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### A model trial for the “Teaching Practice” course within Turkish teaching programs: Lesson study

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#### Abstract

This study aimed to reveal certain people’s perceptions and experiences regarding the lesson study model conducted within the Teaching Practice course under the program of Turkish Teaching at a state university in Turkey. The design of this research was determined to be a case study. The study group consisted of an instructor, practice teacher and three pre-service teachers. Data were collected through observation, interviews or documents, and assessed through analyses. At the end of the study, three categories as positive experiences, issues and contributions emerged. The results indicated that participants had positive experiences in terms of preparing and implementing a course plan for the reading skills, classroom management, communication between the group members, and doing research. Moreover, as understood from the results, micro-teaching practices conducted by the pre-service teachers during their undergraduate program consolidated the characteristics of the lesson study process, and pre-service teachers felt satisfied based on the course plan they prepared and implemented, on the participant of secondary-school students to courses, and on the positive feedback of instructor and practice teacher. The issues were found to be related to the model and negative feelings; these issues were specifically associated with finding sources for the reading activities or preparing course plans for different classes. Moreover, model-related issues such as the obligation of group work in the model and greater responsibility of the person instructing the class were experienced. Pre-service teachers were found to experience certain feelings in this process such as anxiety or excitement. In conclusion, lesson study model contributed to the teaching skills and the cooperation in the classroom.

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**Keywords:** training teachers; lesson study; Turkish teaching; teaching practice

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## 1. Introduction

With the technological advancements, the alternatives making the process of learning easier have increased, while the need for school and teachers has decreased. In addition, these changes have created a significant change in the roles of teachers, and the teacher-centered approaches in schools have been replaced with student-centered conceptions. With the changes in teachers’ roles, intra-class activities and interactions between students and teachers have differed. The need for teachers who have adopted

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the modern methods has increased, and a search for new methods has begun in the programs of training teachers to meet this need.

The programs of training teachers in Turkey are currently provided within four-year studies in the faculties of education at universities. An assessment toward the course contents of these studies within the faculties which still generate graduates due to gradual transition indicated that the courses had content related to subject information (50% ), to professional teaching knowledge (30%), and elective courses of general knowledge (20%) (HEI, 2007). This rate was changed in the undergraduate programs renewed in 2018, and the distribution was altered as follows: subject information (50-60%), professional information (25-30%) and general knowledge courses (15-20%) (HEI, 2018). Accordingly, the rate of practical courses was decreased, while increasing the hours of theoretical courses which include elective courses of general knowledge and subject information. The professional teaching knowledge is included within the theoretical professional knowledge in this regard; only the course of “Teaching Practice” enables pre-service teachers to put their professional knowledge into practice. These courses are critical as they enable the afore-noted practice, introduce pre-service teachers to the target audience, and help them prepare themselves for their professions. Pre-service teachers personally experience certain processes such as observation, research, planning or implementation in the courses of “Teaching Practice”. With systematic efforts in these courses, the aim is to provide teaching skills and professional competence set by the Ministry of National Education (MNE) to the pre-service teachers. This professional competence covers the following: “personal and professional values, getting to learn the students, process of learning and teaching, observing the process of learning and development, understanding the relationships between the schools, families and the society, and having the knowledge of the program and content (MNE, 2017). However, random disconnections between MNE and Council of Higher Education (CHE), certain practices within the faculties of education, and the socio-economic characteristics of the provinces hosting these faculties may create problems in the process of training teachers. Thus, the General Council of Higher Education annulled the decision dated 12.04.2018 regarding the teaching programs, and granted the relevant authority to the universities. However, the decision stipulated that the order set by CHE in regard to grouping courses, course periods and course content shall be observed.

Changes made to the process of training teachers are the clearest indicators of the search for the solution. However, this issue has yet to be solved. The problems such as the failure of terminating the issues and deficiencies in the policies of training teachers and solution propositions, and failure of performing developments within the unity of the system and ensuring rehabilitation in this regard have increased and reached the present day (Abazoğlu, Yıldırım, & Yıldızhan, 2016). According to the results of “International Research on Teaching and Learning” conducted by the Organization for European Economic Cooperation and Development every one of four teachers from the countries including Turkey did not participate in the activities of professional development, and those who participated in these activities considered these occasions as insufficient for meeting their professional needs (OECD, 2008). The efforts to renew programs and the search for solution within continue within the educational policies in Turkey. Trials are conducted for many different models in the countries searching for the solutions of the problems within the professional development of teachers (Bayram & Bıkmaz, 2019). One of these model trials is called “lesson study”, which has emerged in and spread from Japan and supported teachers’ professional development in the recent years (Boran & Tarım, 2016; Dağ-Akbaba & Temur-Doğan, 2018; Dudley, 2012; Karabuğa, 2018).

For pre-service teachers, a real class environment includes many factors to be controlled and observed and may appear complicated for pre-service teachers, which results in excessive excitement (Arsal, 2015; Karataş, Cengiz, & Uludüz, 2020). The “lesson study” model can be considered to correctly manage this process. This model is used within the professional developments of teachers and based on

cooperative efforts, and it represents the courses that are the targets of a direct study (Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004, p. 7). The lesson study model that has been designed for the professional development of pre-service teachers includes the discussions and opinions of a group of pre-service teachers about a course plan that they prepare in cooperation and about how they can instruct their classes by effectively implementing and observing this plan (Günay, Yücel-Toy, & Bahadır, 2016; Lewis & Perry, 2014, Müldür & Çevik, 2020; Sarkar Arani, & Matoba, 2006). This model has been revealed upon the ever-increasing interest toward the idea of filling the gap between theory and practice, and it helps the professional development of teachers (Dağ-Akbaba & Temur-Doğan, 2018). According to different researchers, the lesson study model has different practices (Cerbin, 2011; Dudley, 2014; Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004; Lewis & Hurd, 2011; Murata, 2011). The model consists of four stages as determining the targets in general terms, planning the course, implementing the plan (research course) and assessment (Bütün, 2015).

The first step of the lesson study model is based on determining the purpose. The common objectives of the group should be formed in cooperation in this phase; the common objective of lesson study model for the pre-service teachers is to gain teaching skills in regard to their professional development. Then, planning phase is conducted based on the pre-determined objectives. While planning the content of a course, determining the activities based on the preliminary knowledge and level of students and presenting the numbers and order of the examples appropriately is critical. Planning the course also requires awareness regarding the conceptual mistakes and difficulties in terms of the relevant topics for students, and taking necessary measures in this regard (Baki & Arslan, 2015). Teachers gather to create a course plan in the cooperative planning phase. The most fundamental characteristic of this planning phase is that it is based on meticulous and detailed efforts. Teachers benefit from previous experiences, student-related observations, teachers' guidance, course books and relevant sources (Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004, p. 7). The second phase includes the implementation of the course plan. In this phase, one of the teachers practice the course plan with a group of their colleagues, while the other group observes them based on certain instructions (Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004). The third phase consists of discussions where teachers share their observations and reactions and provide their suggestions regarding the course instructed in a real classroom environment; and the fourth phase is the optional stage of revision (Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004, p. 8). In the fourth phase, the group assesses the issues until being satisfied from the latest form of the course (Fernandez, 2005). It is clear that the cycle may be maintained with the implementation and assessment processes following the course plan preparation stage conducted as a group per certain objectives.

The lesson study model is a professional development model regarding the teachers (Lewis, Perry, & Murata, 2014; Murata, 2011); this model has many advantages as understood from the literature. The greatest advantage of this model is that it directs group members to take more responsibilities about their learning processes and to cooperate (Boran & Tarım, 2016; Coenders & Verhoef, 2019; Droese, 2010; Gözel, 2017; Jacobs, 2012; Kıncal, Ozan, & İleritürk, 2019). As participation in cooperation increases the self-efficacy level, the teaching practices are also improved (Roberts, 2010). Through cooperation, this model directs participants to question and realize different perspectives (Bütün, 2019). Participants' skills of problem solving are also improved (Gözel, Erdem, & Toptaş, 2020). In addition, the process of learning/teaching topics and concepts is also ensured, and professional development is boosted (Bilge & Dede, 2020). The lesson study model develops teachers' skills of classroom management (Schipper, Goei, de Vries, & van Veen, 2018). Lesson study creates relational trust between the groups of school shareholders, assisting in the formation of a professional learning group and supporting personal and organization changes (Droese, 2010). This model increases the interaction, cooperation, peer-learning and self-efficacy perception between the teachers, improving students' self-regulation skills (Doğan,

2018). Considering these advantages, it is safe to state that the lesson study model helps and contributes to both pre-service teachers and experiences teachers.

Bütün (2019) states that the interaction between teachers is critical for the development of teachers and thus suggests the formation of a sharing network extending all over Turkey. Similarly, Eraslan (2008) notes that lesson study model should be implemented in the pre-service and in-service trainings of teachers in Turkey to increase the cooperation between teachers, developing the professional qualities of teachers, and training teachers' success, which suggests that the afore-noted interaction and sharing should be present in all stages of professional development. However, researches from the literature in Turkey and other countries indicate that the lesson study model has been generally conducted in the disciplines of mathematics and science (Carrier, 2011; Chassels & Melville, 2009; Serbest, 2014), and that the model-related studies are rather limited for certain fields such as language teaching (Nami, Marandi, & Sotoudehnama, 2016). The studies regarding the lesson study model were conducted in the fields of mathematics (Boran & Tarım, 2016; Budak, Budak, Bozkurt, & Kaygın, 2011; Bütün, 2012, 2015, 2019; Güner & Akyüz, 2017); primary education (Baki, 2012; Dağ-Akbaba & Temur-Doğan, 2018); and English teaching (Bayram & Bıkmaz, 2018; Yalcin- Arslan, 2019) in Turkey. There was only one relevant study in the field of Turkish teaching (Müldür & Çevik, 2020). This study is believed to fill the gap in the literature and guide new studies, with the hope that the number of studies regarding the models of training teachers in the field of Turkish teaching will increase. Accordingly, this study is important as it is one of the first studies in this regard. The literature review indicates that the studies of lesson study model was mostly performed with the pre-service teachers thus far, and the participation of impacts of other main actors such as practice teachers and instructors were neglected. This study is also particularly important in terms of reflecting how the practice teacher and instructor who took active participation in the practice phase were affected from the process. This study aims to determine the experiences and perceptions of pre-service Turkish teachers, instructor and the practice teacher within the lesson study practice phase. Accordingly, answers for the following question were sought: "What are the perceptions and experiences of participants in terms of the lesson study model?"

## **2. Method**

This section provided information about the study design, working group, data collection and data analysis.

### *2.1. Study Design*

In this study, the lesson study model was implemented within the course of Teaching Practice in the Department of Turkish Education at a state university in Turkey, and this model was assessed in line with the information obtained from different sources such as pre-service teachers, practice teachers, experiences and ideas of instructors, observations, interviews and reports. Therefore, this research was conducted as a case study. The "cases" in a case study may differ based on certain actions and concepts regarding a person, event or the implementation of a certain program (Glesne, 2006). Detailed and extensive data are collected through multiple sources of information such as observation, interviews, documents or reports in these studies (Creswell, 2012; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). In the holistic single-case designs, a single analysis unit such as a person, institution, program or school is present (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). This holistic single-case design was used in this study which assessed the conformity of a certain program for the field of Turkish Education in Turkey.

## 2.2. Study Group

The study group was selected through the convenience sampling method, a purposeful sampling method (Patton, 2014). The study was conducted within the course of Teaching Practice in the Department of Turkish Teaching at the university where the researcher works as an instructor. The study group was formed accordingly. While determining the participants, certain criteria that should be present within the groups where lesson study model was used were considered. People who are to participate in the lesson study model should consist of the people who can be in harmony, participate in the works voluntarily, and consider the planned courses from a holistic perspective rather than a personal view (Lewis & Hurd, 2011; Serbest, 2014). The number of members in a group of teachers participating in the model should range between three and six (Cerbin, 2011; Serbest, 2014). The pre-service teachers who took the Teaching Practice course were interviewed, and three of them (T1, T2, T3) who wanted to participate in the study and believed that they could implement the model effectively were included in the study. Additionally, considering the same criteria, the sampling group included the practice teacher who had a role in the teaching practice and the instructor who managed the classroom (I).

## 2.3. Implementation Process

Before initiating the study model practice, the lesson study model was introduced to the pre-service teachers and practice teacher. Examples from different practices of lesson study model were provided, and pre-service teachers and practice teacher were informed. At this point, the researcher made efforts to not mention the positive or negatives sides of the model, which was also the case for the study of Bütün (2015), and not influence the perspectives of participants.

Following the introductory phase regarding the study model, the practice phase was initiated. In the latter phase, the group was asked to complete two cycles regarding a pre-determined learning field. The group initially made decisions of learning field, learning outcome and classroom levels. Selecting a difficult learning field and outcome was deemed appropriate, which is the case for lesson study models. Accordingly, group members made the decision of working in the field of reading skills. Pre-service teachers decided to perform a practice at the level of sixth-graders for the outcome *T.6.3.4. Use of reading strategies* within the Program of Teaching Turkish (MNE, 2019) in the lesson study model after consulting to the advisors and practice teachers. Pre-service teachers reviewed the printed sources (theoretical books or programs) and web sources, and examined the activity models they could use in course plans. Pre-service teachers gathered and formed the draft of course plan in cooperation. Then, they revised the draft plan in line with the practice and feedbacks of advisors, and gave the final form to the course plan. Moreover, group members made a decision about the classes where the practice was to be performed within the first and second cycles. Accordingly, pre-service teachers determined “the expected student behaviors” for each phase of the course plan. Pre-service teachers also benefited from the observations and efforts of practice teachers as well as their own observations. Finally, pre-service teachers made a decision about the pre-service teachers who would implement the practices of lesson study model, and the planning report required by the model was created.

The plan was prepared within the research courses in the school where the implementation was performed. The course plan of the first cycle was implemented by T2 in the classroom 6/B within the research course which was conducted for two hours. Other pre-service teachers, practice teacher and advisor observed the course in line with the Observation Form as per the lesson study model. In this process, participants focused on whether the course was conducted as per the plan, the perceptions and behaviors expected from students were fulfilled, and methods and activities used were effective.

Following the first research course, participants gathered and assessed how the course was instructed, prepared a report about how to improve the process, and made necessary changes to the course plan.

Following this assessment, the course plan regarding the second cycle was implemented in classroom 6/C by T3. This course was also observed and assessed by other group members in line with the lesson study model, which was also the case for the first cycle.

#### *2.4. Data collection tools*

Three different data collection tools were used in the study. First of them included the interview forms. The form with semi-structured interview items was used to obtain information about the experiences and ideas of participants from the lesson study model. Following each phase of the lesson study model (course planning, practice and assessment), interviews were conducted with the participants. In such interviews, efforts should be made to perform the interviews in environments where the participants would feel comfortable, to not ask directive and close-ended questions, and to enable participants to talk mainly (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 2013), all of which were observed in this study.

The second data collection tool of this study was the observation form. All participants other than the researcher, practice teacher and the pre-service teacher instructing the course observed the lastly-mentioned pre-service teacher and filled the observation form prepared by Bütün (2012).

In addition to the interviews and observations, another data collection tool used in this study was the documents. All sorts of course plans generated by the pre-service teachers in the study processes were preserved. Moreover, the researcher asked the pre-service teachers and practice teacher to fill the assessment form regarding each step of the lesson study model. The researcher also took subject notes during the entire study.

#### *2.5. Data analysis*

The voice records obtained during the interviews were transcribed in this study which examined the experiences and thoughts of pre-service teachers, practice teacher, instructor and teachers. Then, the stage of analysis was initiated after repetitively reading and revising the data obtained through observations, interviews and documents. Following the organization of the data, results and data were examined through content analysis that can be defined as the process of extensively and systematically interpreting a certain material to determine patterns, meanings and themes (Lune & Berg, 2016). A deductive or inductive perspective can be employed in the content analysis (Seggie & Bayyurt, 2015). The data of the present study were examined from an inductive perspective, each datum regarding the research questions was coded, and these codes were grouped and transformed into categories (Merriam, 2013, p. 170-172).

#### *2.6. Validity and Reliability*

Different strategies were used to achieve validity and reliability in qualitative studies. The triangulation method was used in this study. This method is one of the main strategies to increase the credibility of a qualitative study (Merriam, 2013, p. 205). Different triangulation methods were used in the study. In addition to the interviews, multiple methods were used through the observations and collection of documents. Moreover, multiple data sources were used by utilizing the data of people with different perspectives (instructor, pre-service teacher, practice teacher). Multiple interviews were conducted with pre-service teachers and practice teacher; reflective reports were collected from pre-service teachers at different times, and observations were extended through the entire process.

To increase the credibility of the study, member control was utilized and participants' ideas regarding the credibility of the results were asked (Creswell, 2012). Pre-service teachers and practice teacher were asked to give feedbacks about the results, and certain changes that would reflect their perspective better were made in line with their suggestions.

To increase the potential citation rate for this study, the actions performed in this study period as well as the study model, study group, data collection tools, data analysis, implementation process and results were explained in detail. Efforts were made to cite each participant in the references regarding the participants' ideas and to review the ideas that would provide detailed information about the theme.

The agreement between the coders was utilized to increase the credibility of the study. Data were collectively coded by the researchers and divided into themes. Then, the examples selected from the data set were coded by another expert of the field, and the agreement between the coders was calculated (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). This agreement rate was found to be 86% in the current study. Accordingly, it is safe to state that there is an agreement between the coders.

### 2.7. Ethical Processes

Official permissions were received from MNE and the universities where the model was implemented before the study. Moreover, the practice teacher and pre-service teachers were informed about how the process would progress in each phase, and they were asked to sign the participant permission form considering the criteria of Creswell (2012) and his model form. They were told that their names would not be mentioned in any phase of the report, that an alias would be used for them, and that their data would be kept as confidential. Accordingly, efforts were made to make the participants feel safe and comfortable in regard to the privacy and reliability of the study.

## 3. Results

Three categories as positive experiences, issues and contributions emerged at the end of the study. The sub-categories, codes and participants' ideas regarding these categories are presented in detail.

### Positive Experiences

The sub-categories, codes and details regarding the code numbers within the category of positive experiences are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Positive Experiences

Sub-Categories	Codes	f
Preparing and implementing effective lesson plans for reading	Implementation of a configuration process based on active learning	51
	Implementation of motivating reading activities	30
	Progression of the implementation phase based on the plan	15
	Total	96
Effective management of the classroom	Effective communication and consolidation	30
	Ability to generate solutions for undesired student behaviors	12
	Appropriate and explicit expressions and instructions	11
	Correct reflection of the estimated student behaviors	11
	Total	64
Satisfaction	Satisfaction from the plan and success in the implementation	5
	Satisfaction from students' participation in the classes	3
	Satisfaction from participants' interests	3
	Total	11
Cooperation	Cooperation between the pre-service teachers	7
	Cooperation between instructors and pre-service teachers	2

	Cooperation between practice teachers and pre-service teachers	2
	Total	11
Investigation	Examination of the Programs of Teaching Turkish	5
	Searching course materials on the Internet	3
	Examination of Turkish Course Books	2
	Total	10
Facilitation of the Process via courses	Micro-teaching practices within the undergraduate	2
	Observation of the peer in the first cycle	2
Preliminary Knowledge and Experiences	Total	4
	Total	196

The sub-categories that yielded the highest number of codes under the category of positive experiences were related to the effective implementation of course plan and management of classroom. In the process of effective course plan implementation, pre-service teachers as well as instructor and practice teacher implemented different reading methods in the process of using different reading methods in the first and second cycles, stating that the course gained an active form. Additionally, a process that was free from traditional concepts and activities and centered on the students and process of learning, and where teachers undertook the role of a guide was present in both cycles. Participants stated that the activities were motivating and that even the reluctant students participated in courses. Pre-service teachers mentioned about many positive aspects of lesson study model in both cycles. The interesting characteristics of pre-service teachers in terms of effective communication included the efforts to include all students to the courses, calling students with their names, and using a positive and descriptive language. While preparing the course plan, participants received the support of practice teacher and determined the “expected student behaviors”; accordingly, pre-service teachers correctly determined the expected student behaviors. Participants stated that pre-service teachers managed to find solutions for adverse cases such as reluctance to participate in courses or distraction. They noted that the explanations and instructions were appropriate and clear. Other sub-categories of positive experiences included satisfaction, cooperation, conducting research, preliminary information and contribution of experiences. Regarding the sub-category of satisfaction, pre-service teachers stated that they were happy with the success in plans and practices, and with the participation of students. Moreover, they reported that the positive feedbacks of practice teacher and instructor about the entire process made them happy. Regarding the sub-category of cooperation, all participants mostly worked in harmony in all phases of the process, exchanging ideas with one another, and supported each other. Considering the sub-categories of the research, pre-service teachers examined the current and previous Turkish Teaching Programs, assessed different Turkish course books, and performed researches on the Internet to find materials. In addition, the micro-teaching practices of pre-service teachers facilitated the lesson study process. The participant instructing the course in the second cycle stated that it was easier to manage the process owing to the chance of observing the colleague who managed the first cycle. Based on the theme of positive experiences, some of participants’ ideas are as follows:

“The environment of Turkish course should be a place where students clearly reflect their ideas and participate in the course. I saw that students actively participated in the process of instructing Turkish course. Pre-service teachers aimed to prepare an effective course plan by performing examinations and asking for assistance from me before this course that focuses on the reading skills. Preliminary efforts for reading skills were made through the question and answer method and



course videos. The teacher acted as a model for the reading phase by reading texts aloud. In this process, students were asked to guess the following parts of what the teacher read. The guessing game was played in line with the context of the text; additionally, the game of walking on a straight line with eyes closed was also played, which helped students be active. I saw that the students were impressed by the activities. Participation rate was good. The objective of the course was met.” (Preparing and practicing effective course plan for reading, First Cycle, Practice Teacher, Observation)

“The pre-service teacher managing the first cycle called the students by their names in the entire course. It was surprising for me to see how this pre-service teacher managed to learn students’ names in such a short period of time... Students’ knowledge was consolidated throughout the course. Students were approved with positive remarks such as well done or good job... Moreover, this pre-service teacher overcame the issue of making the introverted students talk and participate in the course.” (Effective classroom management, First Cycle, Instructor, Subject Note)

“High participation rate made us all happy. Students who shared their feelings following the practice ended the activity with the answers that we wanted to hear.” (Satisfaction, First Cycle, Pre-Service Teacher 1, Observation)

“There was a harmony between us throughout the entire process, and thanks to this harmony, we had a good communication between us. We had no problems regarding the activities. We checked the program, consulted to the teachers and selected the texts collectively. We listened to ourselves and made common decisions.” (Cooperation, First Cycle, Pre-Service Teacher 3, Interview)

“We reviewed the articles where reading activities and guessing games were conducted but we could not obtain much data. We checked the 2005 Turkish Teaching Program mentioned by our instructor at the university (instructor), and we reviewed the 2013 course book of MNE provided by our advisor. In addition, we performed researches on the Internet for different visuals and short movies we could use in the preparatory stage.” (Performing research, Second Cycle, Pre-Service Teacher 2, Interview)

“A good course instruction required a good plan. We were ready for a good plan in this regard. The micro-teaching practices that we learned in our Special Teaching Methods course within our undergraduate program helped us significantly because we started preparing a plan in the third grade and we actually used these course plans as an example.” (Preliminary Knowledge and Experiences, Second Cycle, Pre-Service Teacher 1, Interview)

### **Issues**

The details regarding sub-categories, codes and code numbers within the category of issues are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Issues

Sub-Categories	Codes	f
Issues in the Process	Seeking sources for reading activities	9
	Preparing different course plans for different classes	5
	Technical Issues	4
	Making decisions for reading activities	2
	Teachers' failure in following the course plan	2
	Student-related issues	2
	Total	24
Model	Obligation of group work by the model	5
	More responsibilities for the person instructing the class	3
	Being observed by a couple of people	2
	Requirement of extensive efforts for the planning process	2
	Failure in understanding the model initially	1
	Ability of a certain group of teachers to instruct classes	1
	Total	14
Negative Feelings	Concerns	4
	Excitement	2
	Discomfort	2
	Total	8
Total		46

Issues regarding the process and lesson study model were found under the category of issues, and participants were found to have certain negative feelings. Considering the general problems within the process, participants had the highest number of issues with the planning process. Pre-service teachers reported that they had problems while searching for sources for the reading activities, and that 2019 Turkish Teaching Program and the course book of this program were insufficient in this regard. Moreover, they stated that each classroom had a different ambiance and that they had issues as they had to upgrade the course plans for each classroom. They also had problems while making decisions for the reading activities as there were ideological differences within the group. Technical issues were the source of the problems experienced within the implementation phase. Internet connection got poorer during the implementation phase, resulting in issues while showing videos to the children. Pre-service teacher reached beyond the course plan in two parts due to excitement. For instance, that pre-service teacher read a text from the course book which actually should have been read from a photocopied paper, which distorted the flow of the course. Student-related issues were associated with the overcrowded population within the classroom. During the process, all students in the classroom wanted to participate in a certain activity, and as this was not possible, motivation of some of them partially decreased. In addition to this problematic process, issues also emerged owing to the structure of the lesson study model. Accordingly, ideological differences emerged between the group members in the planning phase as the model obligated group work. Participants stated that the person instructing the course took more responsibilities and thus experienced more professional burden. In addition, failure of understanding how the model was to be implemented in the early phase, observation of the person instructing the class by a couple of persons as an activity of the model, Ability of a certain group of teachers to instruct classes, and requirement of significant time and professional burden created problems. Participants had negative feelings such as concerns, discomfort or excessive excitement due to being observed by others,

abstaining from sharing ideas, or disliking of being criticized by the peers. Certain statements regarding the issues were as follows:

“The greatest source of our dilemma regarding the teaching activities was the insufficiency of 2019 Turkish Teaching Program and the course book used in this program. No information or explanation regarding the processing of informational gains was present in the program... 2015 Turkish Teaching Program had examples of activities but 2019 program was insufficient in terms of directing us to activities. We had problems while searching for our text and designing the activities.” (Issues in the process, First Cycle, Pre-service Teacher 3, Interview)

“They had to perform group work as per the lesson study model. They had difficulties while determining activities as they had different ideas although they worked in harmony. Plans were prepared in cooperation but only person wrote the plans down, and internalized and practiced the plans.” (Issues regarding the model, Second Cycle, Instructor, Subject Note)

“They had a difficulty in the lesson study model. Pre-service teacher got excited after being present before a couple of teachers and pre-service teachers. That pre-service teacher failed to do what we planned, and did certain actions that were not to be done accidentally... Moreover, we were not comfortable while assessing one another as we were also friends, directing less constructive criticisms to each other. We did not mention each of our criticisms.” (Negative feelings, Second Cycle, Pre-Service Teacher 1, Group Report)

### Contributions

The details regarding sub-categories, codes and code numbers within the category of contributions are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Contributions

Sub-Categories	Codes	f
Contribution to Teaching Skills	Development of planning skills	17
	Development of classroom management skills	10
	Consolidating the previous learning	3
	Total	30
Contribution to Collaboration Skills	Increasing the skills of working collectively	5
	Development of Ideas	4
	Total	9
Total		39

The lesson study model contributed to the planning skill among the teaching skills the most. Accordingly, participants stated that they gained the skill of generating activities that suited the classroom ambience, made students more active in the process, and motivated them. Results indicated that participants had experiences in terms of planning within the micro-teaching practices in their undergraduate studies, but they were able to generate different plans for different classroom ambiances owing to the lesson study model. Additionally, pre-service teachers understood the importance of “determining expected student behavior” while preparing course plans. Regarding the classroom management, participants stated that they learned many concepts and processes for increasing students’ motivation, establishing positive communication with the students, providing effective feedback and instructing students. The model also contributed to the intra-class cooperation. Accordingly, participants

reported that working as a group enabled them to realize different ideas and helped them generate creative and different thoughts during the educational processes. They also emphasized that they developed the skill of working collectively by respecting the ideas of one another.

“Preparing two different plans within two cycles helped us gain experiences through this activity. We needed to know both classes well to establish proper communications with the students. We listed the student behaviors that we expected based on the course plan which we would implement as we were getting to know the students, which was a positive move for the future... I observed the importance of being prepared for the course and generating an effective plan in this regard. We prepared effective plans within both cycles, so I realized that our friend managed the process effectively and captured students’ attention... We performed practices within our undergraduate courses, but performing what I mentioned just now, I learned how I could control and organize the learning of students.” (Contribution to teaching skill, First and Second Cycles, Pre-Service Teacher, Interview)

“Pre-service teachers constantly supported each other. They made collective decisions. Their skills of working in cooperation improved more in the process, which was also the case for me. Through the group work, I improved my reading skills and discovered what could be performed as a different activity in this regard.” (Contribution to cooperation, Second Cycle, Practice Teacher, Observation).

#### **4. Discussion**

This study reflected the perceptions and experiences of pre-service teachers, practice teachers and instructors who collectively experienced the lesson study model implemented within the teaching practice. The results obtained in this study were collected under three categories as positive experiences, issues and contributions. Participants were found to have positive experiences at most. The following section included the discussions about the categories and compared them with the results of international studies.

Three categories as positive experiences, issues and contributions emerged at the end of the study. Among these categories, the one that was assessed by the participants the most was the positive experiences. Accordingly, participants’ positive experiences depended upon the planning and implementation of constructive and motivating activities based on active learning, and upon the effective management of classroom, satisfaction at the end of the process, cooperation between group members, skills of doing research, preliminary knowledge and experiences. The lesson study model is based on collaboration. Using this model, pre-service teachers, practice teachers and instructors were included in all phases of the process and shared their preliminary knowledge and experiences. Participants stated that they worked in harmony, that different ideas created variety, and that they selected the most appropriate ones among these ideas. Cooperation was effective in the planning phase; additionally, pre-service teachers effectively designed the process with the assistance of both practice teachers and instructors. Participants reported that they designed a reading teaching program that was constructive, motivated students and enabled active learning owing to the cooperation and trust between them. Moreover, according to the results, participants determined the “expected student behaviors” in the planning phase and found the potential issues that might arise from the reactions of each student to the activity, which facilitated the process and helped manage the classroom more effectively. In addition, pre-service teachers utilized different sources in the process of determining the activities and used the micro-teaching practices of their undergraduate studies. Accordingly, it is safe to state that the cooperation and trust between pre-service teachers, practice teachers and instructors, micro-teaching

practices of the undergraduate studies and relevant scientific efforts in this regard were effective in the formation of positive experiences from both cycles of lesson study model. A different study examined the prospective thoughts of pre-service teachers and found that these teachers trusted themselves and aimed to improve themselves, which suggests that micro-teaching practice encouraged pre-service teachers in improving their teaching skills (Karataş et al., 2020). Results of the present study match with the results of certain studies from the relevant literature. For instance, Bütün (2015) implemented lesson study model in a research and reported that pre-service teachers experienced problems in determining difficulties and mistakes arising from students in the planning phase, and in designing activities and materials in line with students' levels. Bütün associated this issue with the absence of cooperative and applied efforts and with the failure in receiving sufficient assistance from the practice teacher, which suggests that the positive collaboration between the participants and quality of the undergraduate education could be effective in the emergence of positive experiences. According to Lewis and Tsuchida (1998, p. 15), lesson study helps teachers realize different perspectives. According to Dudley (2012), lesson study model enables the systematical use of learning approaches related to the cooperative education model based on questioning, and it improves the professional knowledge and practices of participants. Bütün (2019) also emphasized that this model naturally directed teachers to question what was happening around them, helping them change their perspectives, and that these practices and the model were effective in the process of teaching mathematics with cooperation in classroom, discussions between students, researches and feedbacks. Bütün also noted that this process should be maintained for a longer period of time. Gözel et al. (2020) found that lesson study model positively affected many steps of problem solving actions taken by classroom teachers. The participants of the present study performed practices within different classroom environments, realized different perspectives, had the chance of questioning their ideas in collaboration, and performed quality reading activities. According to Dudley (2013), the lesson study model helps eliminate the filters such as complication of classrooms or students' secret characteristics. Participants of the present study discussed the reactions students might show to the reading activities, which positively affected classroom management in the practice phase.

Certain issues and negativity regarding the process and model were experienced at the end of the study, and participants mentioned about their negative feelings. Participants experienced the highest number of issues in the process of finding quality references and preparing course plans for different classes. Pre-service teachers reported that they had problems with the current Turkish Teaching Program as it was insufficient in terms of activities and guiding teachers. They stated that they used the Turkish Teaching Programs (2006) published in previous years as a solution. Kalaycı and Yıldırım (2020) compared the latest Turkish Teaching Programs and found that previous programs included teaching methods, techniques and activities suiting each student's learning habits, and that the programs enacted in 2017 and 2019 did not include these. It is fair to state that pre-service teachers experience difficulties in finding quality sources for creating activities in the process of implementing lesson study. Participants also had problems in preparing course plan for different classes. Students' profiles changed as the classes varied in cycles, and therefore, participants had to revise their course plans. As noted by Kıncal et al. (2019), research lessons are real lesson studying with students. Every course plan changes in line with the ambiance in classrooms, which results in extra professional burden for teachers. Müldür and Çevik (2020) applied two cycles in their study and found that classroom profile changed as the cycles varied, that participants had to change the course plan, and that participants had to undertake extra burdens in this case. The main problems regarding the model arose from the obligation of using the model in the group work. Differences emerged in the opinions regarding the phase of planning based on the group work. Group work also required an extensive amount of time and obligated a massive burden. How the model was to be implemented was not clearly understood in the early stages, and the person instructing the class in this process was observed by a couple of people. These results match with the findings of

the previous national or international studies. For instance, different studies (Bayram & Bıkmaz, 2018; Bilge & Dede, 2020; Bozkuş et al., 2017; Bozkurt & Yetkin Özdemir, 2016; Budak et al., 2011; Bütün, 2015; Boran & Tarım, 2016; Dağ-Akbaba & Temur-Doğan, 2018; Güner & Akyüz, 2017; Howell & Saye, 2016; Müldür & Çevik, 2020; Ono & Ferreira, 2010) indicated that lesson study model was time-consuming and that the model increased the burden of group members in the planning phase, which is a result resembling to the findings of the present study. The failure of understanding the model in the early periods of the process matches the results of the study by Bayram and Bıkmaz (2018) who observed that participants did not know what to do in the initial stages and that they were quite anxious. Being observed by others was a source of concern in the study of Bütün (2019), which was also the case for the present study. The pre-service teacher conducting the research course was observed by the practice teacher and instructor. In addition, participants had negative feelings such as anxiety, excitement or discomfort in the study period. These feelings arose from the idea of being observed by others, abstaining from or showing embarrassment toward sharing ideas with others, or disliking of being criticized by the peers. Bütün (2019) reported that participants were not comfortable while sharing their ideas in the process from time to time and felt excited owing to being observed, which obligates the formation of a group of people who are in harmony and trust themselves in the process of lesson study.

Another category that emerged as a result of the study is the category of contributions. The practice of lesson study contributed to participants' teaching skills and the cooperation between the participants. Moreover, the lesson study model positively affected the planning skills in a professional context. The classroom management skills and consolidation of the previous learning processes were also positively affected by the model. The model also increased the skills of working in collaboration and improved participants' ability to generate ideas. Similarly, different studies indicate that the lesson study model improved the professional development and cooperative working skills such as training awareness, planning course content, developing classroom management skills, deepening the knowledge of different subjects, working in cooperation, and the self-efficacy perceptions and self-confidence (Bayram & Bıkmaz, 2018; Budak et al., 2011; Bütün, 2015; Dağ-Akbaba & Temur-Doğan, 2018; Güner & Akyüz, 2017; Howell & Saye, 2016). Bilge & Dede (2020) has recently conducted a study and presented the advantaged of the model under three sub-categories: learning/teaching topics/concepts, cooperation and professional development. The greatest advantage of this model is that it directs group members to take more responsibilities about what they have learned (Boran & Tarım, 2016; Coenders & Verhoef, 2019; Droese, 2010; Gözel, 2017; Jacobs, 2012; Kınca et al., 2019).

Considering the results, practical efforts should be made while preparing course plan and classroom management content for the courses of pre-service teachers covering the early periods of their undergraduate education. Pre-service teachers should be included to group works, and collaborative working skills should be provided to them. For the lesson study process, an environment where participants can practice their preliminary knowledge and experiences, be guided through feedbacks and encourage one another constantly; group members should consist of people who can work in harmony and are open to communication and criticisms. The lesson study model can be performed with pre-service teachers, and the practice teachers and instructors who were included in the lesson study process within the school-related experiences, which is the case for the current study. However, due to the issues arising from the professional burdens in this regard, school experience class can be instructed in the third year rather than the fourth, or the implementation of lesson study model can be performed throughout an academic term. For the solution of the issues regarding the model, more time can be spared for teaching the model in the early periods. The lesson study model can also be implemented by the groups of teachers who work in the schools of MNE or private institutions. Accordingly, teachers' awareness of the educational methods can be raised, helping them solve their common problems in

cooperation. The lesson study model was examined in the context of a qualitative research within this study. A similar study can be conducted with a qualitative or mixed design. The researchers focused on the teaching of reading skill, a problematic subject in teaching Turkish. Future studies can focus on a different set of skills.

## 5. Conclusions

The lesson study model was implemented within the teaching practice performed in regard to the cooperation between schools and universities in Turkey. A holistic assessment of the study results indicated that sufficient assistance, cooperation and voluntariness were achieved, that an effective educational environment could be formed if the knowledge of the relevant subjects and teaching could be used in practice, that pre-service teachers could improve their teaching skills, and that lesson study model could be successfully used within the teaching practice course.

## 6. Ethics Committee Approval

The authors confirm that ethical approval was obtained from Bartın University (Approval Date: 26/02/2019).

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## Türkçe öğretmenliği programlarında “öğretmenlik uygulaması” dersi için bir model denemesi: Ders imecesi

### Öz

Bu çalışmada katılımcıların Türkiye’deki bir devlet üniversitesinin Türkçe Öğretmenliği programındaki Öğretmenlik Uygulaması dersi kapsamında yürütülen ders imecesi modeline ilişkin algı ve deneyimlerini tespit etmek amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma, nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden durum çalışması olarak desenlenmiştir. Araştırmanın çalışma grubu dersin yürütücüsü öğretim elemanı, uygulama öğretmeni ve üç öğretmen adayından oluşmaktadır. Araştırma verileri gözlem, görüşme ve dokümanlar aracılığıyla toplanmış; veriler içerik analizi yoluyla incelenmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda olumlu tecrübeler, sorunlar ve katkılar olmak üzere üç kategori ortaya çıkmıştır. Sonuçlar okuma becerisine ilişkin ders planı hazırlama ve uygulama, sınıf yönetimi, grup üyeleri arasındaki iletişim, araştırma yapma konularında katılımcıların olumlu tecrübelerle sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Olumlu tecrübeler kapsamında öğretmen adaylarının lisans eğitiminde yaptıkları mikro-öğretim uygulamalarının ders imecesi sürecinin niteliğini artırdığı ve özellikle öğretmen adaylarının hazırladıkları ve uyguladıkları ders planına, ortaokul öğrencilerinin derse katılımlarına ve öğretim elemanı ile uygulama öğretmenin olumlu geribildirimlerine bağlı olarak memnuniyet hissettikleri tespit edilmiştir. Sorunların süreç, model ve olumsuz duygulara bağlı olduğu görülmüştür. Süreçteki sorunların okuma etkinlikleri için kaynak bulma, farklı sınıflara uygun ders planı hazırlama gibi konularla ilişkili olduğu belirlenmiştir. Modelin grup çalışmasını zorunlu kılması, dersi yürüten kişinin sorumluluğunun daha fazla olması gibi modele bağlı sorunlar yaşanmıştır. Ayrıca süreçte öğretmen adaylarının endişe, heyecan gibi duygular hissettiği tespit edilmiştir. Son olarak ders imecesi modelinin öğretmenlik becerisine ve iş birliğine katkısının olduğu belirlenmiştir.

*Anahtar sözcükler:* Öğretmen yetiştirme, ders imecesi, Türkçe öğretimi, öğretmenlik uygulaması.

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