

The opinions of primary school teachers' candidates towards material preparation and usage

Zeynep Genc*, Division of Curriculum and Instruction, Near East University, Nicosia, North Cyprus, Mersin 10 Turkey.

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Abstract

Instruction materials help students to acquire more memorable information. Instruction materials have an important effect on providing more permanent and simple way of learning in every step of education. Instruction materials are the most frequently used by primary school teachers. Primary school teachers should support their lectures with instruction materials in order to provide permanent learning. The Teaching Technologies and Material Designing (TTMD) course which is one of the compulsory courses that students must take aims to acquire students the information and skills related with the preparation and use of materials. Evaluation of TTMD course is important in terms of the effectiveness of the course which provides the opportunity of motivating the students to learn by attracting their attention, keeping their attentions alive, making abstract concepts more concrete, facilitating the acquisition of knowledge in an organized way in the process of learning and teaching. In this context, it was aimed to determine the opinions of students in the department of primary school teaching about preparation and use of materials through teaching practice which is done within TTMD course in this study. This study is a descriptive study based on qualitative data. The sample of this research included 37 students from the department of primary school teaching who took TTMD course in the second semester in 2014-2015 academic year at Ataturk Education Faculty of Near East University or students who took this course in previous academic years. The data of this research were collected with structured interview form. According to the results, it was revealed that primary school teachers' candidates attach importance to prepare and use materials based on their answers about the use and preparation of materials in instruction. When the opinions of primary school teachers candidates about the criteria that they give value in preparing and using materials, it was figured out that they emphasize the criteria such as suitability for student level, suitability for aim, simplicity and easy comprehensibility. Furthermore, the results indicated that primary school teachers' candidates mostly experience difficulty in finding suitable materials and tools for the aim. It was also revealed that the majority of primary school teachers' candidates stated that they will use materials and a few of them indicated that they will not use materials since they find materials as

* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: **Zeynep Genc**, Division of Curriculum and Instruction, Near East University, Nicosia, North Cyprus, Mersin 10 Turkey. *E-mail address:* zeynep.genc.vdu@gmail.com / Tel.: +90 392 223 6464

insufficient based on their answers about the question asking if they will use the materials which they prepared in TTMD course when they begin teaching profession.

Keywords: primary school, primary teaching candidates, teaching technologies and material designing (TTMD) course, material design, instruction materials

1. Introduction

Teaching materials have important place in effective learning and teaching because teaching materials provide students more permanent learning, motivate learning by drawing their attention, objectify abstract concepts, simplify unclear concepts (Demirel, Seferoglu and Yagci, 2004; Yanpar, Sahin and Yildirim, 1999). According to Akkoyunlu (2002) teaching materials stimulate students and trigger them to study by providing evaluation and access to information. Teaching materials both help the application of teaching programmes, keep students away from boredom by making lesson entertaining, shorten learning period and increase the efficiency of lesson (Kazu and Yesilyurt, 2008). Learning how to prepare and use teaching materials that provide taking out properties such as sharing information during education, accessing information, objectifying abstract demonstrations, communication within class, motivation and creativity (Selvi, 2012), by teachers/teacher candidates in teacher training programmes is an important efficiency. That is why a lecture that gains this efficiency in a teacher training programme seems to be important. In Turkey a Teaching Technologies and Material Designing (TTMD) lecture that serves this aim, has taken place in teacher training programmes as one of profession knowledge lectures since 2007. With this lecture it is aimed to gain sufficiency of preparing material and make them ready and willing to use material when they become teacher. Teacher candidates gain sufficiency of presenting their knowledge more effective, attractive and efficiency after taking TTMD lesson (Gunduz & Odabasi, 2004). In this lecture, besides recognising teaching materials that can be used in education teacher candidates also learn how to prepare material for specific aim by using technology and how to evaluate present teaching materials. In this scope, materials towards specific aims regarding lecture fields of teacher candidates, are designed and were provided to use these materials for education within class (YOK, 2007; Yelken, 2009).

The definition of "Teaching Technologies and Material Designing" lecture was determined like this (YOK, 2007):

The concepts regarding teaching technology, properties of various teaching technologies, the place and usage of teaching technologies in education, identifying technological needs of school or class, making and conducting suitable technology planning, developing two and three dimensional materials via technology, developing teaching materials (worksheets, organizing activities, overhead transparency, slights, visual media (VCD, DVD) equipments, computer based equipments, examining educational softwares, evaluating teaching materials in various qualities, internet and distance education, visual design principals, researches regarding the activity status of materials, the usage of teaching technologies in Turkey and in the world.

In literature scanning it is possible to say that Primary school teachers have serious deficiencies in benefitting from teaching technology, material development and designing (Yilmaz, 2007; Isman, 2002; Bektas, Nalcaci, & Ercoskun, 2009; Park, 2014; Dieker, Kennedy, Smith, Vasquez, Rock, & Thomas, 2014). That is why "Teaching Technologies and Material Developing" lecture educating in education faculties should be given necessary importance. The attitudes and opinions of Primary school teachers candidates towards this lesson is rather important.

2. The Aim of Research

In this research it was aimed to identify the opinions of Primary school teachers candidates towards preparing and using material in accordance with committed teaching application in the

scope of Teaching Technologies and Material Designing lecture. In the direction of this aim the answers of these questions were searched:

1. From which aspects do you find important to prepare and use material for education?
2. Which criteria do you take into consideration during preparation of materials?
3. Which problems do you encounter during preparation of materials?
4. Do you find materials that you prepared usable when you become a teacher?

3. Method

3.1. Research Model

This study aiming to obtain opinions of primary school teachers' candidates regarding preparing and using material, is a descriptive study that bases on qualitative datas.

3.2. Study Group

37 students of primary teaching department of Near East University Ataturk Education Faculty that have previously taken and are taking this lecture in the second term of 2014-2015 academic year, form the study group of this study.

Table 1. Properties regarding participants of study

| Variable | Level | N |
|----------|-------------|----|
| Gender | Female | 22 |
| | MALE | 15 |
| | TOTAL | 37 |
| Age | 17-20 | 2 |
| | 21-22 | 15 |
| | 23 And Over | 20 |
| | TOTAL | 37 |

3.3. Data Collection Tool and Collecting of Datas

The interview form was prepared by the researcher with the opinions of specialists. Data collection tool was formed by open ended questions that indicate the opinions of Primary school teachers candidates regarding "the importance of preparing and using material in education", "criteria that are considered in preparing of materials", "problems they encounter in preparing of materials", "usability of materials in education" and "willingness of preparing and using materials in teaching". Content analysis for the datas that were obtained from interview forms of primary teaching students in the scope of TTMD lecture in the second term of 2014-2015 academic year, were done and they were tabulated and explained with frequency values.

4. Findings

4.1. The opinions of primary teaching candidates regarding importance of preparing and using materials in education

The findings that were obtained from the opinions of primary teaching candidates regarding importance of preparing and using materials in education were given in Table 2.

Table 2. The opinions of primary teaching candidates regarding importance of preparing and using materials in education

| Opinions | F |
|-------------------------|----|
| Permanence in Learning | 17 |
| Consolidation | 6 |
| Easy Learning | 6 |
| Participation to Lesson | 4 |
| Motivate | 3 |
| Attracting Attention | 1 |

As it is seen in Table 2, the students stated their opinions regarding importance of preparing and using materials in education mostly as providing permanency in learning. One of the participant students expressed the importance of preparing and using materials in terms of attracting attention of students.

The opinions of some students towards these statements are as follows;

S.O.1: "Designing materials for students adds richness to subject in terms of visuality. It provides permanency in learning of students. When teaching materials are prepared as addressing to more than one sense organs, the permanency of learning will increase and the learned subjects are not easily forgotten".

S.O.2: ".....when we show students materials visually and audially learning becomes easy. That is why if we prepare materials that address many sense organs we provide them to learn easily."

S.O.3: "With the materials taken to lesson, the attention of students are attracted to the lesson. If the attraction of students are attracted, learning is provided"

S.O.4: "We can encourage students to participate lessons cooperatively by preparing materials in class. We can turn students from passive to active. We may not provide sufficient participation with direct narration however we can provide participation of students by supporting subjects with materials".

4.2. *Criteria that Primary school teachers candidates consider in preparation and using of materials*

The findings that were obtained from the opinions of primary teaching candidates regarding criteria that they consider in preparation and using of materials were given in Table 3.

Table 3. Criteria that Primary school teachers candidates consider in preparation and using of materials

| Opinions | F |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Suitability to the level of student | 18 |
| Suitability to the aim | 7 |
| Simplicity and understandability | 5 |
| Noticeability | 3 |
| Durability | 3 |
| Suitability in terms of finance | 1 |

As it is seen in Table 3, the students stated their opinions regarding importance of preparing and using materials in education mostly as suitability to the level of students. One of the participant students expressed the importance of preparing and using materials in terms of suitability of finance.

The opinions of some students towards these statements are as follows;

S.O.1: "I choose materials according to the ages, classes and personal characteristics of individuals. If I teach first grades, I pay attention to prepare materials more colourful and entertaining. May be I prepare educational materials by using cartoon characters. I choose materials for the age, class and properties of students. Shortly I ask the question if this material is suitable for a student as I am preparing material because if the material I prepare for the first and fourth grade is same, there will be problem in learning".

S.O.2: "In order to provide an efficient learning, the material that will be taken to class should attract the attention of student. If we attract the attention of students, learning will be more effective. That is why while preparing material, I pay attention that the materials have a property of attracting the attention of students".

S.O.3: "The first rule of us as teachers is, students are our target and aim. There should be an aim. What do we teach? Later when we think about how we teach, we prepare materials suitable for our aim and provide their learning more efficient. The first point I pay attention while preparing material is, suitability for my aim".

4.3. The problems that Primary school teachers candidates encounter during preparation of materials

The findings that were obtained from the opinions of primary teaching candidates regarding problems that they encounter during preparation of materials, were given in Table 4.

Table 4. The problems that Primary school teachers candidates encounter during preparation of materials

| Opinions | F |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Difficulty in finding equipments | 14 |
| Financially costly | 10 |
| Taking too much time | 8 |
| Disagreement within group | 5 |

As it is seen in Table 4, the students stated their opinions regarding importance of preparing and using materials in education mostly as difficulty in finding equipments. The other opinion that students express is having difficulty since they are financially costly. Some opinions of students regarding these statements are as follows:

S.O.1:" designing a lot of materials come to by mind however I cannot find equipments for the materials I want to design both for my presentations and homework. Since they are expensive I cannot buy".

S.O.2: "There are many rules in preparing material such as choosing the right colour, suitability to the subject and aim, construction stage ... Preparing material needs a long time. I can have problems in finishing them".

S.O.3: "I think I do material preparation in the most suitable way. But preparing material is a long term and there occurs some difficulties with friends in the group in that period. The compromise that is necessary in the Project should be given by all group members and all group members can take high points by the help of this person".

4.4. The condition of using materials that Primary school teachers candidates prepared when they become a teacher

The findings regarding the condition of using materials that Primary school teachers candidates prepared when they become a teacher, were given in Table 5.

Table 5. The condition of using materials that Primary school teachers candidates prepared when they become a teacher

| Opinions | F |
|---|----|
| YES | 30 |
| Making a great effort | 8 |
| Being updated-developed | 6 |
| Durability of material | 4 |
| Having educative and informative property | 7 |
| Being suitable to the level of student | 5 |
| NO | 7 |
| Insufficient for education | 4 |
| Being indurable | 3 |

As it is seen in Table 5 in the opinions of students regarding the usage of materials that they prepared during their education, 30 students gave the answer I use those materials and 7 of them gave the answer I do not use those materials. The students that gave the answer "Yes" expressed that they use them because they made a great effort and the students that gave the answer "No" expressed that the materials are insufficient for education. Some opinions of students regarding these expressions are as follows:

S.O.1: "I find the materials that we prepared usable because we work with those materials and we get feedback from our teachers, we change and elaborate on them. We work at for materials for a period. I think that the materials we prepared will be useful that is why I keep them".

S.O.2:"No because I prepare the material in this period just for passing. When I become teacher I never use this material because it will be insufficient and very simple for the education I will give".

S.O.3: "Absolutely no. Now I am in the 3rd grade and I have one more year. Although how durable we prepare materials, I have at least one year to become a teacher and I think there will not any materials left. Of course if I am assigned from KPSS, I will have one year. This period will be longer".

5. Conclusion

From the findings obtained from research, there reached a conclusion that Primary school teachers candidates care about material preparation and usage in terms of providing permanency in learning, reinforcing learning, making learning easy, increasing the participation of students, motivating students, attracting the attention of students.

Primary school teachers candidates stated that the most important criterions they care about in preparing and using materials are suitability to level of students, suitability to the aim, simplicity and understandability. When the literature is examined, it is stated that the most important criterions in choosing of preparing and using material is suitability to the aims in education programmes and suitability to the level of students.

Primary school teachers candidates stated that they have problems in finding equipment's in preparing materials such as they are financially costly, they take too much time and conflicts

within group. Insufficient relation with their teachers can be shown as the reason for finding suitable equipment and financial problems. They also stated conflict within group as another problem they encounter during material preparation. The reason of this problem can be explained as they did not totally understand skill of team working, insufficient in cooperative learning, each group member did not take personal responsibilities into consideration.

Primary school teachers candidates stated that they can use the materials they have prepared when they become teacher since they made great effort, the materials can be developed, they are durable, educative, informative and suitable to the level of students. Based on these findings, it can be said that Primary school teachers candidates prepared their materials suitable to the material preparation principals. The minority of Primary school teachers candidates stated that they cannot use the materials they prepared since they are insufficient for education and they are indurable. It can be said that Primary school teachers candidates having this opinion did not take "durability" and "suitability for the level of students" criterions although they have taken gaining from education programs in TTMD lesson during material preparation.

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