparing the one for profession (f=30). The other aspects of micro teaching method found positive by the prospective teachers include improvement in narration skills (f=15), prevention of repetition of mistakes (f=15), helping them see difficulties they may encounter in teaching career in advance (f=15), helping them overcome their excitement (f=10) and enabling them to learn while teaching (f=5).

Most of the prospective primary school teachers (f=30) have answered the question as to negative aspects of micro teaching method as there are no negative aspects, while the other prospective teachers have talked about limited period of time (f=15), excitement and anxiety experienced in front of the camera (f=5).

Table 7. Prospective teachers opinions on contribution of watching presentations of other candidate teachers on teaching process

	f
We are able to see mistakes of one another and experience them	20
Studies we conduct and materials used act as examples	15
We are learning different subjects and techniques by monitoring one another	15

As can be seen in the table 7, prospective teachers have stated that watching presentations of the other candidate teachers helped them see mistakes of one another and gain experience (f=20), studies conducted and materials used are exemplary (f=15), watching one another helped them learn different subjects and techniques (f=15) .

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Objective of study is evaluating the opinions of candidate class teachers about reflections of micro teaching method on music teaching skills. The following results have been achieved as a result of evaluating the data in the study.

Prospective primary school teachers have listed the difficulties encountered while preparing for micro teaching in music teaching as limited time (f=25), reducing the subject to be covered to level of student (f=20), access to resources (f=20), difficulties as to how the subject is described (f=15), material preparation and assuring diversity of materials (f=15) and difficulties caused by lack of experience (f=10).

Prior to presentation, prospective primary school teachers stated that they are worried about teaching music (f=25), they think that teaching music is extremely difficult (f=15), they are uneasiness and anxious since this is not a field they feel they are competent at (f=10), since teaching music requires knowledge, skills and experience, they are worried about handling this task (f=10). Number of students thinking that teaching music is easy is 5. Anxiety and worries experienced by the prospective teachers prior to presentation are similar to results of the other studies (Bell, 2007; Higgings & Nichol, 2003).

Prospective primary school teachers, after presentation, have stated that they are more self-confident (f=20), their perspective about music has changed (f=15), preliminary knowledge about a subject matter is extremely important and necessary (f=15), they could not believe in themselves and they got rid of their prejudices (f=12), music teaching is difficult yet can be done (f=10), and they need to be knowledgeable about music teaching (f=10). Number of students pointing out that music classes should be given by the branch teachers is 3, and number of students thinking that it is more difficult than teaching theoretical lessons is 2. The result that self-confidence and teaching skills of prospective teachers have increased is similar to the study conducted by Peker (2009a), while result that it has reduced teaching worries is similar to that of the study conducted by Peker, (2009b) and Doğan-Dunlap et al. (2007).

Most of the prospective teachers (f=32), after watching the video records, think that they have had the chance of determining their deficiencies and objectively evaluating themselves. The other thoughts of the prospective teachers are as follows: they look extremely excited (f=18), they had the chance of correcting their mistakes (f=13), they have realized that they are in need of self-improvement (f=12), they have to

pay more attention to gestures, mimics and words they use (f=10), and they have found themselves incompetent (f=8). Number of students saying that I could have performed better is 7.

It is stated that video is an effective tool used in training teachers (Kpanja, 2001), supports the learning (Cunningham & Benedetto, 2002) use of video records in micro teaching applications helps prospective teachers see their strengths and weaknesses and conduct a self-evaluation (Tok, 2007; Peker, 2009a; Yamamoto and Hicks, 2008) . In this sense opinions that expressed by researchers, seems to be in support of the research results. Prospective teachers have predominantly described the positive aspects of micro teaching method as gaining experience (f=35) and preparing the one for profession (f=30). The other aspects of micro teaching method found positive by the prospective teachers include improvement in narration skills (f=15), prevention of repetition of mistakes (f=15), helping them see difficulties they may encounter in teaching career in advance (f=15), helping them overcome their excitement (f=10) and enabling them to learn while teaching (f=5) .

Results of the other studies that find micro teaching beneficial at pre-service education (Amobi, 2005; Benton-Kupper, 2001; Butler, 2001; Fernández, 2005; Fernández & Robinson, 2006; Higgins & Nicholl, 2003, Kuran, 2009, Ostrosky, Mouzourou, Danner, and Zaghlawan 2013, Ramalingam, 2004; Şen, 2009; Wilson & I'Anson, 2006) are parallel with results of the study.

Most of the prospective primary school teachers (f=30) have answered the question as to negative aspects of micro teaching method as there are no negative aspects, while the other candidate teachers have talked about limited period of time (f=15), excitement and anxiety experienced in front of the camera (f=5) .

Prospective teachers have stated that watching presentations of the other prospective teachers helped them see mistakes of one another and gain experience (f=20), studies conducted and materials used are exemplary (f=15), watching one another helped them learn different subjects and techniques (f=15). These results achieved resemble to the studies conducted by İsmail (2011) and Donnelly & Fitzmaurice (2011).

İsmail's investigation results indicates that observing other students teaching was considered a valuable experience for trainee teachers to learn from each other .

Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, (2011) states that *“through analysis and discussion of others teaching styles, the participants were able to attain a level of self-awareness and observing others in the microteaching group enabled participants to refine their ability to define and distinguish characteristics that promote a quality student learning experience”* .

According to findings derived from the study and opinions of the prospective primary school teachers, it is thought that micro teaching applications help music teaching skills of the candidate teachers develop. Under the light of study results, it is suggested that micro teaching activities be given room in the music teaching courses taken by class teachers during pre-service period and undergraduate education so that they can increase their experiences related to music teaching and get prepared for the profession.

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