

A TEACHING PRACTICE THROUGH THE EYES OF A TEACHER CANDIDATE

Gülhan Can¹

Bilkent University

M. Sencer Corlu

Bilkent University

Abstract

In this paper I expressed my observations of a teacher candidate, Ms. Vildan. The lessons that I observed were a 5th and a 10th grade classes. I noted the classroom management skills and some teaching techniques of the teacher. I shared the potential problems in a class, that Ms. Vildan had already experienced.

Key Words: class control in the first teaching practice, being a substitute teacher, potential problems in a class.

¹Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to gulhan.can@bilkent.edu.tr

Introduction

The purpose of this article was to express my observations in 10th grade and 5th grade classes. Differently, this time I observed one of my friends, Ms.Vildan. She is a teacher candidate like me. In both these classes, I expressed Ms. Vildan's classroom management skills and also teaching techniques.

Observing a Teaching Practice of a Teacher Candidate

In the first lesson that I observed, Ms.Vildan faced with an unexpected situation in a 10th grade class. When Ms. Vildan came into the classroom some of the students were laughing among themselves. Ms. Vildan had eye contact with these students and made her voice's volume up to make understand students that the lesson began. By the way, Ms. Vildan distributed some pieces of paper to students to write on their names and introduced herself. While she was telling the course flow, Ms. Vildan walked towards the students who were still laughing silently. I think by doing these, she used classroom management steps respectively.

Another unexpected situation was that Ms. Vildan had a technology problem. She had prepared a video for the engagement part of the lesson but the video did not open unfortunately. Again Ms. Vildan coped with this situation very well. She explained that there had been occurred a problem about a video, but instead she could tell the concept of the video in words. Then she added "If we have time, we can try it again at the end of the lesson and watch it". Ms. Vildan did not panic the face of problems, she looked very confident with her voice and presence.

Although Ms. Vildan overcame some unexpected situations at the beginning of the lesson, some of the students went on speaking and laughing between themselves. So, this time, Ms. Vildan warned them verbally and towards the middle of the lesson Ms. Vildan managed to gain their attention, too. Those students participated into the class, asked some meaningful questions about quadratics and even did the exercises and answered the teacher's questions.

The teacher, Ms. Vildan, used some teaching techniques. At first, to evaluate the prior background knowledge of the students, Ms. Vildan asked a question. The question were asking about constructing two swimming pools with given measurements. Ms. Vildan used problem solving steps; first she made students understand the question by her leading questions. As it is usually seen in mathematics classes, Ms. Vildan used questioning-answering parts very often. Then, Ms. Vildan wanted them to make a plan to solve the question, she waited for a while and asked for the plans. After taking responses, the teacher commented on them and the class decided on a plan to be able to solve the question. When each student were trying to implement the plan on their notebooks, Ms. Vildan walked between desks and monitored the students. After that, one of the students came to the board and solved the question. At the last step of the solution, students faced with a quadratic. Then Ms. Vildan said “Now, today we will learn about how we solve such kinds of equations. They are quadratics”.

At the end of the class, the students were able to define quadratics and for a given quadratic they decided the coefficients of it. As I said before, at the end of the lesson all students had already done all the exercises. Ms. Vildan conducted such a first class very well.

In the second lesson that I observed, I appreciated the teacher’s way to gain attention of the students. It was a 5th grade class with full of curious and energetic students. The topic was *time measurement problems* and it was a bit problematic topic for 5th graders. However, Ms. Vildan gained attention of the students with a small story that tells such as the teacher had some relations in different countries and there was a problem due to the time difference between these countries! The students wondered the topic and all of them participated into the class.

In such a grade, students had some habits about the classroom rules and routines. For example raising hands before saying something is a rule and when somebody forgot it, another one warned him and reminded the rule. It was also useful for the substitute teacher. On the other

hand, if somebody could not see the board, he/she could leave his/her seat and sat on the floor in the front of the board. If a substitute teacher does not know about the routine, it might become a problem for classroom management.

Additionally in this grade the instructions must be short and clear. It is also important for teaching and classroom management. If students do not understand the activity/exercise steps, it might become a chaotic environment quickly.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to observe teaching practices of a teacher candidate and learn from her. I learned this is very important to be prepared for unexpected situations. In such situations, I must not panic, stay calm and cope with the problem confidently. Additionally classroom management skills are very essential to have a good teaching environment, especially for new teachers.

"A Bilkent student does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do. On my honor, as a Bilkent student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work."

Gülhan Can
