ISSN: 1306-3111/1308-7274
NWSA-Education Sciences
NWSA ID: 2013.8.2.1C00583

Status : Original Study
Received: September 2012
Accepted: February 2013

E-Journal of New World Sciences Academy

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http://dx.doi.org/10.12739/NWSA.2013.8.2.1C0583

THE TEACHER ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LEARNER CONTROL STRATEGY

ABSTRACT

The major purpose of this research was to examine the uses' level of learner control strategy by teachers as general in their courses. For this study, data were collected from 219 state primary school teachers, including Turkish, English, math, science, social science, religion and morality, and computer-technology teachers in the province of Adana, Turkey, during the 2010-2011 academic year. The data were gathered by administering the learner control strategy questionnaire (for teachers) that was developed by the researcher, who collected the data from participating schools over a span of a month. The frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were considered in the data analysis, which was performed using spss for windows 11.5. The data analysis showed that the means of items 13 (my students can express their views on the length of each lesson), 21 (my students can decide what courses they should take) and 22 (my students can choose what topics, units or parts of units that they want to study) were low, whereas the means of the other items on the questionnaire were high.

Keywords: Constructivism, Elaboration Theory, Instructional Strategies, Learner Control Strategy, Learning Strategies

ÖĞRENCİ KONTROL STRATEJİSİNE YÖNELİK ÖĞRETMEN TUTUMLARI

ÖZET

Bu araştırmanın temel amacı öğretmenlerin derslerinde genel olarak öğrenci kontrol stratejisini kullanım düzeylerini incelemektir. Bu çalışma için veriler 2010-2011 eğitim-öğretim yılında Türkiye-Adana ilinde devlet resmi ilköğretim okullarında görev yapan, Türkçe, İngilizce, Matematik, Fen, Sosyal Bilgiler, Din Kültürü-Ahlak Bilgisi ve Bilgisayar öğretmeni olan 219 öğretmenden toplanmıştır. Veriler araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen Öğrenci Kontrol Stratejisi anketi kullanılarak bir ayı kapsayan süre içerisinde toplanmıştır. Veri analizi SPSS 11.5 programında frekans, yüzde, ortalama ve standart sapma istatistik verileri kullanılarak sınanmıştır. Data analizinde 13. maddenin (Öğrencilerim her derste görüşlerini açıklayabilir.), 21. maddenin (Öğrencilerim hangi dersleri alacaklarına karar verebilirler.), ve 22. maddenin (Öğrencilerim hangi konu, ünite veya ünite bölümünü çalışmak isterlerse çalışabilirler.) ortalamalarının düşük olduğu buna karşılık diğer maddelerin ortalamalarının yüksek olduğu görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yapılandırmacılık, Ayrıntılama Kuramı, Öğretim Stratejileri, Öğrenci Kontrol Stratejisi, Öğrenme Stratejileri

1. INTRODUCTION (GİRİŞ)

Until recently, training (curriculum-instructions) programs which were taken form by behavioral approach have been implemented in primary schools. Traditional instruction is hierarchical, multilayered (progressive) and rigid. Learners are passive recipients and individual difference are ignored in the schools which includes rigid and uniform education which is teacher-centered [1].The methods used within the framework of traditional education does not offer many activities, it does not restructure information for this reason it leads to the growth of the individual (learner) who use rote learning superficially. According to this perspective, learners who grows in behavioral approach, they come face to face in real life difficulties, problem solving and lack of research skills, sometimes they cannot find the solution and they cannot produce appropriate solutions in these difficult situations [2].Individual does not response to stimuli for no reason in his/her around because there is some individual's ability to comprehend, detection and mental skills and process such as thinking and decision making. Therefore, the individual can choose stimuli which he/she can react for reaction. On the basis of constructivist theory does not include transfer information. Constructivist theory based on taking form individuals' own knowledge and opinions. Students learn to use control, provides positive outcomes for themselves. Being applied to individual communication in learning environment, learner control includes their own characteristics of learning process (learning styles, abilities, etc.) [3]. Learner control is not just a psychological and metacognition process. Learner control encompasses with the constructivist theory about the acquisition of the knowledge because students are actively control information [4]. According to White's [5] theory of motivation and De Charms [6]; students achieve better outcome when they manage their own learning and take more pleasure from their study. The concept of learner control increases the importance of the active participation of the learner in the learning process. The learning process, which is an active rather than passive process, requires that teachers and students work together. In contemporary societies, it is vital for individuals to possess not only basic knowledge and skills but also the ability to think critically and interpret, analyze, evaluate and solve problems when necessary. For this reason, as stated by other researchers [7], teachers should differentiate their instructional approaches. To fulfill this goal, teachers must merge teaching content that involves micro-level selecting, editing, moving, merging and recommending with macro summarizing [8]. Learners are considered passive recipients in traditional classrooms, but if they are given an appropriate amount of control and responsibility with respect to their own learning, then the effectiveness and attractiveness of teaching may increase. Students should also possess the ability to control their own learning and studying [9]. Thus, this research seeks to determine the attitudes of teachers toward the use of learner control strategy as general.

1.1. Learner Control (Öğrenci Kontrolü)

The purpose of the elaboration theory is to disseminate Merrill’s component display theory (CDT) at a macro level and offer recommendations for teaching content, sequencing, and synthesis [9]. In other words, the aim of this theory of teaching and learning is to combine the existing information on a macro level to the greatest extent possible [10]. Elaboration theory proposes seven major strategy components: (1) an elaborative sequence, (2) learning prerequisite

sequences, (3) summary, (4) synthesis, (5) analogies, (6) cognitive strategies, and (7) learner control. The elaboration approach is believed to lead to the formation of more stable cognitive structures and thus enhanced retention and transfer of information, increased learner motivation through the creation of meaningful learning contexts, and the provision of information regarding content to facilitate informed learner control.

Learner control includes the selection and use of strategies to fulfill the needs of learners during the teaching process and thus enable enhanced learner performance. When students are given a greater role in choosing, ordering and improving their abilities during this process, they are able to exercise greater control over their own learning. The teaching process involves comprehending and improving teaching methods, which in turn assist students in controlling themselves during the learning process. According to [11], the purpose of teaching is to continue to improve the process by rendering it more effective, productive and attractive. [9] also states that students can choose to control the elements of teaching strategies as they construct a macro prescriptive framework for selecting, sequencing, synthesizing and summarizing content. The provision of learner control strategy is less important than the manner in which such strategy is implemented. [12] categorizes the levels of learner control as follows: (1) content control, (2) control of pace, (3) display (strategy) control, and (4) control of internal processing. Learners develop an internal process that triggers their learning; as they formulate metacognitions, they become aware of their own cognitive structures and learning features. According to [13] and [14], metacognition is the knowledge of one's own cognitive system and structure. In other words, metacognition involves learners' awareness of their own internal processes that influence their success during the learning process. Learner control enables students to employ a wide array of techniques and to assume complete responsibility for their learning processes in teaching and learning environments [15]. In a review of the literature pertaining to the effectiveness of learner control in CAI, [16] reports that the amount of learner control that is utilized by a student influences the effectiveness of a method, as greater control is associated with improved creativity and learner initiative. In addition, according to [16], the literature suggests that learner control is generally useful when adapting learning environments to the needs of students. Thus, learner control, computer-assisted instruction and student-centered teaching are becoming important tools within teaching and learning environments. Learner control is significant in computer-assisted learning and student-centered instruction because individualism, which is important to learner control, effectively applies to both of these instructional tools. Computer-assisted learning provides each student with a selection of choices in terms of content, exercises, types and speeds to ensure that students may control their own learning processes and the pace of learning.

1.2. Constructivism (Yapılandırmacılık)

According to constructionist view, the human mind is not regarded as an empty box. Individuals interacting with the environment, exploring and living experiences, encounters a new situation (information) installs its own meaning and reviews, in short he/she internalizes it his/her own. John Dewey cites the individuals can internalize the knowledge by themselves. According to constructivist theory, learning is an active process, and teacher is

guide in constructivist approach in particular constructivist approach is crucial to the learning process because learner installs their own meaning in the learning process. Constructivism creates an important role which gives learners an opportunity for their own meanings and designs the learning environment according to their creativity. Constructivism underlies the emphasis on the integrated curriculum in which students study a topic from multiple perspectives. Constructivist ideas also effects in many learning-teaching environments with the principle of learner-centered. Teachers should present the structures to students with giving permission learner to construct him/her understanding.

2. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE (ÇALIŞMANIN ÖNEMİ)

The major purpose of this research was to study the use of learner control strategy in the classroom. Thus, the following question was posed:

- Are there any differences in the manner in which teachers apply learner control strategy as general in the classroom?

Learning is not a passive process where learner creates for this reason learner is active and he/she is responsible in learning process. Learner control is suitable with this process. Learner is effective and has a positive impact on the learning process when learner control strategy is used [10]. "Learner Control" is responsible for one's own learning and learner can active in the process of education therefore the importance of this research is to determine the teacher's usage level of learner control strategy. The study focused on the attitudes of teachers toward the use of learner control strategy as general in their courses. The main importance of the study was to find out the uses' level of learner control strategy by teachers to improve teaching-learning environment with the use of learner control strategy and to help the teachers for their teaching process and also to help learners for their learning process were among the significance of the study.

3. RESEARCH METHOD (ARAŞTIRMANIN YÖNTEMİ)

A correlational research design is used in this study. Correlational studies investigate the possibility of relationships between two variables, although investigations of more than two variables are also common. Correlational research is also referred to as a form of descriptive research because it describes an existing relationship between variables. A correlation study characterizes the degree to which two or more quantitative variables are related by examining correlation coefficients [17]. As stated, this study reviewed the manner in which course instructors used learner control strategy in their classrooms. The research collected the data over a span of a month by visiting participating schools. The data were gathered by administering the learner control strategy questionnaire that was developed by the researcher. Frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were considered in the data analysis, which was performed using SPSS for Windows 11.5.

4. STUDY GROUP OF THE RESEARCH (ARAŞTIRMANIN ÇALIŞMA GRUBU)

The population of the study group, which was selected randomly, includes teachers from the state primary schools in Adana, Turkey. This group includes 219 teachers in state primary schools located in the center of Adana during the 2010-2011 academic year. The study comprised 91 male (42%) and 128 female (58%) teachers. In addition, 123 primary-school teachers (56%), 20 Turkish teachers (9%), 20

English teachers (9%), 16 math teachers (7%), 15 science teachers (8%), 11 social science teachers (5%), 9 religion and morality teachers (4%), and 5 computer and technology teachers (2%) participated in this research. The statistical summary shows that the highest number of participants were from the class teacher group, whereas the group with the lowest number of participants consisted of computer and technology teachers. The number of years of teaching experience of these instructors is as follows: 22 instructors who had taught 1 to 5 years (10%), 28 instructors who had taught 6 to 10 years (13%), 27 instructors who had taught 11 to 15 years (12%), 42 instructors who had taught 16 to 20 years (20%), 41 instructors who had taught 21 to 25 years (19%), 29 instructors who had taught 26 to 30 years (13%), 26 instructors who had taught 31 to 35 years (11%), and 4 instructors who had taught 36 years or more (2%). The group of instructors who had taught for 16 to 20 years was the largest in the study sample. The second highest number of participants in this category was for the group of instructors who had taught 21 and 25 years, the third largest group was that of instructors with 26-30 years of teaching experience, and the group with the lowest number of participants in this category included instructors who had taught for 36 years or more.

5. DATA COLLECTION DEVICE (VERİ TOPLAMA ARACI)

The questionnaire was developed and applied in Turkish. The data, which pertained to the development of the questionnaire through a factor analysis, were shaped by the following statistical methodologies: the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure; the Bartlett test, which was used to assess the validity of the questionnaire; and Cronbach's alpha, which was used to measure the reliability of the questionnaire's internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha value was 0,8819, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure yielded a value of 0,827, and the value obtained for the Bartlett test was 1188,515. A factor analysis was conducted to test the validity of the construct relations within the questionnaire and revealed that the items in the questionnaire were valid.

6. FINDINGS (BULGULAR)

As shown in Table 1, teachers share several similar beliefs regarding using learner control strategy in their courses. In other words, a great number of instructors overwhelmingly agree on the use of learner control strategy in their teaching.

Table 1. Means and standard deviations of the items on the learner control strategy questionnaire
(Tablo 1. Öğrenci kontrol stratejisi anketinin maddelerinin ortalamaları ve standart sapmaları)

Items on the questionnaire	$\overline{X}$	SD
1. I ask my students to express their views and opinions on my teaching methods.	3.47	1,07
2. I ask my students to express their views and opinions on the speed of my lesson presentation.	3.46	1,03
3. I ask my students to express their views and opinions on whether they require prerequisites for the lesson.	3,66	1,05
4. I ask my students to express their views and opinions on whether they need examples.	4,15	,93
5. I ask my students to express their views and opinions on whether they need more exercises.	3,99	,94
6. I ask my students to express their views and opinions on whether they need a summary of the lesson.	3,52	1,15
7. I ask my students to express their views and opinions on whether they need me to repeat any information during my presentation.	4,00	,99
8. More than half of my students know and use the strategies that they need.	3,67	1,03
9. My students have the necessary background knowledge for the lesson.	3,38	,98
10. I ask my students to express what they mean.	3,75	1,14
11. My students can choose to complete exercises that they like.	2,92	1,13
12. My students can work on as many exercises as they desire.	3,33	1,15
13. My students can express their views on the length of each lesson.	2,25	1,08
14. My students know what they will learn during the lesson.	4,05	,85
15. In addition to receiving guidance from me, my students receive assistance from the guidance counselor, advisor and/or other teachers.	2,86	1,28
16. In addition to the course books, my students can access other learning sources, such as books in the library, software, and the internet.	4,08	1,00
17. My students can afford the lesson materials.	3,98	,96
18. My students can choose deadlines for the submission of their performance and project assignments.	2,75	,97
19. My students can consider how they should study when they want to learn a topic.	3,23	1,06
20. My students are aware that they are responsible for their own learning.	3,73	1,04
21. My students can decide what courses they should take.	2,05	1,31
22. My students can choose what topics, units or parts of units that they want to study.	2,45	1,38
23. My students can ask questions about the topic, subject that they do not understand during the lesson.	4,50	,89
24. I respect the decisions (thoughts) of my students.	4,67	,62
25. My students can experiment with different ways of learning a new topic.	3,60	1,12
26. More than half of my students possess critical study skills.	3,79	,93
27. Knowing how to learn is important to my students.	4,04	,99
28. My students can decide how to learn during the lesson.	3,18	1,08

7. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION (SONUÇ VE TARTIŞMA)

The questionnaire responses of the teachers indicated that the means of items 13 (My students can express their views on the length of each lesson), 21 (My students can decide what courses they should take) and 22 (My students can choose what topics, units or parts of units that they want to study) were low, whereas those of the other items were high.

In addition, the analyzed data on learner control strategy revealed that teachers in state primary schools are employing learner control strategy in the classroom. This result implies that this strategy is commonly used by teachers during learning and teaching processes. In addition, teachers generally appear to share similar beliefs and commonly agree on the use of learner control strategy, as revealed in the resulting means and standard deviations for the questionnaire items. The items which were low indicate us that

curriculum and instruction program should be more flexible and learners should choose.

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