

TOWARDS THE FIRST TEACHING PRACTICE

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Abstract

In this paper I expressed my latest observations in OBO. It was a general view to classroom environment, teaching techniques, and classroom management skills. Additionally I tried to observe all classes in the eyes of a student who was in that grade. This point of view made me to realize some important issues about where students had difficulties and why. I noted some advices to myself during these classes and I explained some main points of them in this article.

Key Words: towards the first teaching practice, entertaining and informative class, importance of classroom management.

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Introduction

The purpose of this article was to introduce the lessons that I observed in OBO. The first two classes were 10th grade classes in OBL, the other ones were 5th, 6th and 7th grade classes in OBI. I paid attention on the layout of the classrooms, number of students, names of students, the topics and students' understanding level, also classroom management skills and teaching techniques of the teachers during those classes. I thought about what would be necessary, useful and important for my following week's teaching practice. I shared my observations and ideas in this paper.

The First Steps into Classrooms as an Experienced Student but a Novice Teacher

The first lesson that I observed was a 10th grade class and the topic was *lines in 2-D*. Students learned to write down an equation of a line by using its *direction* and any *fixed point* on the line in this class. The teacher used the board to draw a line and a fixed point and after reminding the last class, he wrote the formulas on the board. Then the teacher wanted students to apply the exercise on their own. Also the teacher explained the *vector equation*, *Cartesian equation*, and *parametric equations* of a line. Since the students would have an exam on the following day, the teacher reminded them the main parts of the last classes. Students usually asked about their confusion on some concepts and notations. For example one of them asked that what the meaning of this notation, $\|v\|$ was and how it was calculated. The teacher explained their questions by making some relations with the previous topics. At the end of this class, I made some notes to myself about using much more concrete examples in this class since I observed students had some difficulties to understand the concepts and needed much more life related examples to make sense of the topic.

The second lesson was again a 10th grade class and the topic was *identities*. The teacher emphasized a particular type of question in this class such as given $x + 1/x = 5$, what is the result

of $x^2 + 1/x^2$? The teacher explained to me after the lesson that this class was academically one of the weak classes among the 10th grades in the school, so they needed much more exercises than the others. I observed that the teacher asked questions from easier to harder ones during the class. The teacher used praise and encouragement lots of times especially to take some weaker students into the class. One other point was the teacher always used students' names. Additionally the teacher asked a prize question to the class. It was more challenging than the others. While asking this question, the teacher also took a clever student into account, I observed. The teacher wanted him not to be bored since the questions were very easy for him. But even if the teacher considered this, he asked the question to the whole class, waited for a while and gave time to students to think on it, after a while he gave some clues and monitored the students when they were trying to solve the question. After that, he took the responses, wrote them on the board and solved the question on the board by explaining the steps. In my opinion, it could be seen that the teacher tried to treat in a balanced way during the class.

The other classes that I observed were 5th, 6th and 7th grade classes. It was studied *coordinate systems* in the 7th grade class, *commutative, associative, and distributive properties* in the 6th grade class, and *tree diagram* in the 5th grade class. I noted some points in these classes. For example I paid attention to classroom environments; especially I observed students' works on boards and resources that they used. I was really impressed that students used Polya's problem solving steps in their works on board in 5th grade, they had the scheme for it. Students read some books such as *Kraliçeyi Kurtarmak*, *Dikkat Dikkat Matematik* and they were using mathematics in some activities during the stories in these books. Also the teachers gave more concrete examples in these grades to make sense of the topics.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to express my latest observations while I was getting closer to my teaching practice experiment step by step. So, these observations covered my previous experiences and became a general view before my teaching practice. I learned this it should be paid attention on classroom management skills for each grade, even for each class since each class had different dynamics in it. An effective engagement part at the beginning of the lesson is one of the ways to achieve class control, I think. A good engagement might help me to keep students on the tasks/activities by the end of the class. Of course it would be important to prepare a detailed lesson plan in advance, with questions that I would ask, activities and tasks. Also effective transitions should help me to conduct the main parts of the class smoothly. Additionally I tried to learn about students' seatings and names during these classes. So, I should try to use students' names during my classes. Last of all, I will try to make these classes entertaining and informative for both students and myself.

"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."

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