

## Teaching Practice of a Social Studies Practicum Student Who is Blind: a Case Study

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### Abstract

*Problem Statement:* It is emphasized in the Council of Europe's action plan for people with disabilities (PD) that it is important to solve the employment problem to enable PD to integrate into society and improve the quality of their lives. In order to achieve this, educational opportunities along with employment for PD at places in which physical conditions are adjusted should be provided. Disability prevents PD from joining educational life which also increases the burden of their disability. Education will help them integrate with the society they live in and therefore prevent isolation. However, some people in Turkey have doubts about the professional competencies of PD.

*Purpose of Study:* In this study, the social studies teaching practice conducted by a practicum student who is blind is described.

*Methods:* The holistic single case design, which is one of the qualitative research techniques, was used through interviews and observations in this study. The university supervisor, mentor teacher, sighted practicum students and students who continually interact with the main participant who is a blind practicum student (BPS) make up the other participants. In analyzing the student interviews, content analysis was carried out.

*Findings and Results:* The findings of the study are as follows: first Impressions of the BPS, the BPS beginning the lesson, classroom management, teaching the lesson, evaluation, ending the lesson, his differences from other practicum students, the problems that occur in the social studies lessons of the BPS, suggestions for the BPS's lessons.

*Conclusions and Recommendations:* The results suggest that all school stakeholders should be educated and prepared for the education process with people who are blind or visually impaired (BVI). This practice conducted by the BPS revealed the importance of education, social and physical conditions.

*Keywords:* Social studies lessons, teaching practice, people who are blind, practicum student who is blind

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In the past, in some religions, it was believed that blindness was punishment for a sin. Although this belief has changed today, many people who are sighted still have misconceptions about people who are BVI. It is this question "How will those misconceptions regarding the BVI people change?" that needs to be answered concerning these prejudices, which are the biggest obstacles they face (Hardman, Drew & Egan, 2008). To eradicate prejudices, it is necessary for PD to take on social responsibilities. The Council of Europe's action plan on PD (2010) highlights that it is important to provide PD with occupations to enable them to take active roles in their society and improve the quality of their lives. It is clear that educational opportunities should be expanded to solve the problem because education is the most basic factor improving a person's level of health, work, income, and involvement in a social life. Disability prevents PD from joining the educational life, which also increases the burden of their disability (Cavkaytar, 2005).

While the PD comprise approximately 10% of the world's population (*World Health Organization*, 2010), in Turkey it is estimated as 12.29%. Of all the disabled, 0.60% are visually handicapped. (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2010). Only 2.42% of them have access to the opportunities of higher education. The rate of unemployment among PD is 78.29% (Administration for Disabled People, 2006). In the Turkish Disability Act 2005, education and employment of PD are highlighted with great importance. The act specifies that PD must constitute at least 3% of the employees working at government agencies and businesses with 50 employees. Those places have to make work environments suitable for PD and provide them with assistive technologies (Turkish Republic Prime Ministry, 2010).

Discussions about the employment and studies of BVI teachers occupied Turkey's agenda for a long time. In recent years, it has been understood from the discussions in Turkey that educators and parents are doubtful about the quality of education that is being and will be provided by the teachers who are BVI. One of the quality indicators of education is teaching competencies. Mastership level of teaching competency of practicum students defines the productivity of teaching practices (Yeşil, 2009). However, BVI teachers need different environments to fulfill their teaching competencies than sighted teachers because the program, school culture, administration, teachers, assistant staff, supportive services and physical structure in the teaching environment of PD are very important (Argyropoulos & Stamouli, 2006; Bardin & Lewis, 2008; Sharma, Moore, Furlonger, King, Kaye & Constantinou, 2010). BVI people need specially organized schools. In Turkey, there are three different applications of special education and they are as follows: (1) formal education in special education schools, (2) special education in inclusive classrooms and schools (3) support services such as physical and speech therapy, occupational therapy in private special education and rehabilitation centers. These services are provided in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education, general directorate of special education and guidance, city organizations, and special education and guidance centers (Cavkaytar, 2006).

What really matters is to create appropriate educational environments for BVI people in schools. In this context, materials and facilities such as, libraries, accessible

computers, media resources, tactile teaching devices, braille and auditory tools, and revolving doors positively affect the education of BVI people. It is very important to develop sound-based communication skills in these environments where classroom teachers, assistant teachers, families and peers take part (Koenig & Friend, 2006).

In Turkey, higher education exams for PD are conducted through a special method that considers their type of disability and preferences as well as their health reports and needs. PD take exams in specific classrooms and are given assistants (Student Selection and Placement Center, 2010). BVI undergraduate students, like those who are sighted, take theoretical courses in the first two years at university and practice-focused courses in the following years.

The literature review suggests that most studies have been conducted on BVI students, but almost none of them concerned BVI practicum students. However, education faculties sometimes admit BVI students, and those faculties and practicum schools are not necessarily prepared for the BVI practicum students. Therefore, this study aims at contributing to the teaching practices of BVI students, and it is significant in terms of emphasizing the importance of the issue. Besides this, the doubtful attitudes toward the job efficiency of BVI students manifest the necessity of this study.

The main purpose of this study was to describe the social studies teaching practices conducted by a senior BPS in a social studies teaching programme. The study posed the following questions:

1. What are the first impressions of the participants about the BPS?
2. How does the BPS begin his lesson?
3. How does the BPS manage the class?
4. How does the BPS teach a lesson?
5. How does the BPS evaluate?
6. How does the BPS end the lesson?
7. What are the differences between the BPS and sighted practicum students?
8. Which problems occur in the BPS's social studies lesson?
9. What are the suggestions for the BPS's social studies lesson?

## Method

### *Research Design*

The holistic single case study which is one of the qualitative research methods was used in this study. It is important to study the research topic deeply in qualitative research (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). There is a unit (BPS) in the focus of the holistic single design. This design can be used when situations are typical (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). BPS's teaching practice was considered a typical situation. In typical

sampling, the aim is not to generalize but to get information. This condition was the reason to do content analysis.

### *Participants*

Participants should be people who know each other, share the same field and are involved in an interaction (Patton, 2002). The BPS, the university supervisor, the mentor teacher, a sighted practicum student and 22 elementary school students (10 female and 12 male) who continually interact with the main participant, a BPS, constitute the participants. Therefore, the data triangulation technique was used. The aim in triangulation is to determine the different and similar perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The students are the ones who received instruction from the BPS during the 12-week teaching practice. The BPS conducted the practice process using the lessons of the mentor teacher along with a sighted prospective teacher. All participants are the individuals who witnessed the teaching process of the BPS. In this study, the role of the teacher, who is also the practice supervisor evaluating the BPS by observation, was to conduct the interviews.

### *Data Collection and Procedure*

In case studies, it is suggested to collect data using multiple techniques because, with a rich data base, the results are analyzed with a greater perspective; with various interpretations, the ratios of validity and reliability may increase (Merriam, 1998). The actual question that is necessary to be answered in case studies is "What is a case?" in case studies since all techniques are used to describe the sample case. The teaching practice lasted for 12 weeks and data were collected in the 2010-2011 academic year in Eskişehir. The BPS practiced six lessons per week for twelve weeks. In the process of data collection, firstly the permissions from the Ministry of National Education, mentor teacher and practicum students were obtained. The BPS's materials included his laptop with screen-reading, voice-recorder and braille. He transferred the voice recording of his lessons to a computer with the support of a volunteer assistant practicum student.

Subsequently, interview forms including nine questions parallel to the aims of the study were prepared. The forms were first examined by experts for their validity. After the experts presented their opinions and the pilot application was completed, the forms took their final shapes. The semi-structured interviews with participants were conducted with a voice recording device. The researcher completed the interviews in 19 days in the spring term. They lasted for between 15 and 40 minutes. The university supervisor filled out the evaluation form while observing the BPS as he was teaching a lesson at the end of the term. In another lesson, the supervisor carried out an unstructured observation. The observation records were filmed with the help of another experienced university supervisor. The observation forms were used to get supportive data.

### *Data Analysis*

In analyzing the student interviews, content analysis was used. The data were examined in accordance with the aim of the study and coded by a researcher and an expert separately. Subsequently, by comparing the codes, a compromise was attained

and the inter-coder reliability ratio was 95.45%. The following formula was used; Reliability= Agreement/Agreement+Disagreement  $\times$  100 (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The codes were classified under specific themes and digitized to compose meaningful totals in the findings. The findings were presented simply parallel to the questions and themes obtained. QSR NVivo was used only in modelling the data. Nicknames were used in place of students' real names in quotations. The findings on students were supported with other findings obtained from other sources. At the final stage of the analysis, they were reorganized in accordance with the suggestions of all sources. Those findings were interpreted in the discussion part and confirmed in comparison with the findings of other related studies.

## Findings and Results

### *First Impressions on BPS*

Students expressed their first impressions as seen in Figure 1.

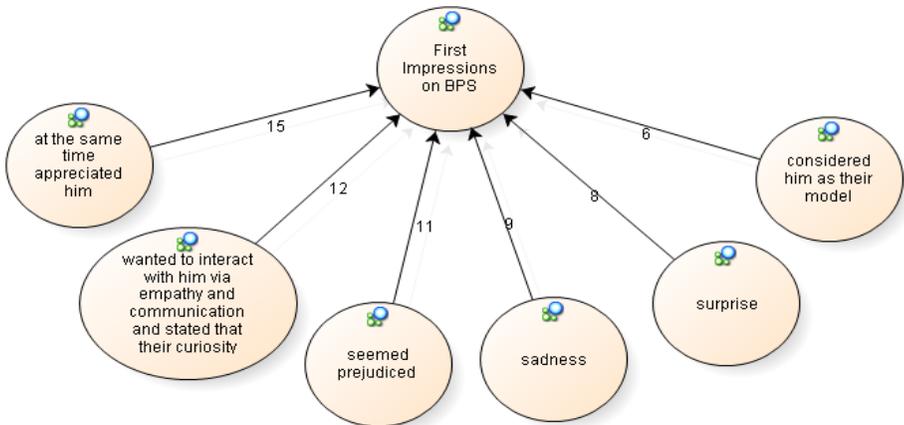


Figure 1. First impressions on student opinions towards BPS

One of the students, called Ozan, said "I had never seen a teacher with disability. First of all, I was surprised and sad. I thought that he wouldn't conduct the course very well. I put myself into his shoes. I was curious about how he was going to teach the lesson."

The mentor teacher said "When I met the BPS, my reaction was similar to reactions of the majority. First, I was surprised. He arouses my curiosity. I asked myself whether he could do this or not as a practicum student, but I was happy. The fact that he was self-confident being a practicum student ignoring his disability made me really happy."

### BPS Beginning the Lesson

As seen in Figure 2, students talked about the BPS beginning the lesson.

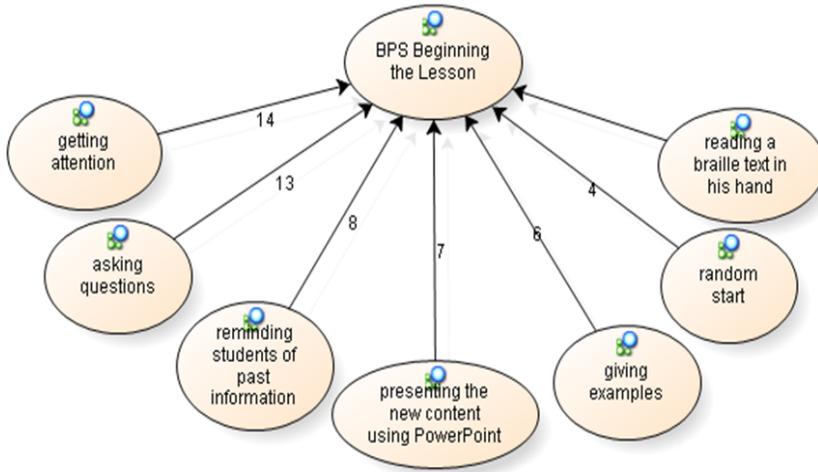


Figure 2. Student opinions towards the BPS beginning the lesson

One of the students called Deniz stated, “He enters the classroom with a smiling face. He explains what we will do step by step. He begins with entertaining questions and giving examples. Then he touches a special paper in his hand and explains what he is going to teach us.”

The mentor teacher stated “Before he begins the lesson, he chats with his students. It is a positive attitude that he begins his lesson by asking questions like ‘How are you?, What else did you do?’ and therefore motivates them.” The BPS explained his opinion as “When I begin my lesson, first of all I motivate my students. Subsequently, I tell or show them what we are going to do in that lesson using PowerPoint. Then, I activate their prior-knowledge.” The sighted practicum student said “One of the first things that the BPS does in the classroom is to discover the physical structure and get students’ attention. After greeting them, he asks students social chat questions like how they are and what they do in general. Later on, he makes revisions concerning the previous lesson and presents the lesson he will teach.” The University supervisor expressed his observation as, “The BPS begins the lesson saying ‘Good Morning!’, and explains what they would do in the lesson step by step. He said that he heard news on the radio related to the topic. After all, he said that If you listen to me, you are going to learn about infectious diseases and you will have awareness about a healthy life.”

### BPS's Classroom Management

As seen in Figure 3, students stated their opinions about BPS's classroom management.

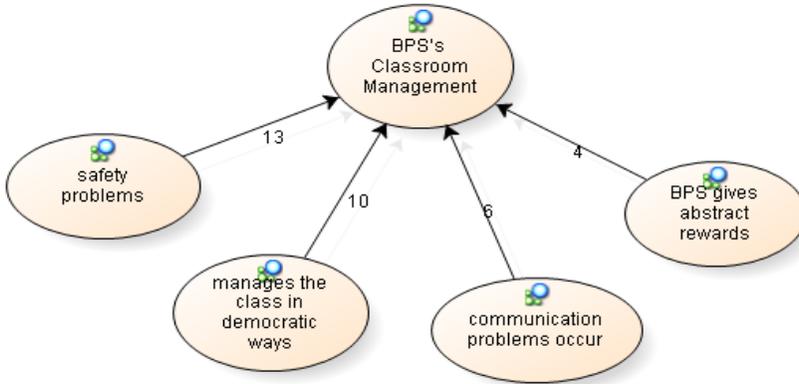


Figure 3. Student opinions towards BPS's classroom management

One of the students, İpek, said, "As our teacher cannot see, he wants us to speak saying 'Y' instead of raising a hand. He generally approaches us warmly. He sometimes has some problems. There are some students who don't behave appropriately and are not respectful because our teacher doesn't see. Apart from these, he is a flexible teacher, not a harsh one."

The mentor teacher said, "Even though he is visually impaired, he is able to distinguish the voices of students. He has an affectionate, nice attitude towards everybody. He visits the teachers' room before he comes to the classroom. He chats with students to make them ready for the lesson. He asks questions about what they do at home, on holiday and therefore, he tries to motivate them." The BPS commented "I put greater importance on communicating with my students via voices as I cannot see. Therefore by learning their names, I know who wants to speak and who behaves inappropriately. I generally warn them verbally." The sighted practicum student said, "As the BPS has a strong hearing ability, he establishes all communication via voices and question-answer technique. He first instructs students to call out 'Y' instead of raising their hands when they want to speak."

The university supervisor shared his observation "The BPS gave instructions to students about how they should behave. Students conveyed their requests calling out their teacher. Throughout his speaking, he sometimes asked 'Are you listening to me?' to his students. He said, 'Thank you for your careful listening, well-done.' He asked questions to them. He provided clues. He got answers and reinforced the correct ones. He corrected the wrong ones. Furthermore, he approached the students who asked questions by listening to them carefully and he tried to reply to those

questions face to face. He strained to make all students participate in the learning process. He established a democratic atmosphere."

#### *BPS's Teaching of the Lesson*

Figure 4 shows the methods and techniques that the BPS employed in his teaching.

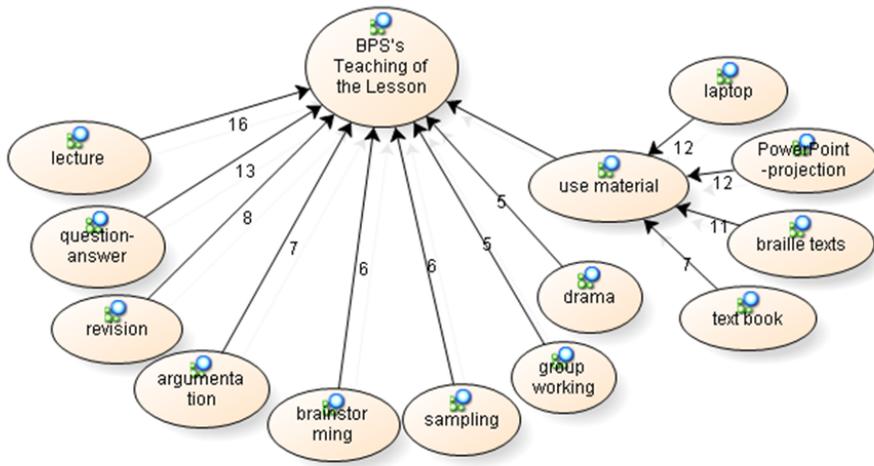


Figure 4. Student opinions towards the BPS's teaching of the lesson

Kerim, one of the students, said, "First of all, he explains the topic. He asks questions related to the topic. If we cannot answer properly, he retells the answer. In other words, he summarizes the topic. He demonstrates something using projection and he makes us write."

The mentor teacher commented, "He certainly comes to the classroom prepared. While managing the visuals/PowerPoint presentations he got help from his friend. It is difficult for him to use our most important lesson materials like maps, globes, etc. I can say that even though the materials for PD do not exist in our school, he is so eager to benefit from the existing opportunities to meet the requirements of conducting the lesson. For the rest, he always follows his braille text. He can feel what students do even though he cannot see. He understands when they are distracted from the lesson and he tries to motivate them by giving examples from real life." The BPS said, "While I am getting prepared, I first examine the text books and workbooks. I look for alternative methods and techniques to the ones in the books considering the flexibility of the curriculum. I test my prior-knowledge and browse resources. Among the methods and techniques I use are speech, question-answer, argumentation, brainstorming and drama. I select my materials in an elaborate manner before I bring them to the class. The materials I generally use are,

computer, projection/PowerPoint presentation and textbook." The sighted practicum student said, "He mostly uses speech and question-answer methods. In spite of the fact that he knows many different methods and techniques, his visual disability makes it harder for him to use them all. He efficiently uses his laptop with screen-reading and he prepares presentations. With the help of the projection, he uses them in the lesson." The university supervisor expressed his observation as "The BPS mostly used speech and question-answer methods and techniques while teaching his lesson. He associated his examples with real life. He used computer, projection and braille texts in the lesson."

#### *BPS's Evaluation*

As seen in Figure 5, the question "How does the BPS evaluate you?" was answered.

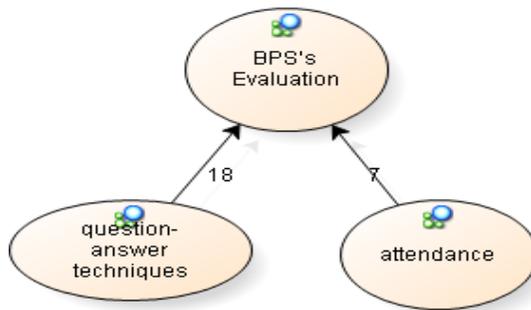


Figure 5. Student opinions towards the BPS's evaluation

A student called Ozan said, "He understands whether we have learned or not from our answers and participation. He asks questions and explains our pluses and minuses."

The mentor teacher said "The BPS tried to distinguish students. I saw that he distinguishes most of them by their voices or names. At break and lunch times, he evaluated students with me. There can be a problem transferring the evaluation into a document." The BPS commented, "I prepare open-ended and multiple choice questions to evaluate students. Generally, at the end of the lesson, I conduct an evaluation session using PowerPoint presentations and a couple of questions" The sighted practicum student said, "He evaluated the written examinations with my help. However, he verbally transferred his assessments concerning his teaching to mentor teacher and students." The university supervisor stated, "The BPS stimulates students to attend the process. He gives feedback like 'You are fine with general knowledge', 'Thanks for your participation', 'Yes, you are right'. He tries to encourage students with verbal rewards."

### BPS's Ending of the Lesson

Students stated that the BPS ended his lesson as seen in Figure 6.

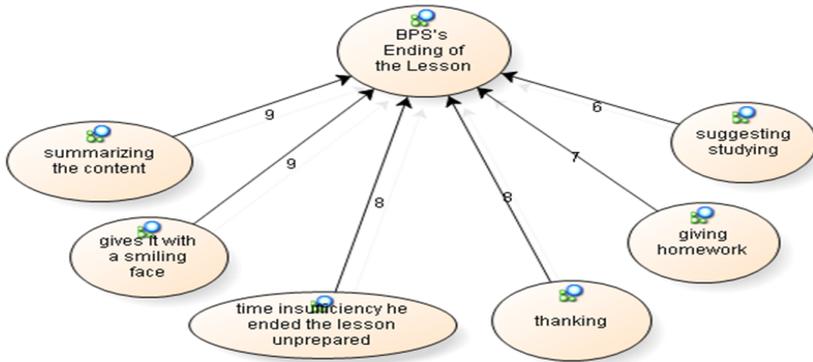


Figure 6. Student opinions towards the BPS's ending of the lesson

One of the students, Ege, said, "He makes us understand the topics. He ends the lessons by giving homework and summarizing."

The mentor teacher said "When there is not enough time to complete the lesson, students immediately begin to walk. Naturally, they cause trouble for their teacher. This problem can be solved over time. What is important for him is to end the lesson by giving feedback and homework. He already does this." The BPS commented "I generally summarize the content taught at the end of lesson. Then, I ask my students whether there is something that they couldn't understand and if there is, I go over that". The sighted practicum student said "The BPS summarizes the lesson. He makes a revision using the question-answer technique." The university supervisor stated his observation "While he was teaching the lesson, the bell rang. However, the BPS did not let students leave the classroom. He went on speaking about the lesson. While he was saying 'Thank you.', students were already leaving the classroom."

### BPS's Differences from Other Practicum Students

Some students considered the BPS as seen in Figure 7, as different.

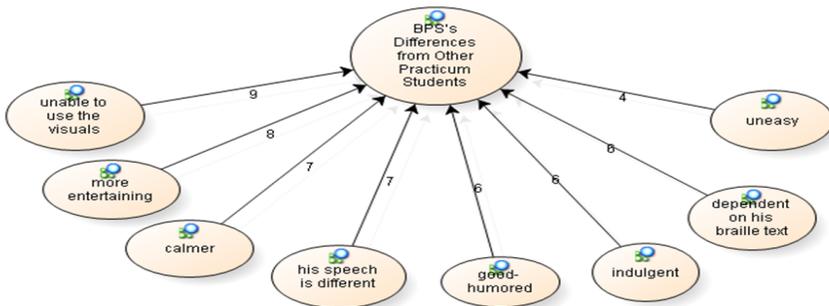


Figure 7. Student opinions towards the BPS's differences from other practicum students

One of the students, Bora, said, "He is calmer when compared to the sighted practicum student. He teaches the lesson without getting angry, and he entertains us. When we have not done our homework, he says 'Please, do your homework next week'. He does not write on the board like others do. He cannot use the map. He just teaches the content."

The mentor teacher stated, "I believe in the importance of eye-contact and BPS is not able to do this. It is very difficult for him to keep the students' attention to the lesson for 40 minutes. While other teachers have the ability to manage the class by monitoring everybody and following the needs of students, the BPS has to follow a regular pattern by using only his sensations and students' reactions. There is not much difference in his knowledge. I could not see a difference or shortfall in terms of effort."

#### *Problems in the BPS's Lessons*

As seen in Figure 8, students mentioned some problems.

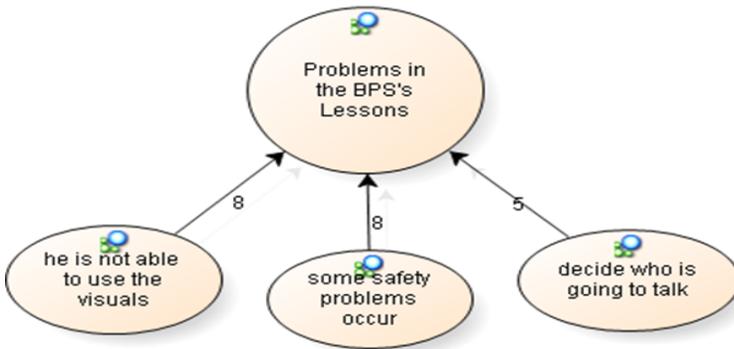


Figure 8. Student opinions towards the problems in the BPS's lessons

One of the students, Canan, stated, "It is difficult for him to use the visuals. For example, when he wants to turn the pages on PowerPoint presentations, he gets help. He cannot decide about who will speak. We have to call out our names 'I' to him."

The mentor teacher said, "So, he is going to have some problems in social studies in terms of using materials. Our most important materials are maps and globes. There can be difficulties on some geography topics that depend on visuals." The BPS stated, "One of the basic difficulties that I face is the material usage. For instance, when I need to use a map, I cannot benefit from this educational tool. Another problem is that physical structure is not organized for PD. I have some small problems in terms of classroom management, too."

### Suggestions for the BPS's Lessons

As seen in Figure 9, students put forward various suggestions.

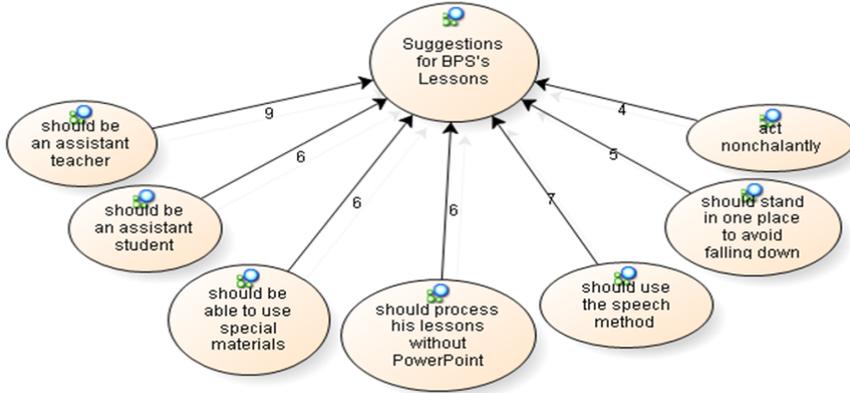


Figure 9. Student opinions towards suggestions for the BPS's lessons

One of the students, Yaman, said, "I worry if he is going to fall down. If he falls down, students will laugh and he will be embarrassed. There should be an assistant teacher near him."

The mentor teacher suggested, "Being educators and social studies teachers who aim at raising social individuals, we should prepare our people to live together with PD. That is to say, this is the first time I have worked with a BPS. As I have grown up with feelings like compassion since my childhood, but this situation broke many of my taboos. I really believe that he is going to succeed. Also, we need to ease their work as a society. We should make them feel our respect and trust, and we should delegate more responsibility to them. The physical structure of schools should be suitable for PD and a special classroom should be developed. At some schools, each course has its own laboratory. Therefore, if the BPS works at a school in which there is a special social studies classroom, and organizes it according to his own needs and knows where the materials are, his stress could be reduced." The BPS suggested that, "The physical environment in a classroom or school should be organized by the experts. The Ministry of National Education should provide schools with every kind of material that is needed for PD to do their job efficiently. Students need to be educated on how to behave when they encounter BVI teachers."

## Discussion and Conclusions

The first impressions of all the participants were similar. First of all, seeing a BPS as a prospective teacher surprised them and how he would teach became a topic of curiosity. Students of the BPS have doubts and are biased about his teaching. On the other hand, it is appreciated that even though the teacher is a BPS, he completed his education to become a teacher. In Hess's (2010) research, which supports these findings, it was determined that the success of PD is closely related to the attitude of

people around them. Carroll, Forlin and Jobling (2003), found that practicum students have feelings for PD like; sympathy, guardianship, compassion, fear, anxiety, distress and deficiency before they get a special education course.

At the beginning the lesson, the BPS greets students and gets them to speak asking how they are. At the same time, he shares their experiences and prepares them for the lesson psychologically. He draws their attention to the topic with examples and motivates them. He relates the new content to the past using the question-answer technique, and then explains what he is going to do with PowerPoint or verbally. While doing this, he benefits from his braille text. In Yeşil's (2008) study supporting these findings, it was stated that at the beginning of the lesson, sighted social studies practicum students similarly use motivation techniques. However, the revision of principles ranks last in the list of the techniques they use.

It is understood that the BPS communicates via his ability to distinguish voices and through guiding students by giving instruction while managing the classroom. The BPS, creating a democratic atmosphere, displays his effort to communicate using examples, clues, encouragement, rewards, and motivating activities. Despite this, it is understood that the lack of eye-contact prevents communication from reaching its' expected level of success. In the study of Yeşil (2009), supporting all these findings, it was identified that while sighted social studies practicum students are good at efficient listening and the democratic approach in classroom management, they are incompetent at using stress and intonation while speaking and leading students to act democratically. Therefore, it can be said that the BPS focuses more on his verbal communication skill than other practicum students.

It is seen that the BPS, while teaching the lesson, mostly uses the speech and question-answer methods. Similarly, in Yeşil's (2009) study it was identified that sighted practicum students are less competent at using different methods-techniques together. It is clear the materials that the BPS uses most are braille texts, laptops with screen-reading and projection. However, physical insufficiencies prevent him from using other techniques and materials. Nevertheless, it is known that there are some materials for PD in social studies education.

The BPS carries out evaluation with question-answers, presentations or verbally. However, it seems difficult for him to record the evaluation results using existing methods. A social studies teacher makes an evaluation, which is included in social studies teachers' specific area competencies, (Ministry of National Education, 2009) giving feedback to students with a critical assessment and sharing with his colleagues.

At the end of the lesson, the BPS summarizes, makes revisions and gives feedback. Supporting all these, Yeşil's study (2008), identified that social studies practicum students are most competent at giving feedback, correction and reinforcement in terms of teaching-learning principles. In the context of differences from the sighted practicum student, the BPS was found to be calmer, more good-

humored, indulgent and perceptive. However, it can be said that since he is unable to make visual contact, he feels dependent on over the physical-social environment and this makes him distressed in the lessons. In parallelism with the findings, it was determined that BVI people have more trouble with social adaptation and are more tempted to resort to passive behaviors than individuals with sighted people because they have developed more skill through the hardship of movement, and their psychomotor and social skills are not as well developed. In addition to the difficulties mentioned, it is stated that the anxiety level increases when their needs are not met (Konarska; 2007; Wong, Machin & Tan, 2009; Bolat, Doğangün, Yavuz, Demir & Kayaalp, 2010). Furthermore, in some studies, it was stated that BVI children demonstrated more limited gestures and gave fewer responses than sighted children. The researchers emphasized that social smiling was very important in an individual's development and this remained undeveloped due to the lack of eye contact (Bolat et al., 2010).

It is understood that the problems of the BPS in the social studies lesson stem from the physical structure and materials. He gets help while using the materials. He needs special materials at each stage of the lesson. The physical structure at most schools is not appropriate for BVI people. The inclusion education which has been widespread in recent years has resulted in the questioning of the educational environment in terms of suitability for BVI people. Another difficulty the BPS faces is his ability to keep students' attention, motivation and safety in classroom management which reflects his differences from sighted practicum students. Bardin and Lewis stated in their studies (2008) that schools without proper environments for BVI people affect their academic achievement negatively.

Taking the results of the research into consideration, some suggestions can be put forward. As is clear from the first impressions, the biggest problem BVI people face is social prejudice. It is necessary to create a society in which their responsibilities are shared to eradicate those prejudices.

The educational environments of BVI people should be prepared for them along with the physical and social elements of their surroundings. As the BPS lacks the ability to see, necessary efforts should be made to take advantage of his abilities such as smelling, touching, hearing and talking. He also needs drama education and technical training to use his voice and intonation efficiently. It is thought that this would be useful for him to communicate with problematic students and interact with administrators, families and the guidance service on a regular basis. He needs to use different methods-techniques and materials to make students actively participate in the process and keep their attention on the lesson. The BPS should constantly be guided on how to educate sighted students. For this, a special education supervisor can be commissioned in the teaching practices. After he becomes a teacher, guidance services can be provided with a BVI monitoring unit. The support requirement can be met by special education consultants, itinerant teaching systems (Argyropoulos & Stamoulis 2006; Bardin & Lewis, 2008; Sharma et al., 2010) and teaching practice and community services at educational facilities.

Schools should be organized considering BVI people in terms of physical environment and materials. According to Suvak (2004), teachers need classrooms prepared by special educators and equipped with special techniques, materials and physical space. Safhi, Zhou, Derric, and Kelley (2009), showed that BVI students need assistive technologies, strategies and support services in their studies. In addition, it is suggested that the education of BVI students should be easier, economical and adapted with new technologies. It is understood from the literature that new technologies are developed for BVI people every day. It is foreshadowed that the materials like navigation, and smart boards with screen-reading and tactile maps will increase the efficiency of social studies teaching. For evaluation and recording, exams need to be turned into braille texts or audio optical systems need to be used.

All school stakeholders should be educated and prepared for the education of BVI people. Moreover, educational environments, with their physical structures and materials, should be made appropriate for BVI people. As a result, BVI people might be less dependent on other people and be more productive.

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## Görme Engelli Bir Sosyal Bilgiler Öğretmen Adayının Öğretmenlik Uygulamasına İlişkin Durum Çalışması

### Atıf:

Kaya, E. (2014). Teaching practice of a social studies practicum student who is blind: a case study. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 54, 187-206.

### Özet

*Problem Durumu:*Avrupa Konseyi'nin 2010-engelliler eylem planında onların toplumla bütünleşmesi ve yaşam kalitelerinin artırılması için istihdam sorununun çözülmesi gerektiği vurgulanmaktadır. Bunu sağlamak amacıyla politikalar geliştirilerek eğitim olanaklarının yaygınlaştırılması gerektiği belirtilmektedir. Çünkü sağlık, çalışma, gelir ve sosyal yaşama katılma düzeyini artıran en önemli etmen eğitimidir. Engellilik eğitim yaşamına katılmayı engellediği gibi, eğitimden yararlanamamak da engelliliğin yükünü artırmaktadır. Son yıllarda görme engelli öğretmenlerin istihdamı ve çalışmalarına ilişkin tartışmalar, Türkiye gündemini uzun süre işgal etmiştir. Bunlardan, eğitimci ve velilerin onların vereceği eğitimin niteliği konusunda kuşku oldukları anlaşılmaktadır.

Geniş bir alanyazın taramasının ardından eğitim alanında görme engellilere yönelik araştırmaların çoğunlukla öğrenci odaklı gerçekleştirildiği görülmektedir. Oysa zaman zaman eğitim fakültelerine görme engelli öğretmen adayları da gelmektedir. Fakülte ve okulların buna yeterince hazırlıklı olduğu söylenemez. Bu nedenle yapılan araştırmayla görme engelli öğretmen adaylarının öğretmenlik uygulamalarına dikkat çekilmek istenmektedir.

*Araştırmanın Amacı:*Araştırmanın temel amacı; eğitim fakültesi sosyal bilgiler öğretmenliği programı son sınıf öğrencisi bir görme engelli öğretmen adayının gerçekleştirdiği sosyal bilgiler öğretimi uygulamalarının betimlenmesidir.

### *Araştırmanın Yöntemi*

Araştırmada, nitel yöntemlerden durum çalışması kapsamında bütüncül tek durum deseninden yararlanılmıştır. Durum çalışması aşamalarına uyularak çalışılacak durum, araştırma soruları, katılımcılar belirlenmiş, veriler toplanmış, analiz edilmiş ve raporlaştırılmıştır.

Görme engelli öğretmen adayı (GEÖA), on iki hafta boyunca her hafta altı derse girerek uygulama yapmıştır. Uygulama döneminin sonunda sürecin paydaşları olan öğrenciler, rehber öğretmen, görme engelli öğretmen adayı, gören öğretmen adayı ve danışman öğretim elemanının görüşlerine başvurulmuştur. Ayrıca GEÖA'nın dönem sonundaki derslerinde yapılandırılmamış gözlem yapılmıştır.

Görüşler araştırmanın amacı doğrultusunda incelenmiş, araştırmacı ve bir uzman tarafından ayrı ayrı kodlanmıştır. Daha sonra kodlar karşılaştırılarak uzlaşmaya gidilmiş ve güvenilirlik oranı % 95.45 olarak hesaplanmıştır. Kodlar belli temalar altında sınıflandırılmış ve bulgularda anlamlı bütünler oluşturularak

sayısallaştırılmıştır. Örnek görüşler kod adlarıyla verilmiştir. Sonuç bölümünde ise yorumlanmış ve başka araştırmaların bulgularıyla karşılaştırılarak teyit edilmiştir.

*Araştırmanın Bulguları:* Katılımcıların GEÖA'na ilişkin ilk izlenimlerinin benzerlikler taşıdığı görülmektedir. Bir engelli öğretmeni aday olarak görmek katılımcılarda şaşkınlık, merak ve kuşku yaratmıştır. Ancak engelli olmasına karşın eğitim alması ve öğretmen olma mücadelesi takdir de oluşturmuştur.

GEÖA derse başlarken öğrencileri selamlayıp, konuşturmakta yaşantılarını paylaşmakta ve psikolojik olarak derse hazırlamaktadır. Örneklerle onların dikkatlerini çekmekte ve dersten kazanımlarını ileterek güdülenmelerini sağlamaktadır. Önceki konuyla bağlantıyı soru-yanıt tekniğiyle kurmakta, söz veya PowerPoint'le ne işleyeceğini açıklamaktadır. Bunu yaparken braille metninden yararlanmaktadır.

Sınıfı yönetirken GEÖA'nın sesten tanıma yeteneğiyle iletişim kurduğu öğrencileri yönergelerle yönlendirdiği anlaşılmaktadır. Demokratik bir ortam oluşturan GEÖA, örnekler, ipuçları, yüreklendirme, ödüllendirme, güdüleme etkinlikleriyle iletişim kurma çabasını sergilemektedir. Ayrıca öğrencilere yaklaşıp iletişim kurmaktadır. Buna karşın göz temasızlığının iletişimi istenen düzeyde kurmasını engellediği görülmektedir. Dersi işlerken GEÖA'nın ağırlıklı olarak anlatım ve soru-yanıt yöntem-tekniklerini kullandığı anlaşılmaktadır. Bu süreçte ekran okuyucu dizüstü bilgisayar, PowerPoint ve braille metni kullanmaktadır.

GEÖA, ölçme-değerlendirmeyi soru-yanıtlarla sözel veya sunuyla, eleştirel bir değerlendirmeyle öğrencilere dönüt vererek ve meslektaşlarıyla paylaşarak gerçekleştirmektedir. Ancak var olan koşullarda bunları kayda geçirmesi zor gözükmektedir.

Dersi sonlandırırken GEÖA dönüt, tekrar ve özetle toparlamakta ödev vermektedir. Süre yetmediğinde kontrolsüz bir biçimde sonlandırmak zorunda kalmaktadır. Bu da dersin bitirilmesinde onun zorluk yaşadığı şeklinde yorumlanabilir.

Gören öğretmeni adaylarından farkları bağlamında GEÖA daha güler yüzlü, hoşgörülü, anlayışlı, sakin bulunmuştur. Ancak görsel iletişim kuramaması nedeniyle kendini fiziksel-sosyal ortama hakim hissetmemesinin onu derste daha tedirgin ve mesafeli olmaya ittiği söylenebilir. En belirgin fark ise görselleri kullanamamak olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır.

GEÖA'nın Sosyal Bilgiler dersinde sorunların fiziki yapı ve materyaller üzerinde yoğunlaştığını anlaşılmaktadır. Materyal kullanımında yardım almakta ve özel materyallere gereksinim duymaktadır. Okulların çoğunda fiziki yapı görme engellilere uygun değildir. Son yıllarda yaygınlaştırılmaya çalışılan kaynaştırma eğitimleri eğitim ortamlarının "engellilere uygunluk" açısından sorgulanmasına yol açmıştır. GEÖA'nın yaşadığı diğer bir sorun da sınıf yönetiminde derse ilgi ve güdünün sürekliliğiyle güvenliği sağlamada zorlanmasıdır. GEÖA öğrenme sürecini bütün öğrencilerin ilgi ve gereksinimlerine göre düzenlemeye çalışmaktadır. Ancak fiziki yapı ve materyal eksikliği onun çabasını olumsuz yönde etkilemektedir. Sosyal Bilgiler dersi alan yeterlikleri arasında bulunan mekanı algılama becerisini de GEÖA'nın materyalsiz bir ortamda kazandırması oldukça zordur.

*Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Önerileri:* GEÖA'nın öğretmenlik uygulamasının sosyal ve fiziki bağlamda çeşitli sonuçları ortaya çıkmıştır. Öncelikle sosyal bağlam ele alındığında ilk izlenimlerden başlayarak engellilerin önündeki en büyük sorunun önyargılar olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Bunların olumlu hale getirilebilmesi için etkili bir eğitimle engellilerle sorumluluğun paylaşıldığı bir toplum yaratılmalıdır. Engellilerin bulunduğu eğitim ortamları sosyal ve fiziki öğeleriyle birlikte onlara hazır duruma getirilmelidir. Çeşitli araştırmalarda engellilerin başarılarında çevrelerindeki insanların tutumlarının etkileyici olduğu belirlenmiştir. Hatta kimilerinde engellilerle ilişkilere yönelik eğitimden sonra insanların onlara yaklaşımlarında olumlu yönde değişiklikler yaşandığı saptanmıştır. Bu nedenle okullardaki tüm insanların eğitilerek engellilere hazır duruma getirilmesi önemlidir.

GEÖA'na gören öğrencilere nasıl eğitim vereceği konusunda sürekli rehberlik yapılmalıdır. Bunun için öğretmenlik uygulamalarında özel eğitim uygulama akademisyeni de görevlendirilebilir. Mesleğe başladıktan sonra da bir engelli-izleme birimiyle rehberlik hizmetleri sürdürülebilir. Destek gereksinimi, özel eğitim danışmanı gibi olan yardımcı ve gezgin öğretmenlik sistemleriyle eğitim fakültelerindeki öğretmenlik ve topluma hizmet uygulamalarıyla karşılanabilir.

Sınıf yönetiminde görmeden yoksun olması nedeniyle GEÖA'nın koklama, dokunma, işitme, konuşma gibi becerilerini geliştirici önlemler alınmalıdır. Bu nedenle ses ve tonlamaları etkili kullanabilmesi için drama eğitimi ve teknik alt yapıya gereksinimi bulunmaktadır.

GEÖA'nın öğretmenlik uygulamasını etkileyen bir diğer etmenin ortamın fiziki koşulları olduğu görülmektedir. Okullar fiziki yapı ve materyaller açısından engellilere yönelik olarak düzenlenmelidir. Görme engelliler yardımcı teknoloji, strateji ve destek hizmetlerine gereksinim duymaktadırlar. Alanyazından her geçen gün görme engellilere ilişkin yeni teknolojiler geliştirildiği anlaşılmaktadır.

GEÖA'nın ders işlerken en çok yararlandığı materyallerin braille metni, ekran okuyuculu dizüstü bilgisayar ve projeksiyon olduğu görülmektedir. Ancak fiziki yetersizliklerin farklı yöntem-tekni ve materyalleri kullanmasını engellediği anlaşılmaktadır. Oysa özellikle sosyal bilgiler eğitiminde engellilere yönelik kimi materyallerin var olduğu bilinmektedir. Ekran okuyuculu CBS, akıllı tahta ve dokunmatik harita gibi materyallerin sosyal bilgiler öğretimindeki verimi artıracığı öngörülebilir. Değerlendirme ve kayıt tutma için de sınavların braille'e dönüştürülmesi veya sesli optik bir sistemden yararlanılması sağlanabilir.

Sonuç olarak sosyal bağlam ve fiziki yapı engellilerle eğitime uygun duruma getirilmelidir. Böylece görme engelli öğretmen adaylarının diğer insanlara bağımlılığı azaltılarak üretken yapıya kavuşmaları sağlanabilir. Ayrıca yönetici ve eğitimciler engellilere uygun eğitim ortamları yaratılmasının gerekliliğine inandırılmalıdır. Bu, engellilere yönelik materyallerin diğer öğrencilerin de kullanabileceği biçimde tasarlanması yanında kolay ulaşılabilir ve ekonomik duruma getirilmesiyle de sağlanabilir.

*Anahtar Sözcükler:* Sosyal Bilgiler dersi, öğretmenlik uygulaması, görme engelliler, görme engelli öğretmen adayı