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## A REVIEW FOR INCREASING THE EFFICIENCY OF VISUAL ARTS COURSE IN PRIMARY EDUCATION FIRST STAGE

(İlköğretim I. Kademe Görsel Sanatlar Dersinin Verimini Artırmaya Yönelik Bir İnceleme)

**Semiha TÜRKAN TAŞ**

semoyku@hotmail.com

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### Abstract

The place and importance of art education is great within a planned training program. Considering the contribution of an individual's personality development, it can be better understood the necessity and importance of the quality. Targeted to be trained the individuals developed the visual perception with art education, self-expression, creative, exploratory, productive, environment-sensitive transducer and recognizing learning ,protecting the culture in which he lives and handing down the next generations, being respectful the world's cultural heritage and being constructive. By improving their confidence during the child's learning period, it contributes to her/his academic success. Art teaches how they could solve the problems by improving the imagination and creativity of children. If developed with together the ability to reflect the truth and the fact beginning to develop in his/her school years and the interest to art observed in little child , but then the art education takes no hesitation at all ages, the art is never interrupted. Wrong attitudes of families, other branch teachers, class masters and administrators cause to be detected as an education required only for talented students and just a leisure activity, a discharge area for the visual arts course. This situation leads to the idea of not being as important as the other subjects within the curriculum. This idea being common leads to be reacted normally the use of the study area of the other courses when the visual arts course is done. The artistic development in the child's development process is ignored and paid no attention. The curriculum of the art education and its dimensions such as teachers, student and media must be complete and the desired level. In case of the failure of one of these, it can be said that the goals will not be reached. The most important condition of being efficient and fitting the purpose of the art education is that the visual arts teacher who has been trained in this area should handle to this course. The classroom teachers enter to the visual arts course in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th classrooms of primary school. The courses for the training of the visual arts within the license training of the classroom teachers include the courses which are 2 credits of art education in the fourth semester and again 2 credits of visual arts teaching in the seventh semester. This period is not sufficient to have enough theoretical and practice-based and the experience and equipment for visual arts of classroom teacher. Because the visual arts course has a method rich and technical means and their use in teaching requires to do a lot of practice on this respect. In the field of application, if especially classroom teachers exhibit a negative and unstable attitude as the subject, tools, equipment, technique and method in education and training of the visual arts, this case causes not to materialize of the goals of course. All control and management staffs, teachers, parents and especially classrooms teachers should accept and adopt that this course is a teaching which has its own characteristics. Otherwise, it can lead to the idea that the picturing is a ability work for the classroom teachers. Furthermore, the picturing evokes the opinion that success in teaching is possible with the talent and expertise. Among the reasons this view, it is due to the idea of needed to make pictures under the photo-realistic of child or as an adult. This clearly means that the child extract from childness, and this is contrary to the nature of the child. It brings together not to understand to the child and being indifference to the interests and wishes. Although the child goes willingly and deliberately to the school, if he/she is forced to paint a certain type, it causes to return frustratedly and leaved the picturing .For this reason, the visual arts course; should keep the values of childness and must take advantage of. her/his development processes conditions. As a result, due to the need to be continuous of the visual arts course; this course must be conducted by the visual arts training teachers trained in this field instead of classroom teachers enter to the visual arts course in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th classrooms of primary school. Art education taught for its purpose for healthy and successful communities consisting of individuals completed personal training is mandatory.

**Key-words:** Art education, visual arts course

## **Özet**

Planlanmış bir eğitim programı içerisinde sanat eğitiminin yeri ve önemi büyüktür. Bireyin kişilik gelişimine katkısı düşünüldüğünde bu eğitimin zorunluluğu ve kalitesinin önemi daha iyi anlaşılır. Sanat eğitimi ile görsel algısı gelişmiş, kendini ifade edebilen, yaratıcı, araştırmacı üretken, çevresine duyarlı, dönüştürücü, içinde yaşadığı kültürü tanıyan, öğrenen, koruyan ve gelecek nesillere taşıyan, dünya kültür mirasına saygılı, yapıcı bireyler yetiştirilmesi hedeflenir. Çocuğun öğrenme sürecinde kendine güvenini geliştirerek akademik başarıya katkı sağlar. Sanat, çocukların hayal gücünü ve yaratıcılığını geliştirerek problemleri nasıl çözebileceklerini öğretir. Küçük çocukta yakalanan sanatsallıkla, okul döneminde gelişmeye başlayan doğruyu, gerçeği yansıtmaya becerisi birlikte gelişebilirse ancak o zaman sanat eğitimi her yaşta hiç duraksamadan sürer, yaratıcılık hiç kesintiye uğramaz. Ailelerin, başka branş öğretmenlerinin, sınıf öğretmenlerinin ve idarecilerin yanlış tutumları görsel sanatlar dersini sadece bir boş zaman etkinliği, deşarj olma alanı, sadece yetenekli öğrenciler için gerekli bir eğitim olarak algılanmasına neden olmaktadır. Bu durum, programda yer alan öteki dersler kadar önemli olmadığı düşüncesini doğurmaktadır. Yaygın olan bu düşünceden dolayı, görsel sanatlar dersinin başka derslerin çalışma alanı olarak kullanılmasının doğal karşılanmasına neden olmaktadır. Çocuğun gelişim sürecindeki sanatsal gelişim göz ardı edilmekte, çocuktaki gelişimin farkına varılmamaktadır. Sanat eğitiminin; ders programı, öğretmen, öğrenci, ortam ve materyal gibi boyutlarının tam ve istenilen seviyede olması gerekmektedir. Bunlardan birinin yetersizliği durumunda hedeflere ulaşamayacağı söylenebilir. Sanat eğitiminin verimli ve amacına uygun olmasının en önemli koşulu, bu alanda eğitim almış, görsel sanatlar öğretmeninin dersi işlemesidir. İlkokul 1.2.3 ve 4. Sınıflarda görsel sanatlar dersine sınıf öğretmenleri girmektedir. Sınıf öğretmenlerinin lisans eğitimlerinde görsel sanatlar eğitime yönelik aldıkları dersler 4. Yarıyıldan itibaren 2 kredilik Sanat Eğitimi ve 7. Yarıyıldan itibaren 2 kredilik Görsel Sanatlar Öğretimi dersleridir. Bu süre sınıf öğretmenlerinin görsel sanatlara yönelik yeterli teorik ve uygulamaya dayalı deneyim ve donanımına sahip olmaları için yeterli değildir. Çünkü görsel sanatlar dersi zengin bir yöntem ve teknik olanaklara sahiptir ve bunların öğretimde kullanılması bu konuda bolca uygulama yapmayı gerektirir. Uygulama alanında özellikle sınıf öğretmenlerinin görsel sanatlar eğitim ve öğretiminde konu, araç-gereç, teknik ve yöntem olarak kararsız ve olumsuz tavır sergilemeleri dersin amaçlarının gerçekleşmemesine neden olmaktadır. Tüm denetim ve yönetim kadrolarının, öğretmenlerin, ana- babaların ve özellikle sınıf öğretmenlerinin bu dersi kendine has özellikleri olan bir öğretim alanı olarak benimsemeleri gerekmektedir. Aksi halde bu durum sınıf öğretmenleri için resim yapmanın bir yetenek işi olduğu düşüncesine yol açabilir. Aynı zamanda resim öğretimindeki başarının bir yetenek ve uzmanlıkta mümkün olacağı görüşünü uyandırır. Bu görüşün nedenleri arasında, çocuğun yetişkin gibi ya da fotoğraf gerçekliğinde resim yapması gerektiği düşüncesinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu açıkça çocuğu çocukluğundan çıkarmak demektir ki bu çocuğun doğasına aykırı bir durumdur. Bu durum onu anlamamayı ilgi ve isteklerine kayıtsız kalınmasını da beraberinde getirir. Belirli tarzda resim yapmaya zorlamak, çocuğun okula resmi severek, bilerek başlamasına rağmen resim yapmasını unuttuğu, yılmış olarak okuldan çıkmasına neden olur. Bu nedenle görsel sanatlar dersi; çocuğa, çocukluğunu yaşatarak sanatsal gelişimini sağlamak durumundadır. Sonuç olarak; görsel sanatlar dersinin, kesintisiz olması gerekliliğinden dolayı, ilkokul 1. 2. 3. ve 4. Sınıflarda bu dersin, sınıf öğretmenlerinin yerine, bu alanda eğitim almış görsel sanatlar eğitimi öğretmenleri tarafından yürütülmesinin zorunlu olduğu kanısına varılmıştır. Kişilik eğitimini tamamlamış bireylerden oluşan sağlıklı ve başarılı toplumlar için amacına uygun işlenen sanat eğitimi zorunludur.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Sanat eğitimi, görsel sanatlar dersi.

## **Introduction**

Education is all the terminal behaviors which a person acquires within the period starting from her/his birth lasting till her/his death. All definitions made with different approaches lead us to the same conclusion. Education beginning with family develops with society and is implemented planned and programmed at schools.

The position and importance of art education is great in a planned training programme. The whole and complete personality development of an individual depends that training programme is to be implemented on its all fields. Contributions of art education on an individual can be determined as follows:

1. It enables an individual to express her/his feelings and thoughts, namely herself/himself freely and after her/his heart.

2. It activates one's creativity and enables her/him to experience the infiniteness of imagination. "Ambition to go beyond limits a child has inside should be awakened and it is provided that the child can paint with feeling coming from deepness of her/his soul and imagination." (Yavuzer, 2000).

Art education is essential in improvement of creativity. Albert Einstein's expression "When I analyze myself and my thought management, I conclude that my talent of fantasy is more meaningful than my ability to internalize science." is in that direction. (akt. Artut 2009). Child develops different point of views towards incidents. Inventions can happen by this means.

3. Individual's producing something belonging to herself/himself enable her/him to create her/his own language. Thus, individuality can be enabled.

As to Tolstoy art; "emerged the necessity to express the same feeling in a way determined by movement, sound, line, color or words so that other people can feel it as well after a person animates a feeling s/he felt once on herself/himself" (akt Yolcu).

4. Art education forms one's self-confidence. Thus, s/he can success in other fields, as well.

5. Art education enables an individual to direct herself/himself and work regularly.

6. It creates individuals who are aware towards environment, realize problems beforehand, and produce original solutions.

7. Individuals learn to use global language of art on communication.

"It seems as if all the children all over the world spoke the same language when they hold pencils, brushes and paints. As it is like the similarity between the paintings decorating the walls of Cave Altamira in Spain and paintings sculpted on the rocks on mountains in Hakkari." (Edgü, 1999).

8. S/he teaches to be respectful towards others.

9. S/he comprehends necessity of art and appreciates art and artists.

10. S/he learns her/his own culture.

11. Individual's development reflects on society; therefore, a productive, art-lover, art literate society comes into existence.

12. Individuals who feel success and happiness of producing something generally learn to get pleasure out of life.

"According to Dewey, art is living and a different activity which provides acquisitions that can rearrange human conscious and thus encourages power forming emotion unity and person's creative part." (Akt; Eisner, 1972).

Child is totally different from adults in emotions, ideas and perspective of life. Klee indicates "The first traces of art are at ethnography museums and kinder gardens; children present a sample of art with the

paintings they created without receiving aid from outside” on his article he wrote for a magazine in 1972 (Werkmeister, 1977).

When looking at a child’s painting, excessive critical, negative, dyslogistic or indifferent attitudes alienate her/him from her/his creativity. Thus, it is necessary to have an efficient knowledge of artistic stages in a child’s development process and develop behavior accordingly.

To define shortly these stages;

1. Sketching stage (at the ages of 2-4)
2. Pre-schema stage (at the ages of 4-7)
3. Schematic stage (at the ages of 7-9)
4. Pretention to reality stage (at the ages of 9-10)
5. Reality stage (at the ages of 11-13)
6. Adolescence stage (at the age of 13 and older)

Every child starts to her/his first painting experience with sketching. During this process, adults should assure and reinforce her/him. Child should not be restricted at home environment and set free. “Child has explored there is a connection between her/his lines s/he draws and her/his movements” (Kehnemuyi, 2009). Sketching act turns into an activity s/he feels happy to practice over and over. “The first years of life pass with efforts of research and exploration. This first interest is motivated sufficiently and if it is directed to a goal, creative activity will start at early ages.” (Gürtuna, 2003).

At pre-schema stage, child begins to draw anything s/he sees around. S/he paints figures scattered at site. S/he creates unique solutions. There is disproportion among her/his drawings in compliance with real dimensions. However, child draws bigger the details which seem important to her/him.

“Child of schematic stage deduces all entity and objects at space. This conscious and exploration turn into a symbol called “point line”. From now on child considers herself/himself as a part of the environment and attributes anything s/he does to this respect. Hereby, we can say that child takes her/his first step into social apprehension” (Kehnemuyi, 1995).

At this stage real artistic productions commence. Child does not accept coincidences and reaches rights through repetition. At the ages of 9-11 child starts to concern about reality more. At this stage it is seen that s/he gives more place to details. At those ages the teacher should avoid photorealistic works. It needs to be advised that reality is the impression it forms for us, but not to imitate identically. Thus, it is given an opportunity to be formed individual differences.

At reality stage child is in an emotional and social development. Her/his ambition to learn is so high. Teachers and parents should appraise this condition in a positive way. “At those ages the primary difficulty waiting for children is the trouble to find their own personality and enhance communication with their immediate vicinity and friends. (Yavuzer, 2003. akt. Gürtuna).

At the ages of 12-14, child has passes to logical stage. Teachers and parents should approach towards individual differences tolerantly in order to allow them to reach puberty in an easier way. At this stage mostly

human figure is illustrated. They tend to express visually incidents happened at their surroundings. It is needed to be teachers who are aware of psychological and physiological aspects of youth. "If artistic aspects grabbed at childhood and ability to reflect truth and reality begun to develop at school age are improved together, art education continues without pauses at all ages and creativity never has cut." (Kırıřođlu, 1994).

In order to implement fine arts courses relevantly and successfully at schools, a well-prepared lesson plan, appropriate practicing environment, adequate course period, obtaining equipments and course teacher should be planned. As to Picasso "Each child is an artist. The point is how the child to be preserved as an artist at process of her/his growth and development." (akt. Artut, 2009).

The teachers form the most important part of teaching visual arts courses relevantly. Otherwise, even if all conditions are satisfied, no success could be achieved.

"Visual arts courses have always been a lesson which could not get its just reward for years. It is considered as a spare time activity and activities in which children can relax rather than a discipline. It is always been in a position of a circumstantial course at schools. Educator, manager, parents and pupils consider society's art education gradually in that way." (Kırıřođlu, 2005).

It is a matter of regarding visual art courses as a programme which is planned only to explore and improve the talented ones at schools. However, child should have a decent art education from sketching stage in her/his development process. This education must continue. Restricting and misleading attitudes of out-of-field teachers obstruct creativity. Preschool teacher's making children color ready made pictures (coloring books, e.g.) is an example for this.

School administration approach towards visual art courses is another factor affecting operation. Most school principals stand indifferent to the requirements of visual art courses while they fulfill needs of other disciplines urgently. Grade teachers teach particularly visual art courses at 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades of primary school. Most of the teachers showed how to draw or drew a sample on the blackboard and asked them to draw the same of the sample. It is a true-life example that the children made to draw pictures by using rulers throughout year so as to enhance ruler usage in mathematics. Another example is that a mathematics teacher who took the class since there was not a branch teacher at school taught "graphic design" subject through graphic curves consisted of numerical axis. Many negative examples like those have undermined the real goal of the lesson. Children have alienated from the lesson and attended to secondary school as being become blind because of wrong approaches. As a consequence, insufficient course duration and appropriate classes could not be provided at schools in addition to these negativities prevent operation of visual art courses.

## **Method**

The data used at this study derives from the questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions which was applied to branch teachers, grade teachers who teach visual art courses at 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades of primary school and visual art teachers in Adana. The answers of questions asked to 12 visual art teachers and 28 grade teachers are evaluated.

## **Findings**

We can specify the answers of grade teachers who teach fine arts at primary schools and branch teachers at secondary school.

### **1. Do you follow artistic activities?**

It has been found that all of the visual art teachers follow cinema, 10 of them go to art galleries, 10 of them go to theatres and 8 of them attend other activities. It has been seen that grade teachers attend these kinds of activities less often. It has been indicated that 4 of 18 teachers could not follow cinema, 14 of them go to cinema, 6 of them go to theatre and 2 of them attend other activities.

### **2. Are there any negative sides you encounter during courses?**

All of the visual art teachers indicate that the courses duration is so less, 10 of them tell that there are not proper workshop environment and equipments of lessons are inadequate and 8 of them say that the classes are so crowded. 4 of them indicate that they are disturbed owing to noises. 16 of grade teachers indicate that untalented pupils create difficulties at lessons, 14 of them think that class environment is insufficient, 8 of them tell that they do not know some of the techniques and 4 of them state explanations at guidebook are inefficient.

### **3. How do you cope with pupils who are not interested in the course?**

It has been found that 5 of visual art teachers would ask pupils to study subject they want, 4 of them would give pupils materials and motivate them, 2 of them would evaluate them with grades. 4 of them indicate that there are not any pupils who are not interested in the lesson. It has been seen that 14 of grade teachers would persuade pupils to draw, 8 of them would evaluate them with grades. 6 of them claim that music can raise participation.

### **4. What is your favorite visual art course activity?**

9 of visual art teachers indicate that they love all of the techniques and 6 of them state that they do not want to have activities difficult to be practiced at classrooms made (techniques such as water color and gouache paints create troubles as there cannot be found water at classrooms and there is not enough time). 6 of them states they achieve success in subjects like examination of work of art owing to projection and computers. 15 of grade teachers state that they love free working on grounds that they use imagination of pupils, 8 of them tell that they use the technique of drawing by using sample picture and work by using models. 6 of them indicate that the children love cut and paste activities.

### **5. At which part of visual art courses do you have difficulty most?**

It has been seen that 10 of visual art teachers have difficulty in extrascholastic trips (museums, e.g.), 5 of them thinks that there is not appropriate place for clay workings, 4 of them say that the equipments of courses are insufficient, 4 of them state that the timing is inadequate and 2 of them tell they have to send printing works to home. The whole grade teachers indicate that they have difficulty in practicing techniques they do not know, 2 of them say they cannot dominate most activities and 4 of them state that they cannot have

activities in which classroom gets dirty done.

#### **6. Do you go to museums and art galleries with pupils?**

Visual art teachers indicate that they would like to go but it is difficult to plan because of time and financial matters. Grade teachers have made the same comments.

#### **7. Do you give theoretical information during courses?**

All of the visual art teachers state that theoretical information is necessary and they give information from time to time. 14 of grade teachers remark that they give information on the book while particularly talking about art movement and 4 of them tell that they give so less information.

#### **8. Which techniques do you use at courses?**

Visual art teachers specify that they use all techniques they can practice at classroom. Grade teachers state that they teach the techniques took part in plan.

#### **9. Which artists' works do you show to your pupils?**

Visual art teachers remark that they present all artists with their workings which are on the plan and grade teachers indicate that they present all artists on the curriculum via projection.

#### **10. What would you do if a pupil asks you to draw a tree?**

6 of visual art teachers tell that they make the pupil draw her/his own tree by saying "everybody has a unique tree", 2 of them say that they talk to the pupil about "what s/he wants to do with the picture s/he cannot draw" and 4 of them state that they show pupils different tree examples belonging to different artists. 10 of grade teachers indicate that they "can persuade the pupil s/he can draw a tree", 6 of them tell that they "draw one and show it to the pupil" and 2 of them ask to the pupil to draw one and s/he will correct it if it is wrong.

#### **11. What is your key criterion at evaluation?**

All of the visual art teachers state that they will evaluate pupil's performance at class, bringing all course equipments to school, works' convenience to the subject and good paper lay-out as full marks. Additionally they state that it is difficult to give marks. 10 of grade teachers give full marks to drawing which look well, 6 of them give full marks to drawings which well-painted and covered the topic well and 6 of them give marks to workings painted well, composition, imagination and coloring the all drawing. 2 of them give marks to pupils' behaviors at classroom.

#### **12. Should the visual arts course in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th classes of the primary school be given by grade teachers or by branch teachers? Why?**

Answers of both Visual Arts teachers and grade teachers are same: "Of course it must be given by the branch teachers". Grade teachers have indicated that visual arts teachers could be more competent and teach the course more proper to its purpose and could give more accurate decisions regarding discovering and improving the talents.

### **Comment-Debate**

Based on the answers of grade teachers and visual arts teachers to the poll questions, who participated in the study; branch teachers gave self-confident and determined answers while grade teachers usually stayed within the borders of the curriculum.

It is understood that, visual arts teachers are competent persons, who know all technical information and practice and perform them, while a few of grade teachers (since it is their particular interest) are more efficient. It is also understood that teachers, who motivate children well and stimulate creativity, (even if there are not many of them) give the courses in classrooms more entertaining. Yet, if the teacher is not able to determinate a proper subject for the improvement process of a child or if he is hypercritical and fastidious, it is inevitable that he will break the confidence of children in the class and their interest in drawing. This situation causes only the talented pupils to enjoy the course (in case of the wrong guidance) and causes generally unwillingness. As a result, the art education digresses from its purpose.

It doesn't mean grade teachers can give this course efficiently, when they get inner service training related with this field or when they have an exclusive interest in this field. It is mandatory for them to get a training for a certain time in this field.

### **Results And Suggestions**

Considering the importance of visual art education in schools, factors that affect giving this education adversely must be fixed urgently. The quality of this teacher, who gives this course in several adverse factors, is his mode of giving the course. Wrong attitudes and behaviors affect development of individual's personality and create irreversible harms. Since the school children will take teacher as an example unconditionally, they will also get all those wrong attitudes as they are. Creativity, imagination and attributions all of the art education will be affected adversely. Individuals devoid of arts thus the society devoid of arts will come out.

It is mandatory this course to be given by teachers, who have got education in visual arts course by the preschool period. A continuous education of arts will fix most of problems in this regard. Subjects, which are appropriate to improvements levels of pupils, should be chosen, weekly lesson hour of visual arts lesson should definitely be increased and places of study should be regulated. School principals, grade teachers, other branch teachers and parents should be trained respecting art education.

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