



Available online at:
<http://www.ulead.org.tr/journal>
*International Association of Research
in Foreign Language Education and Applied Linguistics*
ELT Research Journal
2012, 1(3), 189-198
ISSN: 2146-9814

Classroom management, self-efficacy and readiness of Turkish pre-service English teachers

Görsev İnceçay*
Yeditepe University, Turkey

Yeşim Keşli Dollar**
Bahçeşehir University, Turkey

Abstract

It is evident that, there are some skills that pre-service teachers should develop during their undergraduate teacher education programs to be able to be effective teachers in their future careers. Specifically speaking, teaching efficacy related to classroom management is one of those skills. Even though pre-service teachers are instructed about the related theory, without observing them during their implementation of learnt theories into practice, one cannot claim that they are efficacious in real teaching context. In this study, the main aim was to investigate both the efficacy of pre-service teachers and its relation to their readiness to manage their classrooms. In addition, the relationship among their efficacy beliefs, classroom management readiness and their implementation in a real teaching environment was also investigated. For the purposes of the study, 36 senior students in the English language teaching department of a foundation university in Istanbul, Turkey participated in the study. Data came from three sources; (a) subscale of the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale concerning classroom management, (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001), (b) the Teacher Readiness Scale for Managing Challenging Classroom Behaviors (adapted from Baker, 2002) and (c) an observation scale developed in line with the questionnaires. The analysis of data revealed that there is a significant relationship between the pre-service teachers' classroom management efficacy and their readiness to manage the challenging classroom behaviors. However, no significant difference was found in the implementation of classroom management skills of pre-service teachers in a real teaching environment. The findings provided insights into pre-service teachers' classroom management efficacy and readiness in a real teaching environment and their improvement in this area.

Keywords: *pre-service teacher education, efficacy, readiness, implementation, classroom management*

Teacher efficacy

* EFL Instructor and PhD Candidate Görsev İnceçay. Yeditepe University. Email: gincecay@yeditepe.edu.tr
** Assist. Prof. Dr. Yeşim Keşli Dollar. Bahçeşehir University, Faculty of Educational Sciences,
Email: yesim.keslidollar@bahcesehir.edu.tr

As an important concept in the field of teacher education, *efficacy* has been studied since its inception and continues to be the focus of research (Molnar, 2008) in the field of teacher education. As Bandura (1995) stated, teacher efficacy is “the teacher’s belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to accomplish successfully a specific teaching task in a particular context”. In addition, it is well known that teachers’ sense of efficacy plays a powerful role in schooling which means greater efficacy leads to greater effort and persistence, which leads to better performance, which in turn leads to greater efficacy (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy and Hoy, 1998).

The development of teacher efficacy beliefs among pre-service teachers resulted in ample research interest since it is not easy to deter after being established (Woolfolk Hoy, 2000; Pendergast, Garvis and Keogh, 2011). Recent studies on pre-service teachers’ efficacy indicate that there are several factors that cause this resistance to change. They can be listed as; self-perceptions of teaching competence, personal characteristics (Poulou, 2007), emotional and pedagogical support, and the preparation program that contribute to the level of teachers’ efficacy.

Ashton (1984) claimed that a teacher education program ought to make an effort to develop pre-service teachers as highly motivated and confident for effective classroom performance. He further suggested that a teacher education program which is designed to foster teaching efficacy beliefs should consist of not only exposure to context-based teaching experience but also to authentic teaching experience in order to help the trainees develop practical skills, human relationships and all other necessary elements of teaching efficacy. In a similar vein, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) stated that teacher training programs should provide opportunities for the pre-service teachers to experience teaching practice that includes instructing and managing students in different teaching contexts.

Pre-service teacher efficacy (PTE) has also been the focus of research in Turkey where English is spoken as a foreign language (e.g. Külekçi, 2011; Zehir-Topkaya, 2010) and in other EFL contexts (e.g. Anthony and Saidi, 2008; Liaw, 2009).

Külekçi (2011), in her study of which aims were to explore pre-service English teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs and to evaluate the influence of some variables (gender, perceived academic achievement, grade level, department preference and the attitude of the faculty as perceived by the pre-service teachers) on self-efficacy of pre-service English teacher found that pre-service English teachers have positive efficacy beliefs regarding English language teaching profession to a great extent. Moreover, results revealed that pre-service teachers’ self-efficacy differed depending on the perceived academic achievement and grade level. In another study, Zehir-Topkaya (2010) explored the relationship between preservice English language teachers’ perceptions of computer self-efficacy and their perceptions of general self-efficacy.

In other EFL contexts, one of the studies conducted by Anthony and Said (2008) in Iran, where English is a foreign language, investigated the self-efficacy of pre-service teachers before and after their field experience in an attempt to predict their future teaching effectiveness. 155 pre-service teachers from one institution participated in the study and they responded to the Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale. The study found that self-efficacy beliefs and behavior changes and outcomes were highly correlated and that self-efficacy was an excellent predictor of behavior. The researchers also pointed out that in order to respond to the continuously increasing demands for quality in education, it is important to specifically investigate and develop the self-efficacy of the pre-service teachers to meet the ever increasing change in the field.

Another study by Liaw (2009) was based on the collaboration between a teacher training program and an elementary school to investigate the effect that exposure to various sources of teacher efficacy has on pre-service teachers in Taiwan. In the study twenty-six pre-

service teachers, aged from 22 to 26 years with Chinese as their native language, enrolled in a Language Teaching Methods course, participated in the study. The results of this study show some influences of classroom experience and group discussions on the teaching efficacy of this group of pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers demonstrated a higher level of PTE after the classroom experience and group discussions.

Teacher readiness

Perceived readiness has been related theoretically with the development of self-efficacy (Giallo and Little, 2003). Housego (1990) indicated that a teacher's success in maintaining an effective learning environment is compromised if s/he is not ready enough to teach. This assertion does not exactly mean that a teacher's perceived readiness denotes that s/he is ready in reality; however, teacher's feeling of being ready is important to their ability to execute a behavior (Giallo and Little, 2003).

Readiness is defined as a combination of one's ability and willingness to do a job that indicates a situational need for differing leadership approaches to get that job (Baker, 2002). In the field of education, teachers are more likely to engage in the tasks and perform in a successful way when they feel confident and competent (Bandura, 1993). As cited in Baker (2002), teachers would be considered as more ready to implement a teaching task (Hersey et al., 1996) when they have enough experience in preparation to create a supportive environment for all the students. In other words, they have greater confidence to handle the challenging behaviors.

In the field of pre-service teacher education, there have been some studies with the purpose of investing the readiness of pre-service teachers (Li, 1996; Baker, 2002; Hudson and Hudson, 2007; Moore and Hayes, 2008).

Li (1996) conducted a study with the purpose of examining the differences between consecutive and concurrent pre-service elementary education teachers concerning both their feelings of readiness to teach and the classroom management and discipline problems experienced. The results of the research revealed that the combined effects of classroom instruction and practicum are sufficient to enable pre-service teachers enrolled in a consecutive program to develop feelings of readiness to teach equivalent to those of the concurrent pre-service teachers.

Baker (2002) examined the beliefs of pre-service teachers on their interpersonal self-efficacy regarding general classroom management skills and their readiness (ability and willingness) to implement specific management techniques to handle the individual needs of the students. Findings showed that as teacher self-efficacy for general classroom management increased, teacher readiness for managing more challenging situations in the classroom increased too. Teachers who had high self efficacy were more ready to use and implement specialized techniques to manage challenging classroom behavior.

Hudson and Hudson (2007) examined the pre-service teachers' readiness for teaching art during the practice teaching. The findings of the study revealed that, in general, the participating final-year pre-service teachers believed they were ready to teach art in primary schools.

Another study conducted on the readiness of teachers aimed to explore the pre-service and beginning teachers' perceptions of preparedness to teach was -Moore-Hayes- (2008). The findings mainly focused on efficacy levels of teachers in specific fields as well as the differences in the preservice teachers' answers contrary to new teachers. Analysis of quantitative research findings did not show any statistically significant difference between pre-service and beginning teachers' perceptions of readiness to teach, for any of the constructs measured.

To the knowledge of the researcher there was not any studies conducted on the preservice EFL teachers' readiness either in an EFL context or in a Turkish context. Thus, the present study contributed to the Turkish EFL context with the significant findings.

Classroom management

Feiman-Neimser (2001) has defined effective classroom management as “arranging the physical and social conditions so that learners have growth-producing experiences” (p.17). Managing a classroom effectively is a significant component of effective teaching and is of vital importance in pre-service teaching. A meta-analysis of the past 50 years of classroom research identified classroom management as the most important factor, even above student aptitude, affecting student learning (Wang, Haertel and Walberg, 1994).

Classroom management and self-efficacy beliefs are connected to pre-service teachers. The pre-service teachers' success in a teaching setting is affected by their perceptions about their readiness and their beliefs about how to manage their classes.

For instance, Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) conducted a study with 182 pre-service elementary teachers to measure the beliefs of pre-service teachers about student control and whether it would influence the way, they facilitate their classrooms. The results of the study showed that participants with high efficacy were more humanistic in their views of students and had a lower student control ideology. Despite the studies discussed above there is still need to investigate pre-service teachers' readiness and efficacy in specific relation to classroom management.

In the light of the above literature review, this study addresses the following research question to examine the relationship between the self-efficacy levels of pre-service teachers with their classroom management readiness and implementation.

1. Is there a relationship between the pre-service teachers' efficacy beliefs and their readiness to manage the classroom and implementation of classroom management strategies in a real teaching environment?

Method

Setting and the participants

The setting of the present study was the English Language Teaching (ELT) department of a foundation university in Istanbul. 36 senior pre-service teachers in the ELT department of Yeditepe University participated in this study. 3 of the students were male and 33 were female. The average age of the students was 20. For the purposes of the study, senior students were chosen to participate since they have completed all compulsory and selective courses which also include classes in classroom management. Even though each of the 36 participants responded to the questionnaires, only 10 of them, randomly chosen, were observed.

Data collection

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale: The subscale of this questionnaire about classroom management (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) was used to investigate the classroom management efficacy of the participants.

Teacher Readiness Scale for Managing Challenging Classroom Behaviors (adapted from Baker, 2002): As the second instrument, a questionnaire to evaluate the classroom management readiness of participants was adapted.

Observation scheme: As the third data collection instrument an observation scheme was developed and used which was also analyzed quantitatively. The items of the observation guide were prepared in line with the items in the other two scales. There are some questions about the ability of the pre-service teacher to manage the problems that occur during the lesson, manage disruptive student behavior, develop rules and standards, solve problems. Efficacy and readiness scales were administered at the beginning of their practice teaching period which is the last term of their teacher education program. Immediately after collecting data, 10 of the participants were observed during their practice teaching using the scale.

Reliability of the instruments

Reliability of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale: The reliability value for this instrument was found to be .83, showing that the instrument revealed highly reliable results for the purposes of the study (Büyüköztürk, 2002).

Teacher Readiness Scale for Managing Challenging Classroom Behaviors: The reliability value for this instrument revealed a high alpha value (.70).

Observation Scheme: The observation was filled in by both researchers who have entered the observation together. And 84% agreement was provided.

Data analysis

Data which were collected by two questionnaires: (a) Classroom Management subscale of ESTES (b) Teacher Readiness Scale for Managing Challenging Classroom Behaviors and the observation scale were analyzed by using SPSS 17.0 version for windows.

In order to answer the research question concerning the relationship between pre-service teachers' efficacy and readiness to manage the classroom, data which were collected by ESTES and Teacher Readiness for Managing Challenging Classroom Behaviors Scale were analyzed by means of Pearson Correlation. However, the relation between Classroom management efficacy and implementation of classroom management strategies, readiness for challenging classroom behaviors and implementation of classroom management strategies in real teaching environment were analyzed by means of Spearman rank-order correlation due to the number of observed participants (n=10).

Pearson Correlation was applied to find the strength of the relationship between pre-service teachers' classroom management efficacy and readiness for managing challenging classroom behaviors before the pre-service teachers started to practice teaching in the schools they were recruited.

Results and discussion

In relation to the research question, namely, "Is there a relationship between the pre-service teachers' sense of efficacy and their readiness to manage the classroom and implementation of classroom management strategies in real teaching environment?" the

results of the Pearson Correlation revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between pre-service teachers' classroom management efficacy and readiness. In other words, there appears a moderate positive relationship between pre-service teachers' sense of efficacy and their readiness to manage the challenging classroom behaviors ($r = .39, p < .05$) which means classroom management efficacy scale scores associated with readiness scale scores of the pre-service teachers.

Classroom management efficacy scale scores associated with readiness scale scores of the pre-service teachers according to the analysis. These findings concur with the findings of the study conducted by Baker (2002), which indicated that as self-efficacy of teachers for classroom management increased, as did the teacher readiness for managing more challenging situations in the classroom. Moreover, Baker (2002) stated that teachers who had high efficacy were more ready to use and implement classroom management skills to manage challenging classroom behaviors. The findings in this study also concur with Giallo and Little (2003), which stated that there is a relationship between perceived readiness and the development of self-efficacy.

Table 1

Pearson Correlation Coefficient of the Relationship between Pre-service Teachers' Classroom Management Efficacy and Readiness for Managing Challenging Classroom Behaviors

Dimensions	Classroom Management Efficacy	Readiness for Challenging Classroom
Classroom Management Efficacy		.387*
Readiness for Challenging Classroom	.387*	

* $p < .05$

As a second step, the relationship between pre-service teachers' classroom management efficacy and implementation of classroom management strategies and also between their readiness and implementation of classroom management strategies were explored by performing Spearman Rank Order Correlation test (see Table 2).

Table 2

Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient of the Relationship between Pre-service Teachers' Classroom Management Efficacy and Implementation and between their Readiness and Implementation

Dimensions	Observation
Classroom Management Efficacy	-.295
Readiness for Challenging Classroom	.292

The results of Spearman Rank Order test demonstrated that the students' observation scores were unrelated to their efficacy level, $r(10) = -.30, p > .05$, and also the students' observation scores and readiness levels were found to be unrelated, $r(10) = .29, p > .05$.

Specifically speaking, the findings indicated that the observation scores of participants were unrelated with their efficacy and readiness levels to manage the classroom in a real teaching environment. Contrary to the results of Anthony and Said's (2008) study, which claimed that efficacy beliefs are excellent predictors of behavior, no relation was found in this study. This result may be related to lack of practical knowledge. Specifically, despite having declarative knowledge about the construct of classroom management, they did not have an adequate level of procedural knowledge. As a result, they were observed as being unable to implement the abilities that they have stated in the efficacy and readiness questionnaires. This result may have been different; if they had been observed at the end of their practice teaching, which proves the role of practice and the purpose of practice teaching in teacher education programs. Therefore, the result for this part of the question is not surprising.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship among Turkish pre-service English teachers' efficacy beliefs and readiness related to classroom management and their implementation in a real teaching environment. Data gathered from 36 senior students revealed that there is a significant relationship between the pre-service teachers' classroom management efficacy and their readiness to manage the challenging classroom behaviors. However, their implementation of classroom management skills in a real teaching environment and their readiness and efficacy in classroom management was found to be unrelated. The findings of this study are significant by providing insights into the importance of pre-service teachers' classroom management efficacy and readiness in a real teaching environment and their improvement in this area. It can be concluded that pre-service teachers' efficacy and readiness can be correlated with their implementation through the experience in real teaching environments.

Implications

This study has both practical and empirical implications for teacher educators and educational researchers. First, the findings provided insights into pre-service teachers' classroom management efficacy and readiness in a real teaching environment and their improvement in this area. The findings, which indicated the impact of the practicum period on pre-service teachers' classroom management efficacy, provided insights into the features of practice teaching. It is obvious that pre-service teachers' efficacy and readiness can be correlated with their implementation through the experience in real teaching environments. In other words, as Bandura (1997) stated two of the sources of efficacy, mastery experiences and vicarious experiences, help them improve their teaching abilities during their practicum. In this respect, teacher educators can use these findings to design effective pre-service teacher education programs that contribute to student learning with more hours in a real environment.

Moreover, it is believed that practicum would increase pre-service teachers' perceptions about their readiness regarding classroom management. In this sense, teacher educators can use the results of this study when developing a teacher preparation program aiming to have well-prepared pre-service teachers regarding classroom management. This study, by investigating pre-service teachers' implementation of classroom management skills with an observation scale, also provided insights into the importance of the duration of the practice teaching period.

Finally, although it was not one of the aims of the study, by having reliable and valid results, this study provided additional evidence for the importance of using multiple instruments to reach the purposes of a study. In this respect, the results of the study and

instruments used can be administered by the educational researchers to help them plan further studies on pre-service teachers' efficacy, readiness and implementation.

Limitations

A number of limitations need to be noted regarding the present study. First, this study focused on pre-service teachers in the ELT department at a specific university. Therefore, the results may not be generalizable to other teacher education settings. Secondly, the Teachers' Readiness Scale to Manage Challenging Classroom Behaviors has been adapted and pilot tested by the researcher with a sample of 20 pre-service teachers. Therefore, more testing for its reliability and validity needs to be considered. Despite these limitations, the present study is significant for the field of foreign language teaching since it provides foundation for the further research.

Recommendations for further research

This study has several recommendations for further research. First, teacher efficacy is believed to vary across tasks and contexts. Therefore, it is recommended that this study be repeated in different teacher education programs in Turkey to see the difference between pre-service teachers' efficacy and readiness levels regarding classroom management in different parts of the country. In addition, a similar study can be conducted in a different country where the structure of practicum is different to examine the effects of different practice teaching programs. Moreover, it would be interesting to assess the differences between high and low efficacious pre-service teachers regarding implementation of classroom management skills. The same can be searched for the construct of readiness. Finally, a longitudinal study can be conducted and the pre-service teachers can be followed during their beginning years in order to see the long-term effects of the practicum on classroom management skills.

References

- Ashton, P. T. (1984). Teaching efficacy. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 25 (2), 41-54.
- Anthony, R. & Saidi, H. (2008). A comparative study of the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy based on the field experience. <http://eprints.utm.my/7895/>
- Baker, P. H. (2002). The role of self-efficacy in teacher readiness for differentiating discipline in classroom settings, p.46, Unpublished dissertation.
- Bandura, A. (1995). Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning. *Educational Psychologist*. 28(2). 117-148.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York, New York: W. H. Freeman and Company.
- Broadbent, C. (1998) Pre-service teachers' perceptions and level of satisfaction with their field experiences, *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 26(1), 27-37.
- Büyüköztürk, Ş. (2002). Sosyal Bilimler İçin Veri Analizi El Kitabı. PegemA Yayıncılık: Ankara.
- Emmer, E. T., Evertson, C. M. & Anderson, L. M. (1980). Effective classroom management at the beginning of school year. *The Elementary School Journal*, 80(5), pp. 219-231.
- Feiman-Nemser, S. (2001). Helping novices learn to teach: Lessons from an exemplary support teacher. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 52 (1), pp. 17-30.
- Giallo, R. & Little, E. (2003). Classroom behavior problems: The relationship between preparedness, classroom experiences and self efficacy in graduate and student teachers.

- Australian Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology*. Vol.3,2003, pp. 21-34.
- Housego, B. E. J. (1990). A comparative study of student teachers' feelings of preparedness to teach. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 36, pp. 223-239.
- Hoy, W. K & Woolfolk, A. E. (1990). Socialization of Student Teachers, *American Educational Research Journal*, 27 (2), 279-300.
- Hudson, P., & Hudson, S. (2007). Examining preservice teachers' preparedness for teaching art. *International Journal of Education and the Arts*, 8(5). Retrieved from <http://ijea.asu.edu/v8n5/>.
- Küleçi, G. (2011). A study on pre-service english teachers' self - efficacy beliefs depending on some variables. *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, 3(1), 245-260.
- Liaw, E. C. (2009). Teacher efficacy of preservice teachers in Taiwan: The influence of classroom teaching and group discussions, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, doi:10.1016/j.tate.2008.08.005.
- Molnar, K. (2008) *A Peer Collaborative Instructional Design for Increasing Teaching Efficacy in Pre-service Education Majors*. Unpublished dissertation. Walden University.
- Moore-Hayes, C. (2008). Exploring preservice and beginning teachers' perceptions of preparedness to teach. *A dissertation presented at partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy, Capella University*.
- Newman, C., Lenhart, L., Moss, B., & Newman, D. (2000, October). *A four year cross-sectional study of changes in self-efficacy and stages of concern among pre-service teachers*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.
- Pendergast, D., Garvis, S. & Keogh, J. (2011). Pre-Service Student-Teacher Self-efficacy Beliefs: An Insight Into the Making of Teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 36(12), 46-58.
- Poulou, M. (2007). Personal Teaching efficacy and its sources; student teachers' perceptions. *Educational Psychology*, 27(2),191-218.
- Rushton, S. P. (2000). Student teacher efficacy in inner-city schools. *The Urban Review*, 32 (4), 365-383.
- Soodak, L. & Podell, D. (1997). Efficacy and experience: Perceptions of efficacy among pre-service and practicing teachers. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 30,214-221.
- Spector, J. E. (1990, April). Efficacy for teaching in preservice teachers. *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston*.
- Stanulis, R. N. & Russell, D. (2000) 'Jumping in': trust and communication in mentoring students, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16, 65–80.
- Tschannen-Moran, M., Woolfolk Hoy, A. & Hoy, W. K. (1998). Teacher efficacy, its meaning and measure. *Review of Educational Research*, 2, 202-248.
- Wang, M. C. , Haertel, G. D. & Walberg, H. J. (1994). What helps students learn? *Educational Leadership*, 51 (4), 74-79.
- Zehir Topkaya, E. (2010). Pre-service English language teachers' perceptions of computer self-efficacy and general self-efficacy. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 9 (1).

