

Research Article

Understanding Stance of English Language Teachers' Cooperation with Parents and School Administrators in Classroom Management

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Abstract

Classroom Management (CM) possesses a key role in teaching in L2 classroom settings. So, it is fair to suggest that there is an increasing volume of research in addition to the research conducted in the mainstream CM studies. However, to our knowledge, the lack of research about cooperation among the insider and outsider stakeholders of L2 CM is still felt. Within this respect, the objective of this study is to explore how pre-service (PSTs) and in-service English language teachers (ISTs) view parent- and school administration-support in CM. Therefore, a semi-structured interview is utilised to delve into PSTs' and ISTs' stance towards cooperation with parents and school administration. Then, data yielded from the interview are analysed through content analysis. Thus, the outcomes have revealed some convergences and divergences between PSTs' and ISTs' views. Overall, some pedagogical implications are suggested to improve ISTs' and PSTs' classroom practices in tandem with L2 teaching pedagogy.



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Introduction

In teaching a foreign language, teachers are supposed to hold a variety of roles such as guide, director, trainer, and evaluator as well as their primary role, teacher (Gultom & Saun, 2016). In order for L2 teachers to efficiently carry out these roles, efficient ways of managing classroom become more prerequisite (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). In so doing, many L2 teacher have long reported to witness disruptive behaviours and teachers' attempts to take these behaviours under control may result in time loss at the expense of academic facilities. Therefore, certain effective classroom management (CM) strategies are needed to foster students' appropriate and desirable behaviours and decrease teachers' stress burn-out and stress (Oliver et al., 2011). In this vein, the role and nature of CM are probed into so as to attain a clearer vision.

The field of CM, despite limited, but increasing number of studies in L2 teaching and learning settings (e.g. Klattenberg, 2021; Yütük, 2018), is one of the significant domains deserving and witnessing investigation (Sakui, 2007) and is regarded as an indispensable tool in educational inventory of teachers (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). As well as fostering academic progress of students, as Doyle (1986) and Postholm (2013) have already suggested, CM can be an effective instrument for pupils' moral and social development. In tandem with the long-lasting research, the academic and social development of pupils through meticulous use of CM is positioned at the language teacher's agenda (e.g. Wright, 2005). In this background, the role of CM has been focal point in teaching English (e.g. Zein, 2018), Japanese (e.g. Horwitz, 2005), Spanish (e.g. De Fina, 1997), and French (e.g. Emeh & Agbor, 2005). Yet, the available studies in L2 CM are still scarce (Macías, 2018). So, in order to attain a better understanding and to get more comprehensive overview, the next section is reserved for CM in foreign language settings, CM from students' and teachers' perspectives, respectively.

The notion of students' disruptive or undesirable behaviours and the way teachers overcome these behaviours might show variance and necessitate the utilisation of more in-depth studies when compared to mainstream education. Some L2 teachers have reported some of these behaviours such as unwillingness to participate, staying idle during the courses, and sometimes even not attending the course itself (Debreli & Ishanova, 2019). As one of the significant stakeholder of L2 classroom, teachers are regarded as one of the key actors in managing classroom order and maintaining learning atmosphere.

To begin with, grasping CM skills possesses a significant role in preserving teachers' job satisfaction (van Tartwijk & Hammerness, 2011). Therefore, Sariçoban (2005) has underscored the need for L2 teachers' being equipped with management skills in addition to language teaching skills. Additionally, Sánchez-Solarte (2019) notifies a remarkable role for L2 teachers: decision-makers. To illustrate, teachers' decision-making processes may require dynamic and fluctuating course of action in that even a smoothly- and perfectly-planned course might bear disruption moments and they necessitate teachers' instantly- and carefully-programmed actions. Even if these behaviours do not occur in their classrooms, they need to stay alert to take an appropriate action. Similarly, while making their decisions, L2 teachers should organise classroom settings in a way that it should be a facilitator and conducive L2 teaching and learning process (Zein, 2018). In this vein, they can arrange

students' seating arrangement. To exemplify, teachers should be able to convert the formation of their classrooms among traditional, horseshoe (u-shaped), and team formation, accordingly (Gultom & Saun, 2016).

Similarly, teachers' ability in organising classroom and student behaviours seem to be critically correlated to positive learning outcomes. (Thangarajathi & Joel, 2010). In so doing, teachers have a wide spectrum of inventories managing their classroom with for the sake of this ultimate aim. First, teachers can, at the very beginning, set clear and attainable expectations and expect students to tune their behaviours, accordingly (Marzano & Marzano, 2003; Reinke et al., 2013). Second, Malmgren et al., (2005) mention that they can take charge all procedures and manage the classroom by themselves. Third, they can use the stage in an effective way and may refrain from being stick to a point for a long time (Brown, 2001). Moreover, teachers can be vigilant (Kunter et al., 2007), can scan the unfolding of students activities (Balli, 2011), and they can make use of eye-contact (Cangelosi, 1988) and intonation (Barraja-Rohan & Pritchard, 1997) to keep students in the 'classroom atmosphere'. Besides, Grim (2010) has noted teachers' use of L2 in handling students' noise, misbehaviour, etc. So, one can understand that L2 teachers possess a vital role in managing, directing and handling student behaviours.

Moreover, some studies have focused on the potential discrepancies between experienced and less experienced teachers in terms of their CM skills and procedures. Relatedly, Daloğlu (2002) has found that inexperienced teachers tend to make use of more detailed written plans while their more experienced counterparts prefer drawing on mentally designed an outline. Also, this study has uncovered that less experienced teachers seem to be challenged in motivating their students and experience difficulty in encouraging them to participate in the classroom activities. However, more experienced teachers have been reported to be more competent in making use of pair- and group-work in organising classroom setting. On the other hand, Ünal and Ünal (2012) have posited that experienced teachers tend to take the control of the classroom whereas the beginning teachers prefer being less interventionist, otherwise called as less teacher control. Moreover, these less experienced teachers are open to interactionism and collaboration; however, they appear to be authority by themselves in the course of time (Ünal & Ünal, 2012)

Students, one of the most important stakeholders in L2 classrooms, have also a vital role in the management and design of classroom settings. In this regard, Willis (1996)

suggests L2 teachers to delegate some responsibility to students and they will accordingly attune to tasks assigned to them. Also, Hoff and DuPaul (1998) have suggested teachers to foster the agent role of learners and encourage them to take initiatives. Similarly, Balli (2011) points out that students are logical and rational beings and they can be steered to be in charge of their behaviours. Therefore, teachers need to explain the underlying reasons behind the classroom rules and procedures, then students will consequently customise their behaviours in tandem with the requirements of the classroom environment (Stoughton, 2007). Correlatively, Kerdikoshvili (2012) heralds that student-centred CM procedures have increasingly gained robust grounds in foreign language teaching setting, but further adds that further progression is still needed.

Furthermore, the recent mainstream research paradigm has highly emphasised the importance of cooperation and collaboration between the stakeholders inside and outside the classroom. To this end, as noted by Back et al. (2016), the ecological approach in CM underscores the role of cooperation among staff relations and posits that positive school climate culminates in the increase in students' academic success. Similarly, Lojdová (2020) mentions the cooperation between in-service and pre-service teachers as a valuable component of a school and classroom climate. Also, some studies notify the contribution of parent support in that parent involvement can contribute to the quality of CM (Cheng & Chen, 2018) and teachers can resort to parent support in dealing with problematic behaviours (Savas, 2012) since parents are knowledgeable about the interests, learning styles, etc. and they have a significant impact on their children (Walker & Hoover-Dempsey, 2013). Similarly, in her MA thesis, Keskin (2019) has found out that there exists a medium positive correlation between young learners' English language learning and parental effect. To put it differently, parent support and effect seem to play a significant role in students' academical and behavioural conducts. Nonetheless, there seems to exist some terra incognita in understanding the role of parent and school administration support. Therefore, this study sets out to probe into in-service and pre-service English language teachers' reflection on parent and school administration support in CM. In this vein, the research questions below are the main reference points in this paper:

- 1) How do pre-service and in-service English language teachers vary in terms of parent support?
- 2) How do pre-service and in-service English language teachers vary in relation to addressing school administration?

With these questions in mind, it is aimed to account for the paucity of research about the way CM of in-service and pre-service English language teachers in relation to parent and school administration support. Relatedly, the following section will uncover the methodology to be utilised in order to shed light upon the aforementioned questions.

Method

The methodological issues are, in detail, presented according to the research design, participants, procedures, instrument(s), and analyses sections, respectively. By this way, it may become plausible to comprehensively describe the background underlying the study before initiating analytical phases to comprehend the stance of English language teachers' cooperation with parents and school administrators in CM.

Research Design

The current study is equipped with a diagnostic characteristic in a way that it sets out to take a concise overview of pre-service and in-service English language teachers' reflections regarding the parent and school administration support in order to answer the aforementioned research questions. To this end, qualitative research methodology has been adopted. To specify, upon granting ethical clearance and consent, a semi-structured interview is conducted with pre-service and in-service English language teachers since interviews enable the researchers to probe into the corners which may not be readily observed or measured with other research tools (Wellington, 2015) . In so doing, it is aimed to understand the pre-service and in-service English language teachers' reflections about (1) parent- and (2) school administration-support.

Participants

The semi-structured interviews are carried out with 5 pre-service and 2 in-service teachers in a high school in Türkiye within this frame. First, the pre-service English language teachers are senior students in an English Language Teaching Department in a state university and conduct their practicum in their last year before graduation. Moreover, they are graduates of different high schools across the country, therefore they have probably witnessed a lot of disruptive behaviours in their education paths although they have not had much opportunity to teach previously. Additionally, there is a similar gender distribution

when compared to other ELT contexts and this gender trend tends to exist in the prospective years within the profession of English language teaching. So, it is possible to assert that this research sample seems to ideally represent the ELT contexts in Türkiye. Accordingly, the external validity could be reached and the research outcomes might be viable for generalisation into different context as suggested by Seedhouse (2004) for qualitative studies.

As the second group of the study, the in-service English language teachers have already been teaching about for 15 years in a variety of schools across the country. Thereby, it is possible to put forward that these teachers are quite experienced in their careers. Furthermore, they supervise internship students from English Language Teaching departments and share their reflections and experiences with them. To put it differently, this sample can constitute a functional group in generalising research outcomes to other contexts because they have had the chance to be enrolled in various institutions and might have possibly encountered with a wide range of disruptive behaviours in the course of time.

Overall, it can be posited that the participants are selected by utilising convenience sampling, through which the informants have been recruited in line with some criteria such as being easily accessible, or willingness to participate as noted by Dörnyei (2007). Moreover, their convenience in the ELT field is another priority. That's to say, there is a clear-cut distinction in relation to service year between these groups and this could possibly facilitate our job while relating the findings to the notion of experience. In doing so, the internal validity could be ensured, too.

Procedures

The interviews are conducted with 7 participants (5 pre-service and 2 in-service English language teachers). This process lasts around 3 weeks and the data obtained from the interviews have been analysed at the end of the data collection process so as to refrain from researcher bias. In other words, the data have not been analysed after interviewing with each participants for fear that responses may have impact on the flow of the whole process. Rather, 7 recordings are transcribed and analysed altogether. That's to say, by analysing the data at the very end of the sessions, it is aimed not to lead or intervene into the participants' responses. In so doing, more reliable and valid findings could be attained.

Instrument(s)

A semi-structured interview was adopted since Dörnyei (2007) underlines its flexibility in that it gives the interviewee the chance to elaborate on the subject to be investigated. It can be further postulated that as a part of the qualitative research paradigm, this type of interview has a potential to bear openness and creativity by letting the participants lean on details as suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998). To this end, the interview was carried out with 5 pre-service and 2 in-service English language teachers. Thus, questions were fabricated in a way that they could allow the participants to go deeper into the details of the topic by staying on the main line of the study at the same time. Also, it is important to note that the questions addressed to the both groups were not identical. Rather, according to the group they are in, the participants were asked questions bearing slight differences by based on their status, career, teaching experience, etc.

Analysis

These interviews enable the participants to refer to the views and experiences regarding these two domains (i.e. (1) parent- and (2) school administration-support). Then, the interview sessions are recorded, digitised, and transcribed into the textual form. Given that qualitative research paradigm is functional in comprehending human condition in variety of situations (Bengtsson, 2016) is taken into account, it appears to be more plausible to utilise of content analysis to probe into the details emerging in the interview sessions. Similarly, as posited by Harwood and Garry (2003), the content analysis assists researchers in terms of the reduction of phenomena into defined categories in order to better scrutinise and interpret them. It is also important to note that according to Schreier (2012), the content analysis embraces a systematic method since all relevant material is taken into consideration and this is a significant factor in enhancing the trustworthiness of the content analysis as reported by Elo et al. (2014). What's more, Dörnyei (2007) warns that researchers do not set out a set of predetermined categories, rather these categories emerge as the data are being analysed. In this vein, categorical units are constituted by referring to emergent themes through reading and re-reading. Later, these units are coded and tabulated. Following these steps, the participants' responses are appointed into these formed categories. Deviant responses are also noted. Thus, it is aimed to avoid any data being excluded as irrelevant a

priori. Finally, it is targeted to focus on the fine-grained details from the reflections of prospective and practicum English language teachers.

Finding

This study possesses a diagnostic nature and the analyses will be conducted in accordance with the semi-structured interview. In this frame, the qualifications of data analyses have been showcased in Table 1 in accordance with the research questions and data collection tools.

Table 1. General overview of data collection and data analysis

Research Questions	Instruments	Number of participants	Properties of participants	Data collection method	Data analysis
1) How pre-service and in-service English language teachers vary in terms of parent support?	Semi-structured interview	7	Pre-service and In-service English Language Teachers	Qualitative	Content Analysis
2) How do pre-service and in-service English language teachers vary in relation to addressing school administration?	Semi-structured interview	7	Pre-service and In-service English Language Teachers	Qualitative	Content Analysis

1st Research Question

The study, initially, focuses on pre-service (PST) and in-service English language teachers' (IST, in short) stance towards parent support in CM. In this respect, a semi-structured interview is carried out and the reflections posited by the participants are, respectively, (a) coded, (b) tabulated, and (c) categorised. For each group, all responses are summarised and the best representative ones are showcased in Table 2.

Table 2. Prospective and practicum English language teachers' reflections about parent support

Participant	Subcategories	Outcome
PST 1	<i>Stance/Behaviour</i>	- <i>Parent support as a crucial tool especially in teaching to young learners</i>
PST 4	<i>Stance/Behaviour</i>	- <i>The necessity for language teachers resort to students' mothers in dealing with disruptive behaviours</i>

IST 1	<i>Stance/Behaviour</i>	- <i>Trying to solve the problems on one's own</i> - <i>Then, resorting to parent support</i>
IST 2	<i>Stance/Behaviour</i>	- <i>Resorting to parent support can be necessary if all techniques seem to stop functioning</i>

On analysing Table 2, one can notice that pre-service English language teachers diverge from their experienced counterparts in that the PST 1 regards the parent support as a (*crucial tool especially in teaching to young learners*). Similarly, the PST 4 considers the cooperation with parents as (*the necessity for language teachers ... in dealing with disruptive behaviours*). Even though other pre-service teachers' responses are not displayed here because of the space issue, one can infer that the pre-service English teachers seem to be open to cooperation with parents in CM ranging from teaching English to young learners and handling disruptive behaviours.

As for the in-service English language teachers, the stance for parent support might be deviant from that of pre-service teachers. To specify, the IST 1 prefers (*trying to solve the problems on her own, then resorts to parent support*) when she encounters with a problem. Likewise, the IST 2 tends to address to parent support (*if all techniques seem to stop functioning*). Therefore, it can be concluded that the in-service teachers seem to be reserved towards parent support and prioritise their way of CM and handling disruptive behaviours; however, if they are not able to do as such, they may resort to parent support.

2nd Research Question

As the second phase of the study, it is focused on PSTs' and ISTs' attitudes towards school administration support in terms of CM. In this vein, the expressions put forward by the interviewees are, respectively, (a) coded, (b) tabulated, and (c) categorised as in the case of the first research question. For each group, on summarising all responses, the best representative ones are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Prospective and practicum English language teachers' reflections about school administration support

Participant	Subcategories	Outcome
PST 2	<i>Stance/Behaviour</i>	- <i>School administration as the last option</i>
PST 3	<i>Stance/Behaviour</i>	- <i>School administration as the last option</i> - <i>School administration not to interfere with the classroom procedure</i>
IST 1	<i>Stance/Behaviour</i>	- <i>Not trusting on school administration</i>
IST 2	<i>Stance/Behaviour</i>	- <i>Relying, initially, on his/her skills,</i> - <i>Resorting to school administration if they do not function</i>

From Table 3, it can be understood that PSTs and ISTs do not seem to hold convergent stance in school administration support. To illustrate, the PST 2 regards the school administration as (*the last option*). As in the same vein, the PST 3 also considers it as (*the last option*) and also points out that she prefers school administrators (*not to interfere with the classroom procedure*). Thus, one can notice that the PSTs regards the school administration as a last address to resort.

The ISTs, on the other hand, appear to express variant responses. To specify, the IST 1, does (*not trusting on school administration*) and appears to stand aloof in relation to CM while the IST 2 prefers (*relying, initially, on her skills*) and addresses to it if other CM measures (*do not function*). In some aspects, the IST 2 retains similar stance with the PST 3. Nonetheless, one can deduce that PSTs and ISTs do not only seem to diverge in relation to their attitudes towards the school administration in CM, but ISTs also exhibit heterogeneous attitudes.

Overall, the PSTs' and ISTs' stance towards parent- and school administration-support can show variance both inter- and intra-group level. Therefore, by drawing on the related literature, possible explanations and remarks are provided in the discussion part.

Discussion and Conclusion

Teachers possess a crucial role in decreasing disruptive behaviours and increasing student achievement (Oliver et al., 2011). However, they are not the only actor responsible for attaining this aim; however, it is a team work and they are one of the significant stakeholders in CM as put forward by the ecological approach in CM (Back, et al., 2016). Classrooms have a dynamic and unforeseeable nature in that effective CM necessitates a harmonious coordination and collaboration among these stakeholders (Sánchez-Solarte, 2019). English language teachers are, therefore, expected to know their students and customise their teaching agenda in accordance with the students' needs (Sarıçoban, 2005) and CM practices can also benefit from this customisation. However, many actions taken by teachers seem to indicate that these course of actions mainly result from their own experiences (Macías, 2018). Macías' (ibid.) concern can be partly observable in this study.

Initially, for the first research question, the PSTs' and ISTs' views are sought in terms of parent support. In this regard, the PSTs have been found to be cooperative and ready to collaborate with parents. Especially, the PST 4's expressions about parent support as the necessity for language teachers which is in line with Savas' (2012) findings. Moreover, what Walker & Hoover-Dempsey (2013) have posited can be embodied in PST 1's ideas (see Table 2, PST 1) since they are knowledgeable about their needs and interests. However, ISTs do not seem to position themselves as willing as their pre-service counterparts in this vein. To specify, although both IST 1 and IST 2 point out the role of parent support, they regard this tool as a last resort if all the techniques do not work (see Table 2). ISTs' statements can be interpreted in a similar vein with the study carried out by Ng (2003), who has posited that despite their expression for the importance of parent involvement and support, teachers do not seem to be ready to cooperate with parents; additionally, those who are ready to cooperate prefer parent involvement and support not in the school, but at home. Therefore, the ISTs, in our study, may regard coordination with parents as a downgrading factor for their teaching even though they suggest they are open to resort to parent support as a last resort.

Then, the PSTs' and ISTs' stance towards the school administration support are inquired as the second research question. In this frame, PSTs do seem to exhibit the attitude that is shown by ISTs for the first research question, parent support. To clarify, both PST 2 and PST 3 address to the school administration support as the last option. Furthermore, this

position can be more salient in ISTs' expressions in that they do not much seem to be willing to cooperate with school administration and can be even against it (see Table 3, IST 1) In the same vein, Both PSTs' and ISTs' positioning themselves in school administration support can resonate what Brandisauskiene et al. (2019) postulate in teachers' reluctance to teamwork and openness to improvement proposals. What's more, the outcomes of this study can be in line with those of Clunies-Ross, et al., (2008), who suggest that teachers tend to be unwilling to be observed since they perceive this observation as an evaluation of their teaching manner. No matter what their status is, PST or IST, teachers/teacher candidates can view cooperation with school administration in CM as a kind of erosion in their authority in their classroom.

Although there exists an increasing volume of research in CM, more areas necessitate to be explored so as to deepen our understanding (van Tartwijk & Hammerness, 2011). Therefore, with this study it is aimed to comprehend the PSTs' and ISTs' opinions about parent and school administration support in CM. The current paper has put forward how PSTs and ISTs approach parent and school administration support. The results reveal that it is not plausible to notify a monolith point of view for both areas. Nonetheless, it can be concluded that the participants appear to be more open for parent support than that of school administration. But, both cases have their exceptions, too. Overall, with this study, it is aimed to account for the gap regarding English language teachers'/candidates' openness for cooperation with parents and school administration.

In this regard, some pedagogical implications for language teacher education need to be discussed. First, as Horwitz (2005) suggests, more specific CM courses are needed in teacher education rather than general one-for-all courses. Therefore, CM courses can be customised in relation to the necessities and pedagogy of foreign language teacher education. Second, although many teacher education programmes claim the inclusion of CM courses in their curricula, many seem to lack of feeding from the research as mentioned by Greenberg et al. (2014). Therefore, the research in CM can be amalgamated into foreign language teacher education pedagogy rather than providing this course as an end in itself. Third, the fact that Shamina and Mumthas (2018) have reported the limited amount of support and coordination between supervisors and pre-service teachers underscores the importance and role of collaboration in training PSTs. Without being unable to attain this coordination and collaboration even among each other, the openness for cooperation with

parents and school administration will probably be beyond the agenda of foreign language teachers and teacher candidates once the significance of the cooperation and collaboration among all the stakeholders in CM (Back, et al., 2016) is taken into consideration. To this end, more participatory and collaborative approaches to CM in relation to foreign language teaching pedagogy may be incorporated into language teacher education curricula without downgrading or the role of foreign language teachers. Fourth, ISTs can also benefit from cooperation with other actors in CM through seminars, workshops, parent-teacher meetings by not undermining their crucial role in their classrooms. To conclude, foreign language teachers, PSTs or ISTs, can be equipped with more comprehensive point of with CM which will positively correlate with their students' achievements in their language learning paths (Marashi & Assgar, 2019).

Nonetheless, the current study possesses some drawbacks in racing more in-depth understanding towards the participants' views. Relatedly, prospective research equipped with conversation analysis (e.g. Sacks, et al., 1974; ten Have, 2007) can focus on parent-teacher meetings and school principal-teacher meetings which may provide researchers, foreign language teacher educators, foreign language teachers, and pre-service foreign language teachers more fine-grained details in CM. Moreover, school principals and parents may have some take-away deductions from these meetings. Also, further research can examine the cooperation and collaboration among pre-service, in-service foreign language teachers, and supervisors within the scope of CM, which may bring fruitful insights into the pedagogy. Consequently, through collaboration among all the stakeholders in foreign language teaching classrooms, more progress can be achieved through research- and practice-oriented resources.

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Ethical Committee Permission Information

Name of the board that carries out ethical assessment: Hacettepe University Research and Publication Ethics Committee

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Author Contribution Statement

İsmail Firat ALTAY: Conceptualization, literature review, data analysis, data collection, translation, and writing.

Tarık YÜTÜK: Conceptualization, literature review, data collection and writing.

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