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Exploring the Language Teaching Self-Efficacy Levels of English Language and Literature Department Students: The Impact of Demographic Variables

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü Öğrencilerinin Dil Öğretimi Öz-Yeterlik Düzeylerinin Araştırılması: Demografik Değişkenlerin Etkisi

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the self-efficacy levels of students in the Department of English Language and Literature at Fırat University regarding their ability to teach English. It examines how self-efficacy varies according to gender, academic year, and teaching experience. Using a causal-comparative research design, data were collected from 275 participants through the Language Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (Deregözü & Gündoğar, 2020). Findings reveal that students demonstrate moderate self-efficacy in planning, performing, and evaluating language teaching. While gender did not significantly impact self-efficacy, academic year played a role—fourth-year students reported the highest levels. No significant differences were found based on teaching experience. The study highlights the need for integrating targeted pedagogical training into the curriculum to strengthen self-efficacy. It also calls for further longitudinal and comparative research to track the development of teaching self-efficacy over time. Due to the scarcity of related studies within English Language and Literature programs, this research contributes a unique perspective. It offers valuable insights into teacher preparation in non-education departments and emphasizes the importance of practice-oriented curricular enhancements to better equip students for future teaching roles.

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, Fırat Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü öğrencilerinin İngilizce öğretme yeterlik düzeylerini incelemektedir. Özellikle bu yeterlik düzeylerinin cinsiyet, öğrenim yılı ve öğretim deneyimine göre nasıl değiştiği araştırılmıştır. Nedensel karşılaştırma desenine dayanan araştırmada, 275 katılımcıdan Deregözü ve Gündoğar (2020) tarafından geliştirilen Dil Öğretimi Öz-Yeterlik Ölçeği aracılığıyla veri toplanmıştır. Bulgular, öğrencilerin dil öğretimini planlama, uygulama ve değerlendirme alanlarında orta düzeyde öz-yeterlik sergilediklerini göstermektedir. Cinsiyetin öz-yeterlik üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi bulunmazken, öğrenim yılına bağlı olarak öz-yeterlik düzeylerinde artış gözlemlenmiştir; dördüncü sınıf öğrencileri en yüksek düzeye sahiptir. Öğretim deneyimine bağlı anlamlı bir farklılık ise saptanmamıştır. Çalışma, öğretim programına hedefe yönelik pedagojik eğitimin dahil edilmesinin öz-yeterlik gelişimini destekleyeceğini vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca öğretme yeterliğinin zamanla nasıl geliştiğini anlamak için uzunlamasına ve karşılaştırmalı araştırmalar yapılması önerilmektedir. İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı programlarında benzer çalışmaların azlığı, bu araştırmanın özgün katkısını ortaya koymaktadır. Çalışma, eğitim fakültesi dışındaki bölümlerde öğretmen yetiştirme süreçlerinin geliştirilmesi için önemli bulgular sunmakta ve uygulama temelli ders içeriklerinin önemini vurgulamaktadır.

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1. Introduction

English, within the Turkish context, is regarded as a foreign language that students are expected to attain proficiency in. In this study, the term “language teaching” refers specifically to the teaching of English as a foreign language, in line with the educational context in Turkey. The globalization of society and technological progress have a significant impact on the necessity to acquire proficiency in the English language (Brown et al., 2008). Additionally, English proficiency is necessary for certain endeavors, including university admission, scholarship and job applications. As a result, Turkish students are required to learn English in order to remain competitive in today’s globalized world. Without sufficient English proficiency, they may find it difficult to keep pace with their international peers in both academic and professional domains. This places them considerably behind in terms of prospects for tertiary education and professional progression. In light of this, Turkish students must place an extreme priority on enhancing their English proficiency if they are to be successful in the worldwide marketplace of today. Furthermore, English proficiency can facilitate access to international employment prospects and partnerships.

The presence of competent and proficient educators is critical for educational systems to operate effectively and for the improvement of learning outcomes. This notion is supported by research which indicates that a proficient instructor and the conduct that transpires within the classroom significantly influence the students' ability to learn effectively and efficiently (Markley, 2004). Research emphasizes that teaching practicums offer essential opportunities for pre-service teachers to apply what they have learned, manage real classroom dynamics, and gain confidence in their teaching abilities (Cania, Kusriandi, & Dwiniasih, 2024). Critical is the instructor's capacity to captivate students and foster a constructive learning atmosphere. Teachers’ perceptions of their own self-efficacy play a central role in shaping their instructional behaviors and decision-making processes in the classroom, ultimately influencing how they manage learning environments (Orakcı & Durnalı, 2023). Teachers of the English language are not an exception; their critical contribution to successful language acquisition should not be disregarded. Particular emphasis should be placed on this connection between instructors and students in certain countries where language acquisition occurs predominantly in structured classroom environments (Kariminia & Salehzadeh, 2007). Establishing a supportive and motivating learning environment is contingent upon this link. Chacón (2005) argues that instructors' understanding and organization of instruction are influenced by their beliefs, perceptions, and assumptions regarding teaching and teacher efficacy. Their relationships with students and the strategies they employ in the classroom may be impacted by these beliefs. By comprehending and contemplating these beliefs, one can develop more effective pedagogical approaches and enhance academic achievements of students.

Much has been written about the notion of teacher self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al. 1998), that regards to educators' perceptions of their own competence in carrying out particular pedagogical duties within a given instructional setting. The significance of teacher self-efficacy as a fundamental construct within educators' belief systems that impacts the outcomes of various educational facets, both positive and negative, has been widely recognized. Self-efficacy is a fundamental notion in the field of psychology that has been thoroughly examined by Albert Bandura. Self-efficacy is the term used to describe an individual's belief in their capacity to do the actions required to achieve specified goals or outcomes (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy significantly influences how individuals think, feel, and act, playing a vital role in overall human functioning. Broadly defined, efficacy refers to an individual's perception and belief in their ability to perform at a certain level. It also involves their approach to handling difficulties, navigating challenges, and directing their actions accordingly (Bandura, 1997). He (1997) categorized self-efficacy into four main sources:

Mastery Experiences: Accomplishments serve to reinforce an individual's belief in their capacity for success, whereas failures, particularly those encountered prior to the development of a robust sense of self-efficacy, can significantly undermine it.

Vicarious experiences: They refer to the act of observing others perform successfully, which might enhance one's conviction in their own talents.

Verbal Persuasion: Positive reinforcement from others, particularly when accompanied by practical and constructive feedback, can significantly enhance an individual's self-efficacy.

Physiological and emotional states: These factors significantly affect perceived self-efficacy. Positive emotional states can enhance self-efficacy, whereas stress and fatigue can weaken it.

Self-efficacy beliefs have an impact on multiple areas of life, such as academic achievement, professional growth, and health-related actions. For instance, in educational settings, students with a strong sense of self-efficacy are more likely to engage in challenging tasks, demonstrate greater perseverance, and employ more effective learning strategies. (Schunk, 1991). Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy serves as the theoretical backbone of this study, as it offers a well-established lens through which teacher beliefs and behavior can be understood. His definition of self-efficacy—as individuals' beliefs in their ability to plan and carry out the actions necessary to achieve specific goals—has been widely applied in educational research. In language teaching contexts, this perspective is especially valuable, since teachers' confidence in their instructional skills often shapes how they manage the classroom, respond to challenges, and engage with students. For students in English Language and Literature departments in Turkey, who typically follow a different route into the teaching profession compared to those in education faculties, Bandura's theory provides a useful framework for exploring how confident they feel in their teaching potential and how this confidence develops. Teacher self-efficacy on the other hand refers to the educator's confidence in their own ability to plan and implement the necessary steps to effectively complete a designated instructional objective within a specific setting (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 233). This concept expands upon Bandura's (1997) idea of self-efficacy in the field of education, highlighting the importance of considering the individual context and tasks while examining ideas about one's ability to succeed. After that, numerous disciplines, including education, psychology, and organizational behavior, have investigated and implemented the notion of efficacy. Educational research has shown that instructors' self-efficacy impacts both their teaching methods and the entire teaching environment. Highly self-efficacious instructors believe they can positively impact student learning, whereas those with low self-efficacy think external variables have a greater influence on student learning than their teaching (Gibson & Dembo 1984). Self-confidence can boost drive and determination while encountering obstacles. In accordance with Bandura's (1997) overarching theory of self-efficacy, the development of teaching self-efficacy is influenced by some sources. Proficiency in instructional assignments fosters robust self-efficacy convictions, whereas failures could undermine assurance. The achievement of mastery experiences is influenced by effective classroom management, positive student feedback, and successful application of teaching tactics (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Observing peers or mentors who demonstrate effective teaching practices can enhance a teacher's self-efficacy. This is particularly influential when novice teachers observe similar individuals successfully managing classroom challenges (Bandura, 1997). Language teacher self-efficacy develops over time through reflective experiences, ongoing support, and context-sensitive training during teacher education programs (Wyatt & Lorenzo, 2021). Colleagues, administrators, and mentors can enhance instructors' confidence in their talents through positive reinforcement and helpful criticism. Professional development programs and performance reviews frequently act as platforms for convincing statements (Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). The emotional health, temperament, and stress levels of educators all have an impact on their sense of self-efficacy. Elevated self-efficacy beliefs are a result of positive emotional experiences and decreased stress, whereas their reduction is a consequence of chronic stress and negative emotions (Bandura, 1997).

Understanding self-efficacy is crucial for educators because it directly influences their motivation, resilience, and effectiveness in the classroom. This is particularly evident in how teachers' beliefs shape their instructional behaviors. For instance, Karimi, Abdullahi, and Khales Haghighi (2014) found that self-efficacious language teachers were significantly more capable of aligning their theoretical orientations with their actual classroom practices, highlighting the mediating role of self-efficacy between belief and pedagogical action. While general teaching self-efficacy provides a broad sense of a teacher's confidence in their abilities to manage classroom activities, engage students, and implement instructional strategies, it is essential to have a more granular understanding of self-efficacy specific to English language teaching due to the unique challenges and requirements associated with this field. Teaching English presents unique difficulties, including the need to accommodate different levels of language skills, handle cultural differences, and utilize specific teaching methods such as communicative language instruction and task-based learning.

Research indicate that teacher self-efficacy has a substantial influence on student achievement (Klassen & Tze 2014; Klassen et al. 2011) and motivation (Pajares, 2006). In the field of language teaching, educators with high self-efficacy are more inclined to adopt innovative instructional strategies, foster dynamic and engaging learning environments, and overcome challenges, thereby positively impacting language learners' outcomes.

Insight into language teaching self-efficacy helps identify areas where teachers may need support to enhance student outcomes. Numerous studies have demonstrated that teacher self-efficacy plays a pivotal role in influencing both student achievement and motivation. For instance, research has revealed a significant correlation between teacher self-efficacy, creativity, and the academic performance of students learning English as a foreign language. Educators with a strong belief in their teaching abilities and who incorporate creative instructional strategies tend to foster higher levels of student motivation and contribute to improved academic outcomes. (Ma et al., 2022). Furthermore, another study emphasized the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and key professional factors, such as job satisfaction, motivation, and professional identity. The findings highlighted that teachers with higher self-efficacy are more likely to adopt adaptive coping strategies and implement effective classroom management practices, thereby promoting greater student engagement and academic achievement. (Tschannen

Moran et al., 1998). Moreover, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the significance of teacher support and self-efficacy became even more evident. A study investigated the impact of instructor support on academic performance in emergency online learning environments. Huang and Wang (2023) discovered that the connection between teacher support and student accomplishment is influenced by academic self-efficacy and student involvement. This emphasizes the significant impact of instructors' confidence in their abilities during difficult periods.

This underscores the vital role of teacher self-efficacy in shaping effective language teaching practices, particularly in navigating challenges and enhancing student outcomes. According to a number of studies, the self-efficacy of English language instructors is positively correlated with their level of experience (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007; Aylar & Bostan, 2017; Çelik & Zehir Topkaya, 2017; Aytaç, 2018; Çankaya, 2018). Nevertheless, it is also essential to examine the levels of self-efficacy exhibited by prospective teachers. Since, teaching begins not with physically commencing schooling, but with receiving teaching education. Upon reviewing the literature, it is evident that there is research investigating the self-efficacy levels of English language teacher candidates based on a number of variables (Baykara, 2011; Alıcı & Yüksel, 2012; Alagözlü, 2016; Çelik & Zehir Topkaya, 2017; Çankaya, 2018). There is a noticeable research gap concerning the self-efficacy levels of prospective teachers from English Language and Literature Departments. In Turkey, graduates from these departments can become English language teachers after completing a pedagogical formation certificate, placing them in similar professional circumstances as English Language Teaching graduates. In this context, it is important to note that students in English Language and Literature departments in Turkey have the opportunity to complete a pedagogical formation certificate alongside their undergraduate education. This formation program is structured across the four years of study and includes both theoretical and practical pedagogical courses. In their final year, students take a school-based teaching practicum course, which provides them with real classroom experience. Upon graduation, they receive the certificate of pedagogical competence, which enables them to work as qualified English teachers in public or private schools. However, their unique pathway to teaching raises questions about their preparedness and confidence in their teaching abilities. Although pedagogical formation programs are designed to provide foundational instructional knowledge, they often lack the depth of sustained classroom experience offered in traditional teacher education programs. Some pre-service teachers, therefore, report feeling unprepared for real classroom contexts, which is often linked to low self-efficacy levels (Dolgun & Caner, 2018; Starinne & Kurniawati, 2018). This concern may be particularly relevant for English Language and Literature students, whose academic training focuses primarily on literary and linguistic knowledge rather than pedagogical development. As a result, their sense of instructional readiness may be limited when compared to peers in education faculties. Understanding the self-efficacy levels of English Language and Literature students is essential for improving the curriculum and aligning it with the demands of the teaching profession. Despite their significant role in Turkey's educational system, limited research has explored how demographic variables, such as gender, grade level, and teaching experience, influence their teaching self-efficacy. This study aims to address this gap by examining the English language teaching self-efficacy levels of students in the Department of English Language and Literature at Firat University and investigating how these levels vary across different demographic factors. The findings are expected to contribute to curriculum development efforts and enhance the readiness of future teachers graduating from English Language and Literature Departments. From this standpoint, the research questions have been formulated as follows:

1- What are the self-efficacy levels of English Language and Literature Department students in teaching English, specifically in the areas of planning, implementation, and evaluation?

2-Is there a significant difference in the language teaching self-efficacy levels of English Language and Literature Department students based on factors such as gender, grade level, and teaching experience?

The findings may guide future research and curriculum development by offering insights into the current language teaching self-efficacy levels of English Language and Literature students, who are prospective foreign language teachers.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

A causal-comparative study is a research design aimed at identifying and analyzing causal relationships between variables without the researcher directly manipulating them (Fraenkel et al., 2011). Accordingly, this study employed a causal-comparative model to explore differences in language teaching self-efficacy levels among Turkish students in the English Language and Literature Department, considering independent variables such as gender, academic year, and teaching experience.

2.2. Participants

Table 1. Demographic qualities of the participants

Gender	Female:202	Male:73		
Grade	Freshmen:69	Sophomore:79	Junior:72	Senior:55
Teaching Experience	Experienced:100	Inexperienced:175		
Total	275			

The sample for this study consisted of 275 students enrolled at the department of English Language and Literature in a state university in the eastern Turkish city of Elazığ, as determined by the data shown in Table 1. It was decided that 275 participants would be a sufficient sample size. According to Çokluk et al. (2010), it is suggested that the basic assumptions are met when the sample size is at least five times greater than the total number of items. The primary objective of this study is to determine whether Turkish English Language and Literature Department students, who are potential EFL teachers, possess enough levels of teaching self-efficacy. Thus, the study group consisted of students from the English Language and Literature Department who were enrolled in a public institution. The participant selection technique utilized purposeful sampling. A total of 284 pupils responded to the scale. A total of 9 data points were excluded from the dataset using control techniques to refine the analysis. This resulted in a final sample size of 275 participants, comprising 73 males and 202 females. Regarding teaching experience, 100 participants reported having prior experience in private tutoring or teaching at private courses, while 175 participants reported no such experience. The distribution of participants across academic years revealed that 69 were first-year students, 79 were second-year students, 72 were third-year students, and 55 were fourth-year students.

2.3. Data Collection Instrument

The study collected data using the Personal Information Form and the Language Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale, which was developed by Deregözü and Gündoğar (2020). The personal information form included questions about the participants' gender, grades, and teaching experience. The Language Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale comprises three factors, namely planning, performing, and evaluating, with a total of 22 items. The reliability of the scale was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which assesses internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha values were calculated for both the entire scale and its subscales. The overall internal consistency coefficient for the full scale was found to be .85, indicating a high level of reliability. The subscales 'Planning', 'Performing', and 'Evaluating' had internal consistency coefficients of .59, .89, and .88, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of a five-point Likert scale is a reliable and valid approach for assessing language teaching self-efficacy. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficients were calculated as .852 for the planning dimension, .913 for performing, .897 for evaluating, and .944 for the overall

scale, demonstrating high reliability across all components.

2.4. Data Analysis

The application of parametric tests in quantitative research enhances the robustness and validity of the findings, ensuring a more precise and contextually relevant interpretation of the data (Can, 2014). As a result, parametric tests were employed in this study to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings. Nonetheless, the use of parametric tests necessitates meeting specific assumptions to ensure their appropriateness. The data should initially be presented on a range scale or greater. Furthermore, it is critical to ensure that the data corresponds to a normal distribution and that the assumptions regarding equal group variances are fulfilled (Can, 2014). In order to validate these assumptions, a thorough analysis of the data was performed, and descriptive statistics were employed to evaluate the skewness and kurtosis values of the items, verifying that they were within the range of ± 1.5 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013). The dataset exhibited a skewness of .352 and a kurtosis value of -.149, indicating that the data were normally distributed. As part of the control procedures, nine data points were excluded based on criteria such as responses to control items, extreme values, and other descriptive characteristics. After performing the descriptive analysis, the remaining 275 data points were utilized for subsequent analyses.

The research data were analyzed using a range of statistical methods, including descriptive statistics such as the arithmetic mean and standard deviation, as well as inferential analyses, including independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA. A significance level of $p < .05$ was established for the inferential analyses. As noted by Miller (1969), the Bonferroni test is frequently employed for multiple comparisons, particularly in the context of t-statistics. The computed effect sizes (η^2) were interpreted based on the criterion values specified by Green and Salkind (2005, p. 157). According to these guidelines, an effect size of " $\eta^2 < 0.01$ " indicates a small effect, " $\eta^2 < 0.06$ " denotes a medium effect, and " $\eta^2 < 0.14$ " represents a large effect.

3. Findings and Results

The findings of the analysis are presented in this section in accordance with the chronological order of the research questions.

Language Teaching Self-efficacy Levels of English Language and Literature Department Students

Mean values and standard deviation were calculated to assess the levels of language teaching self-efficacy among students in the English Language and Literature department. The results of the analysis are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Undergraduate Students' Language Teaching Self-Efficacy Levels

Factors	N	Mean	Sd
Planning	275	2.46	.62
Performing	275	2.64	.69
Evaluating	275	2.69	.74

According to Table 2, the descriptive analysis indicates that the mean score for undergraduate students' self-efficacy in planning language teaching is 2.46, with a standard deviation of 0.62, suggesting a relatively limited level of confidence in this domain. The mean score for self-efficacy in performing language teaching tasks is moderately high at 2.64, with a standard deviation of 0.69. Similarly, students' self-efficacy in evaluating language teaching is also moderately high, with a mean score of 2.69 and a standard deviation of 0.74. These findings suggest varying levels of confidence across different aspects of language teaching among undergraduate students, with planning receiving the lowest self-efficacy ratings.

The Investigation of Language Teaching Self-Efficacy Levels of Undergraduate Students Regarding their Gender

Table 3 displays the results of an independent samples t-test analyzing potential differences in undergraduate students' language teaching self-efficacy levels according to gender.

Table 3. Independent Samples t-Test Results

Factors	Gender	N	M	Sd	t	p
Planning	Male	73	2.45	.678	.154	.878
	Female	202	2.47	.612		
Performing	Male	73	2.87	.81	-1.145	.253
	Female	202	2.74	.83		
Evaluating	Male	73	2.79	.72	-1.310	.294
	Female	202	2.66	.75		

(p < .05)

No significant difference was observed in the factor of planning [$t(273) = .154$, $p < .05$] when including the gender variable. The average planning self-efficacy level of female students is 2.47, whereas the average level for male students is 2.45. The results suggest that there was not a substantial difference in the planning component of language teaching self-efficacy levels among undergraduate students.

There was no statistically significant difference in the factor of performing when the gender variable was examined, as indicated by the t-test ($t(273) = -1.145$, $p < .05$). The mean self-efficacy level for female students in terms of performance is 2.74, whereas the mean level for male students is 2.87. The findings reveal that there is no significant difference in undergraduate students' language teaching self-efficacy levels concerning the performance aspect.

The results presented in Table 3 suggest that there was no statistically significant difference in the evaluation factor across genders, as determined by the t-test ($t(273) = -1.310$, $p < .05$). The average self-efficacy level of female students in evaluating is 2.66, while the average level for male students is 2.79. The results suggest that there was no statistically significant distinction in the levels of language teaching self-efficacy in the evaluation factor among students.

In the absence of a statistically significant difference among the variables, the effect size rate regarding the gender variable was not computed.

The Investigation of Language Teaching Self-Efficacy Levels among Undergraduate Students with regard to Their Grade Levels.

The purpose of the one-way ANOVA test, as shown in Table 4, is to determine the differences in language teaching self-efficacy levels among students in the English language and literature department, based on their grade levels.

Table 4. ANOVA test results on the statistical difference of language teaching self-efficacy levels of students regarding their grade levels

Factor		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	Difference	Effect size (η^2)
Planning	Between Groups	43.015	3	14.338	59.172	.000	2>1, 3>2, 4>3	.396
	Within Groups	65.668	271	.242				
	Total	108.683	274					
Performing	Between Groups	48.721	3	16.240	31.521	.000	3>1, 3>2, 4>3	.259
	Within Groups	139.625	271	.515				
	Total	188.346	274					
Evaluating	Between Groups	46.170	3	15.390	30.488	.000	3>1, 3>2, 4>3	.252
	Within Groups	136.798	271	.505				
	Total	182.968	274					

Table 4 reveals a significant statistical difference in the degrees of language teaching self-efficacy across students based on their grade levels within the planning, performing and evaluating factors. The one-way ANOVA test findings indicated a significant difference in language teaching self-efficacy for planning levels

among students of different grade levels ($F = 59.172$, $p < .05$). The results of the Bonferonni test reveal a significant difference in the levels of language teaching self-efficacy for planning among the 1st grade ($M = 2.005$) and the 2nd ($M = 2.330$), 3rd ($M = 2.534$), and 4th ($M = 3.161$) grade students within the department. The computed effect size of the difference, expressed as $\eta^2 = 0.396$, has been regarded as considerable.

The results of the one-way ANOVA test showed a statistically significant difference in language teaching self-efficacy among students of different grade levels in terms of their 'performance levels' ($F = 31.521$, $p < .05$). The results of the Bonferonni test revealed a significant difference in language teaching self-efficacy levels for the 'performing' factor among students in the 1st grade ($M = 2.454$) and the 2nd ($M = 2.439$), 3rd ($M = 2.885$), and 4th ($M = 3.536$) grade within the English Language and Literature Department. The calculated effect size of the difference, denoted as $\eta^2 = .259$ is considered to be large.

The statistical analysis using ANOVA revealed a significant difference in language teaching self-efficacy concerning students' 'evaluation levels' across different grade levels ($F = 30.488$, $p < .05$). Post-hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated a statistically significant difference in self-efficacy levels related to the 'evaluating' factor among students in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th years of the English Language and Literature Department, with mean scores of $M = 2.48$, $M = 2.46$, $M = 2.88$, and $M = 3.53$, respectively. While no significant difference was observed between the 1st and 2nd-year students, these two groups demonstrated substantial differences when compared to the 3rd and 4th-year students. This suggests that self-efficacy in evaluating language teaching tasks increases notably in the later years of study.

The Investigation of Language Teaching Self-Efficacy Levels among Undergraduate Students with regard to Their Teaching Experience

An independent samples t test was conducted to reveal whether the language teaching self-efficacy of English Language and Literature Department students differed based on their teaching experience.

Table 5. The results of the independent samples t-test

Factors		N	M	Sd	t	p
Planning	Experienced	100	2.541	.553	1.448	.112
	Inexperienced	175	2.427	.667		
Performing	Experienced	100	2.917	.876	2.100	.107
	Inexperienced	175	2.700	.792		
Evaluating	Experienced	100	2.922	.871	1.968	.067
	Inexperienced	175	2.722	.777		

($p < .05$)

According to the findings from Table 5 when the experience variable was taken into account, there was no significant difference observed with the factor of planning ($t(273) = 1.448$, $p < .05$). The mean planning self-efficacy level of experienced learners is 2.54, whereas the mean level for inexperienced students is 2.42. The findings indicate that there was no significant disparity in the degrees of self-efficacy in the planning aspect of language teaching among undergraduate students, with respect to the variable of experience.

Within the performing factor ($t(273) = 1.448$, $p < .05$), there was no statistically significant difference in the language teaching self-efficacy levels between experienced ($M = 2.91$) and inexperienced ($M = 2.70$) students.

Regarding the evaluating factor there was no statistically meaningful difference in the degrees of language teaching self-efficacy between experienced ($M = 2.92$) and inexperienced ($M = 2.722$) students.

5. Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

The present study sought to evaluate the self-efficacy levels of students enrolled in the Department of English Language and Literature at Firat University in terms of their ability to teach English language. Additionally, the study aimed to investigate how these levels differ based on specific variables. The primary rationale for conducting this study lies in the unique professional trajectory of English Language and Literature students, many of whom obtain a pedagogical formation certificate and enter the teaching profession. Assessing the levels of self-efficacy among these group of students in regards to foreign language instruction is crucial, given that they cannot take part in pedagogy courses at the faculty of education and can only obtain a teaching

certificate via a short-term program. When one considers the potential for instruction exhibited by graduates of English language and literature programs, the findings of this study are truly remarkable.

Teachers who have a strong sense of efficacy tend to use more effective teaching strategies, are less likely to experience stress, and are more dedicated to their profession compared to those who doubt themselves. This has been supported by research conducted by Woolfolk Hoy and Davis (2006), as well as Zee and Kooman (2016). The findings of the current research indicated that the undergraduate students in the English language and literature department had a moderate level of self-efficacy in language teaching in all the factors such as planning, performing and evaluating. Many factors may justify this moderate level of language teaching self-efficacy. Firstly, the curriculum in an English Language and Literature program provides a strong foundation in linguistic and literary analysis, critical thinking, and effective communication. These skills are crucial for planning, performing, and evaluating teaching activities. However, the absence of dedicated pedagogical training might limit their confidence to a moderate level. While students develop strong analytical and communication skills through their coursework, they lack formal teaching practice opportunities. This lack of practical experience can result in moderate self-efficacy, as students may feel confident in their knowledge but less so in their ability to apply it in a teaching context. Supporting this, previous research suggests that pre-service EFL teachers need greater opportunities to apply instructional strategies, engage learners, and manage classrooms effectively in order to build strong teaching self-efficacy. Language education programs are therefore encouraged to emphasize practical experience over theoretical content to better prepare students for real classroom challenges (Cania, Kusriandi, & Dwiniasih, 2024). Furthermore, Students in this department gain extensive theoretical knowledge about language and literature. However, transforming this theoretical understanding into effective teaching practices requires a different skill set that they may not fully develop without specific pedagogical training and classroom experience. The academic atmosphere, including feedback from professors and cooperative endeavors with peers, cultivates a nurturing context that has the potential to boost self-efficacy. Constructive feedback and academic accomplishment enhance students' confidence in their capabilities, however to a limited extent due to the absence of formal teaching prospects. Alagözlü (2016) carried out a comparable investigation involving students from the English Language and Teaching Department. She discovered that they regarded their language proficiency as high. They also perceived themselves as proficient in utilizing suitable pedagogical tactics in language schools. This difference can be attributed to the nature of the programs. Students in the English Language and Teaching Department receive comprehensive training that includes both theoretical knowledge and practical teaching experience. This pedagogical training and hands-on practice significantly contribute to their higher self-efficacy levels. Nevertheless, perceiving oneself as having a moderate level of self-efficacy is not inherently negative. Some researchers observed that although having a strong belief in one's teaching abilities may be beneficial, it does not always guarantee improved performance. In fact, there are instances where a certain level of uncertainty may be necessary in order to facilitate improvement (Wheatley 2002; Wyatt 2014, 2016).

Beyond self-efficacy, developing a sense of teacher identity is also an important part of becoming a confident and capable educator. Rather than being something fixed, teacher identity takes shape gradually—through reflection, experience, and interaction with others such as peers, mentors, and students (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). For students studying in English Language and Literature departments, this process may unfold differently. Since their coursework often emphasizes theory and analysis over classroom practice, they might begin forming their teacher identity later than peers in education faculties. Still, as they move through their studies and begin taking on informal teaching roles or engaging with pedagogical ideas, their perception of themselves as future educators starts to emerge. This growing sense of identity often works hand in hand with their self-efficacy beliefs—those who begin to see themselves as teachers also tend to feel more confident in their ability to teach. Supporting this process through opportunities for reflection, discussion, and exposure to teaching-related experiences can therefore help strengthen both their professional identity and their belief in their teaching abilities.

When considering the components of planning, performance, and evaluation in language teaching self-efficacy levels, there were no gender differences observed among students. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the levels of language teaching self-efficacy between male and female students indicating that self-efficacy in language teaching is likely influenced by factors other than gender. This finding was consistent with those of other investigations (Rezaeian & Abdollahzadeh, 2020;

Çankaya, 2018; Mashhady, Fallah and Gaskaree, 2012; Naseri Karimvand, 2011; Baykara, 2011; Gencer & Çakıroğlu, 2007, Conversely, there were also contrasting findings to this particular one (Lesha, 2017; Ercan Demiral, 2017; Sarfo, Amankwah, Sam & Konin, 2015). Differences and contradictions across studies are not unusual in self-efficacy research and can often be explained by a range of factors. Variations in how self-efficacy is defined and measured, the academic background of participants, or the type of training programs they attend can all affect outcomes. Cultural and institutional contexts also play a role, especially in how teacher education is structured and what kind of support students receive. Because of these differences, it's natural that findings sometimes overlap or conflict. Looking at self-efficacy within a clearly defined group—as this study does—can help make sense of these variations and contribute to a more focused understanding.

The subsequent finding of the study revealed a notable difference between the 'language teaching self-efficacy' and the classroom levels of undergraduate students in the English Language and Literature Department. Specifically, it was found that fourth-year students exhibit higher levels of language teaching self-efficacy compared to third-year students, who in turn have higher levels than second-year students, with first-year students having the lowest levels of self-efficacy. Several factors may justify this progressive increase in self-efficacy, even though the students are not in an English Language Teaching program and do not have formal teaching practice opportunities. As students progress through their undergraduate program, they acquire a deeper and broader understanding of language and literature. This increased academic mastery can enhance their confidence in their ability to teach these subjects, even without formal teaching practice. Fourth-year students have completed more advanced coursework, which often includes complex analysis, synthesis, and presentation of literary and linguistic concepts. These higher-level academic tasks can build students' confidence in their ability to convey and explain content effectively, contributing to higher self-efficacy. Moreover, the study of literature and language involves rigorous development of analytical and communication skills. Over time, students refine their abilities to interpret texts, construct arguments, and articulate their thoughts clearly, which can translate into greater confidence in a hypothetical teaching role. Lastly Senior students are more likely to have experience with academic presentations, seminars, and discussions. These activities require them to explain concepts and engage with an audience, which can enhance their self-efficacy regarding their potential teaching abilities. Ercan Demirel (2017) did a study that was similar in nature. The author conducted a study where they utilized the age factor instead of grade level and discovered that self-efficacy remained constant regardless of age. This discovery was inconsistent with the results of our investigation. Pendergast, Garvis and Keogh (2011) did not find any consistent relationship between age, gender, and the self-efficacy of pre-service teachers.

Past achievements in performance are often believed to be the most powerful factor in determining self-efficacy (Bandura 1997; Usher and Pajares 2008). Thus, prior teaching experience before graduation was believed to be a potential factor influencing language teaching self-efficacy. Nevertheless, the research did not discover any evidence to support this claim at any level of analysis. Consequently, no notable difference was observed between students' teaching experience and their levels of 'language teaching self-efficacy'. Several factors may justify this finding. The teaching experiences of students varied significantly, ranging from private tutoring to acting as course instructors. Such variability can lead to inconsistent impacts on self-efficacy, as the nature, scope, and intensity of these experiences are not uniform. Private tutoring, for example, may not offer the same level of challenge and feedback as formal classroom instruction. The effectiveness of teaching experiences in enhancing self-efficacy depends greatly on their quality and structure. Informal or unstructured experiences, such as casual private tutoring, might lack the depth and rigor needed to significantly impact self-efficacy. Without systematic reflection, feedback, and assessment, these experiences might not provide substantial benefits. The support systems available within the academic program, such as mentorship from experienced faculty, peer collaboration, and access to educational resources, play a crucial role in developing self-efficacy. These institutional supports might be more consistent and reliable in enhancing self-efficacy compared to the varied and potentially sporadic nature of teaching experiences. Overall, the findings effectively addressed both research questions by confirming moderate self-efficacy levels across components and identifying academic year as a significant variable, while gender and teaching experience did not yield significant differences.

Based on the research findings, several recommendations for future research can be proposed to further explore and understand the factors influencing language teaching self-efficacy among undergraduate students.

-Future research should explore the effect of incorporating targeted pedagogical training and methods courses into the English Language and Literature curriculum. Studies could assess how these specific interventions impact students' self-efficacy in planning, performing, and evaluating teaching tasks.

-Longitudinal studies should be implemented to track the development of self-efficacy from the first year to graduation. This would help identify critical periods for interventions and understand how self-efficacy evolves over time in the absence or presence of teaching practices.

-Comparative studies should be conducted between students in the English Language and Literature Department and those in English Language Teaching or other education-focused programs. This could highlight differences in self-efficacy development and suggest specific curriculum enhancements for non-English Language Teaching programs.

-Future research should investigate students' perceptions and attitudes towards teaching and how these influence their self-efficacy. Understanding students' motivations, expectations, and beliefs about teaching can provide deeper insights into the factors affecting their confidence levels.

6. Limitations

One of the main limitations of this study lies in the scarcity of existing research focusing specifically on language teaching self-efficacy among English Language and Literature undergraduate students. This limited the extent to which the current findings could be compared with prior studies. As such, the discussion was constrained by the lack of directly comparable data in the literature. Nevertheless, this research addresses a notable gap and provides a foundation for future investigations. Further research in similar academic contexts is needed to enable more comprehensive comparisons, validate the present findings, and deepen the understanding of self-efficacy development among pre-service teachers in non-education departments.

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Etik, Beyan ve Açıklamalar

1. Etik Kurul izni ile ilgili;
☒ Bu çalışmanın yazar/yazarları, Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'nun tarih 13.06.2024 sayı 25190 ve karar 12 ile etik kurul izin belgesi almış olduklarını beyan etmektedir.
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