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EFL Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Classroom Management: Perceptions, Practices and Reflections on Professional Learning and Development

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Abstract: This paper reports the findings of an investigation into English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' self-efficacy and their classroom management in the context of the Mekong Delta of Vietnam. The paper also aims to find out what makes teachers different in terms of skills in classroom management. The study was designed as a descriptive mixed-methods one, using a questionnaire, focus group interviews, and classroom observations to collect data. Forty-six EFL teachers from three high schools responded to the questionnaire. Twelve got involved in the semi-structured interviews, and six as classroom observed teachers. Two group interviews were conducted with the participation of three vice-principals and three heads of English teams. The results indicated a significant interaction between EFL teachers' self-efficacy and their classroom management skills. Teachers who own a higher level of self-efficacy showed to manage their classes in a more confident and purposive manner than those with a lower level of self-efficacy. Three main reasons differentiating teachers' skills in classroom management, including pre-service teacher education, previous attending continuing professional development events, and teacher's learning autonomy were detected. Case-based teaching, organizational learning, and lesson study are recommended in pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher professional development activities to enhance teachers' self-efficacy and their classroom management.

Keywords: Classroom management, EFL teachers' efficacy, interaction, Mekong Delta of Vietnam.

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Introduction

It is undeniable that classroom practitioners encounter numerous difficulties in classroom management, such as students' unexpected behaviours and classroom pedagogies. Kagan (1992) claimed that to deliver successful instructional strategies, teachers, beforehand, need to acquire two types of knowledge, namely knowledge of the subject matter and that of classroom management. These claims make the role of classroom management in teaching and learning recognized. A few studies have been conducted to study classroom management, e.g., Huong and Tung (2019). In those studies, some emerging challenges have been found in classroom management, such as time constraints, students' misbehaviours, or teachers' skills to engage inactive students in learning in large-size classes in a context of a developing country like Vietnam. Some other studies focused much on teachers' knowledge of the subject matter. However, these studies have not satisfied stakeholders' concerns about how teachers with different levels of self-efficacy deal with these classroom issues, how teachers struggle when these problems occur, or how they overcome those problems to teach more effectively. Moreover, none of them was conducted in the context of the Mekong Delta, seen as a "low land area" in education.

For the mentioned reasons, this study was administered to examine (1) Vietnamese EFL teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy in classroom management, (2) the interaction between teachers' perceptions and their classroom management in practice, and (3) what makes differences in skills in classroom management between one teacher and another. This study hopes to enrich literature related to English teacher professional learning and development in developing countries.

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Literature Review

Teacher's Perceptions

According to Graham (1869), perception is an internal process for selecting, evaluating, and organizing one's ideas about their surrounding world. Similarly, Williams et al. (1998) defined perception as a process that human ability recognizes and interprets sensory stimulations. In addition, Yook and Lee (2016) defined perceptions as a process of how one chooses, organizes and interprets the input and existing experiences to analyze them and create one's own beliefs. In other words, perceptions could be understood as a process how a person evaluates the values of something based on his/her own experience. In this current study, EFL teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy in classroom management skills could be formed by their self-evaluation of how effective they are in managing their classes.

Teacher's Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1994) defined people's perceived self-efficacy as their beliefs about their own capabilities to do a particular job at a certain level. Besides, self-efficacy determines people's feelings, motivation, perceptions, and behaviours. In educational context, Ghanizadeh and Moafian (2011) indicated that teacher's self-efficacy is a decisive factor in inciting students' achievements. This concept refers to teachers' beliefs in their ability to support learning in diverse tasks and context-specific cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social ways (Punyasettro et al., 2021; Tan et al., 2020). Physiological and emotional moods such as anxiety or excitement in performing a particular task may influence teachers' sense of competence or incompetence (Bandura, 1997). After teaching a successful lesson, a teacher's feeling of satisfaction may enhance their self-efficacy. This indication aligns with Shang (2010) that individuals expecting success in a particular enterprise anticipate successful outcomes. However, affective states influence a teacher's self-perception of teaching competence depends on how attention is directed to his/her affective states (Bandura, 1997). In that way, teachers who have a higher level of efficacy are more likely to implement effective methods of instruction, persist in difficult teaching situations, and be successful in maintaining student engagement.

In contrast, teachers with a lower level of efficacy facing more difficulties with student misbehaviours are pessimistic about their students' learning and experience higher levels of job-related stress and lower levels of job satisfaction (Bandura, 1997; Caprara et al., 2003). Besides, teacher self-efficacy is related to higher levels of student achievement and motivation, and it has a significant influence on teachers' instructional practices, enthusiasm, commitment, and teaching behaviours (Wolters & Daugherty, 2007). In summary, teachers' self-efficacy is how they perceive their abilities to impact their students' learning process.

Classroom Management

Classroom management is defined as strategies a teacher uses to encourage students to perform desirable behaviours through positive reinforcement, inspiration, and devotion, despite disruptive behaviours (Emmer & Hickman, 1991). In the same vein, Varghese et al. (2016) described it as a process in which teachers create and maintain an environment in the classroom that allows students to engage in learning. Furthermore, Koutrouba et al. (2018) ascertained that it positively impacts learners and instructors whenever classroom management is effective. In other words, classroom management reflects how effectively teachers guide their classes and deal with sudden situations to keep the class running to reach desirable learning outcomes.

Teacher's Self-Efficacy and Classroom Management

Teacher's self-efficacy in classroom management refers to teachers' beliefs in managing challenging classroom circumstances (Almog & Shechtman, 2007). Teachers with high self-efficacy use additional positive strategies, including praise and positive reinforcement, and apply classroom management strategies to inspire students to be in charge of their behaviours. This conceptualization is also positively related to the reduction of behavioural problems of students (Almog & Shechtman, 2007). Furthermore, the effectiveness of teacher intervention relies substantially on their self-efficacy and perception of whether they can manage student's behaviors (Gebbie et al., 2012). Reviewing available literature shows that teachers' self-efficacy is related to effective classroom management (Hicks, 2012; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990), openness to adoption of innovation (Guskey, 1988), the effort teachers invest in their teaching and the goals they set (Hoy & Spero, 2005), being less critical of students' mistakes (Webb & Ashton, 1986), and student motivation (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Guskey, 1988).

Teacher Preparation, Professional Development and Classroom Management Skills

A systematic approach to teacher preparation and professional development is obligatory (Oliver & Reschly, 2007). It is undeniable that new teachers will get more benefits from on-going professional development in classroom management than those who have worked in the educational field for a long time (Oliver & Reschly, 2007). Especially, young teachers who were not trained sufficiently on classroom management may encounter many difficulties in dealing with tough situations, such as being overwhelmed by students' needs and unexpected misbehaviours. Sometimes, those teachers lose their control and respond inappropriately (Oliver & Reschly, 2007). As a result, students who were removed from

their teacher's instructions due to their misbehaviours are more likely to continue misbehaving. More consequences can occur in the classrooms without teachers' sufficient classroom management skills. However, Oliver and Reschly (2007) asserted that even though several surveys had found that experienced teachers do not worry about classroom management issues as much as the youngers do, none of those surveys had investigated how teachers learned and improved their classroom management skills during their careers. This result is also applicable to other teachers' backgrounds, such as gender, age, teaching areas, teaching levels, etc.

Moreover, Baker (2005) found that many teachers stopped their teaching due to their lack of opportunities for learning classroom management skills. Therefore, teacher training is essential to solve this problem. Thus, ongoing professional training and development must be ensured to prepare educators with all backgrounds to be competent and efficient at dealing with diverse students in their classrooms.

Teacher's Teaching Beliefs and Their Preparation and Professional Development

According to Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981), the duration that teachers spend as students in the classroom shape their teaching beliefs which will still remain during and after the teachers' training on pedagogy training. Kennedy (1997) asserted that the aforementioned major force plays an essential role in teachers' evaluation of a new idea about teaching that teachers comfort in their classes. Besides, these beliefs formulate an image of a good teacher that the teachers bring to their professional school; it therefore prevents them from learning from the formal study of teaching (Kennedy, 1997). Similarly, Bruner (1996) highlighted the impact of preservice training on pedagogy on the teachers' beliefs as wired-in human tendencies which could not be changed easily. As a result, it is explainable to say that preservice training programs greatly affect the teachers' beliefs in their teaching practice and their skills in classroom management in particular.

Related Studies

Several studies in the fields of teacher self-efficacy and classroom management belong to correlational or intervention ones. Morris-Rothschild and Brassard (2006) designated that constructive opposition management tactics play a role in managing a concrete classroom atmosphere, yet little is known about interpersonal or school variables correlated with teachers' use of such manoeuvrings with students. Teachers high in their self-report of classroom management efficacy (CMEFF) and security of attachment (i.e., low on avoidance, anxiety) were prognosticated to support integrating or compromising classroom management approaches more than precarious teachers and those low in CMEFF. Two hundred eighty-three teachers from eleven schools, primarily female and white, participated in answering the questionnaire. CMEFF and teaching experience had positive and notable consequences on mixing and compromising classroom management strategies, while avoidance had counteractive impacts on CMEFF and teaching experience.

Gencer and Cakiroglu (2007) searched for Turkish pre-service teachers' efficacy and classroom management credos. Data were consolidated from a cumulative number of 584 pre-service science teachers employing the Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument and the Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) index. Findings showed that pre-service teachers commonly declared positive efficacy beliefs about teaching. In addition, results revealed that participants were interventionist on the instructional management dimension, whereas they supported the non-interventionist style on the people management dimension of the ABCC inventory.

Varghese et al. (2016) conducted a quantitative study on North Carolina, Texas, New Mexico, and Nebraska participants. Throughout the research, the researchers found that lower self-efficacy in classroom management can yield disruptive student behaviours that could result in lower self-efficacy and reflect poor classroom management. Conversely, teachers with a greater sense of self-efficacy have a greater capacity to manage their classrooms more effectively, and teachers who employ successful classroom-management strategies experience a greater sense of efficacy in return.

As seen from previous studies, a strong interaction between teachers' self-confidence in classroom management skills and the effectiveness of teaching and learning was observed. It also implies that a positive change or an increase in teachers' confidence in their teaching expertise could affect the quality of learning. This current study was informed and grounded in understanding the interaction between teachers' self-efficacy and their classroom management abilities. As a result, this study addressed three main research questions with two sub-questions for the second one as follows:

1. What are EFL teachers' perceived self-efficacy in their classroom management?
2. How do EFL teachers manage their classrooms?
3. What makes EFL teachers different from one another in terms of their self-efficacy and classroom management skills?

Methodology

Study Design

The current research was designed as a descriptive study using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Murray and Hughes (2008) asserted that a qualitative study involves collecting in-depth information for an insightful look into the nature of the inquiry. It is also noted that qualitative analysis is generally observed when researchers examine human beliefs, perceptions, or attitudes towards a particular issue (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Unlike qualitative design, a quantitative one fits with numbers that observe the phenomena and measure (Murray & Hughes, 2008). Arnon and Reichel (2009) stated that qualitative and quantitative approaches are probably consolidated to reinforce the study and its results.

Participants

Forty-six EFL teachers from three high schools in the Mekong Delta participated in the current study. Twelve out of them, four each school, volunteered to take part in the semi-structured interviews. In terms of the observations, six classes, two each school, taught by six participants were randomly chosen to conduct classroom observations. Then, three school academic vice-principals and three heads of the English teams of the researched schools were invited to participate in the group interviews.

Instruments

To identify the interaction between teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy, their practices of classroom management, the researchers employed three research instruments, including a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations:

- The questionnaire was administered to seek the participants' beliefs in managing their classes.
- Six semi-structured interviews were used to gain insights into the participants' perceptions of the correlation between their self-efficacy and their classroom management.
- The data from classroom observations from six teachers were used to document the participants' practices in classroom management.

To find out what makes participants different from one another in terms of their perceptions of self-efficacy in classroom management and practices in classroom management, information related to teachers' educational backgrounds and work settings were collected; the two focus-group interviews were also conducted with the three school academic vice-principals and three heads of the English teams at three schools.

Questionnaire

To achieve the research aims of identifying the interaction between teachers' self-efficacy and classroom management perceived by EFL teachers, the researchers employed the questionnaire as one of the main research instruments. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014), a questionnaire is the most favoured technique for collecting attitudes, motivations, and opinions. Additionally, Brown and Coombe (2015) supported that a questionnaire provides a relatively cheap, quick, and efficient way of obtaining large amounts of information from a large sample of people. The current study was conducted in a limited time and studied on a small group of participants, for which a less structured questionnaire is entirely appropriate. The questionnaire used in the current study was sequenced in a clear structure convenient for participants to provide their responses in the way they deeply believe in (Baron-Cohen et al., 2000).

The questionnaire, including twelve items related to teachers' perceptions of classroom management, was adapted from the study by Bandura (1994). The five-point Likert scale was used to measure participants' responses with five levels, including Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly agree. In order to avoid misunderstanding, the questionnaire might cause to the respondents, and a Vietnamese version was used. To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, the researchers conducted piloting the questionnaire before its actual administration (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002). The questionnaire was piloted with the participation of twenty participants who were different from the actual ones. The results of a Scale Test run on the data of the pilot study showed that they were reliable enough to be delivered in the official study ($\alpha=.78$). After the questionnaires were administered to the participants, quantitative data collected were subjected to the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20.

Before the study participants were recruited to participate in this current study, the research team sent permission letters to the five vice-principals of five high schools in the Mekong delta of Vietnam in order to invite them and their EFL teachers to partake in the study. After two weeks, the research team received the agreement letters from three principals; the other two nicely refused to participate in the study. Then, the researchers were allowed to contact with the official teachers working in the three participating schools via emails. In the emails sent to the teachers, the researchers also attached the Google Form link to help the EFL teachers access the questionnaire. After a month, forty-six EFL teachers

responded to the survey, and of course they became the study's participants. Table 1 displays the information of the teacher participants for the survey.

Table 1. Participants' information

Variables	Sub-variables	N	Percentage
Gender	Male	10	21.74
	Female	36	78.26
Teaching experience	<5	17	36.96
	>5 & <10	14	30.43
	>10	15	32.61
Undergraduate major	TEFL	17	36.96
	English Linguistics and Literature	29	63.04

Among the participants, there were ten males and 36 female teachers; 17 teachers with less than five years of teaching experience, 14 teachers working in teaching profession for more than five and less than ten years, and 15 teachers working for more than ten years; 17 teachers with teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) degrees and 29 teachers with English Linguistics and Literature degrees.

Semi-structured interviews

Based on the participants' demographics and their scores gained from the questionnaire in which they self-reported their perceived confidence in classroom management, 12 out of 46 participants were invited to participate in the interviews. Table 2 displays the information of the teacher interviewees.

Table 2. Participants for semi-structured interviews

Name	School	Gender	Undergraduate major	Mean score
A	TQL	Male	TEFL	2.92
B	TQL	Female	English Linguistics and Literature	3.01
C	TQL	Male	English Linguistics and Literature	4.20
D	TQL	Female	TEFL	4.72
E	NTHL	Male	English Linguistics and Literature	2.99
F	NTHL	Female	TEFL	3.20
G	NTHL	Male	English Linguistics and Literature	4.52
H	NTHL	Female	TEFL	5.00
I	LTT	Male	English Linguistics and Literature	3.22
J	LTT	Female	TEFL	3.42
K	LTT	Male	English Linguistics and Literature	4.33
L	LTT	Female	TEFL	4.69

Four participants for semi-structured interviews were selected from each school. The recruitment for the participants from each school was guided first of all by the participants' highest and lowest scores in their perceived efficacy as the first and then by participants' gender and BA degree to secure the equal chance for teachers with highest and lowest scores, gender and educational background as participants. The questions used in the interviews were designed as open-ended questions with sub-questions to gauge data related to the participants' perceptions of their self-efficacy and classroom management. Before conducting the semi-structured interviews, the research team had sent the interview questions to the teacher participants. The purpose was to provide the interviewees sufficient time to progress their answers that might help enhance the comprehensibility of the actual interviews. The interview questions aimed to investigate (1) whether the participants were confident in their classroom management skills, (2) why they perceived their classroom management skills at a particular level, but not higher or lower, (3) what sub-skills in classroom management the teachers were most and least confident, and (4) why they were most confident in a particular sub-skill, but not another one. For the aims (3) and (4), the teachers had to be aware of these sub-skills. To do that, the research team also sent them the observation checklist. There was a list of sub-skills that were used to score the observed teachers.

Interviews were carried out in the Vietnamese language as the participants' mother tongue to avoid unexpected misunderstandings or challenges participants might face in expressing their ideas. Interviews were then transcribed. The research team double-checked these transcriptions before sending them back to the interviewees for their feedback on their loyalty. If the transcriptions carried any differences against the interviewees' ideas, they were revised with the consensus of the interviewees. Then, data from the interviews were coded, categorized, and analysed based on thematic relationships. For confidential purposes, the names of interviewees were reported under pseudonyms. The interviews were done both face-to-face or via telephones, depending on respondents' availability.

Observations

After conducting the interviews, the researchers selected six out of them, two per school according to their mean scores. Specifically, Teachers A, D, E, H, I, and L, who had obtained the lowest and highest mean scores in each school, were observed. The classroom observation checklist, developed by Simonsen et al. (2006), was adopted in the current study. The checklists were used to assess participants' classroom management skills by awarding definite scores and taking notes of critical visible features related to teachers' self-efficacy. After classroom observations, the researchers met the observed teachers to clarify what was unclear to them. Data from classroom observations were analyzed based on total scores given to each observed teacher by two observers, one researcher of this study and one colleague of the observed teacher.

Focus-group Interviews

As noted, three school academic vice-principals and three heads of the English teams were invited to participate in two group interviews, the vice-principals group and the team leaders group. Both group interviews were conducted using Zoom, which allows users to start or join a closed meeting with flawless video and audio. The interview questions used in the group interviews were designed as open-ended questions to collect data explaining why one's classroom management skills are worse or better than another's. Each focus group interview lasted more than one and a half hours. The interviews were video-recorded with the participants' permission. Highlights of all interviews were note-taken and then transcribed. The interview transcript was sent back to the individual interviewee for their feedback to ensure the reliability of the data collected. Data from the interviews were analyzed according to themes. Data were coded and categorized so that the themes were generated, reviewed, defined and finally named. The research team cross-checked the results of interviews and where consensus among the team members was required, an expert in the field of thematic analysis was invited to give support to the research team to ensure the reliability of the results of the study.

Results

EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Their Efficacy in Classroom Management

A Descriptive Statistics Frequencies test was employed and the results identified a normal distribution of participants' responses collected from the questionnaire ($M=3.95$; $Median= 3.99$; $Skewness= -.12$; $Kurtosis= -.13$). Then, a Descriptive Statistics test was run to examine the teachers' perceptions of their classroom management skills. Table 3 manifests the test results.

Table 3. EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Their Abilities in Classroom Management (N=46)

Classroom management activities	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Managing discipline and control disruptive behavior	2.00	5.00	3.63	.80
Maintaining a positive climate of courtesy and respect	2.00	5.00	3.89	.67
Maintaining classroom environment in which students work cooperatively	3.00	5.00	4.13	.50
Establishing a classroom management system with each group of students	2.00	5.00	3.87	.62
Creating an encouraging atmosphere for students to use English freely	3.00	5.00	4.15	.60
Using allocated time and give instructions for various activities effectively	3.00	5.00	3.91	.59
Establishing specific rules and consequences for students' misbehaviors	2.00	5.00	4.11	.64
Monitoring the entire classroom	2.00	5.00	3.70	.79
Rewarding students' achievements	1.00	5.00	4.33	.76
Using consistent disciplinary practices for each group of students	2.00	5.00	3.83	.74
Incorporating a variety of activities in English teaching	1.00	5.00	3.89	.92
Discussing behavioral problems to understand students	3.00	5.00	4.02	.58
Overall	2.92	5.00	3.95	.34

The statistical test results showed that the teachers in general highly perceived their efficacy in classroom management skills ($M=3.95$). The teachers were remarkably confident in their classroom management skills, especially in rewarding students' achievements ($M=4.33$). Classroom management is always considered one of the most critical aspects for conducting a successful class (Emmer & Hickman, 1991; Koutrouba et al., 2018; Varghese et al., 2016). The teachers' high self-efficacy reflected their high self-awareness of the impact of their classroom management skills on their teaching performance and students' learning outcomes.

EFL Teachers' Classroom Management in Practice

To further investigate the issue, scores from the observations regarding each activity the teachers did in the observations were examined. Table 4 displays the scores from the classroom observations.

Table 4. EFL Teachers' Practices in Classroom Management

Checklist	A	D	E	H	I	L	Total
Managing discipline and control disruptive behavior	1	2	2	2	2	2	11
Maintaining a positive climate of courtesy and respect	2	3	2	3	2	2	14
Maintaining classroom environment in which students work cooperatively	1	3	2	3	2	3	14
Establishing a classroom management system with each group of students	2	3	2	2	2	3	14
Creating an encouraging atmosphere for students to use English freely	1	3	1	2	2	3	12
Using allocated time and give instructions for various activities effectively	2	2	2	3	3	3	15
Establishing specific rules and consequences for students' misbehaviours	2	2	1	3	2	3	13
Monitoring the entire classroom	3	3	2	3	2	3	16
Rewarding students' achievements	2	2	2	3	2	2	13
Using consistent disciplinary practices for each group of students	2	2	3	3	2	3	15
Incorporating a variety of activities in English teaching	2	3	2	3	2	3	15
Discussing behavioural problems to understand students	1	2	2	3	2	2	12
Total scores	21	30	23	33	25	32	

According to the total scores, Teachers D, H, and L, all belong to the group having high self-efficacy in their classroom management skills, performed better than Teachers A, E, and I, who belong to the group obtaining low mean scores in the survey. Furthermore, the participants were divided into two groups. First, Teachers D, H and L ranked as the most influential teachers in classroom management among six participants in teaching practices. From the observations, the teachers were flexible and creative in choosing instructional strategies and classroom management. They focused on developing students' communicative competencies to communicate and cooperate throughout the pair work or group work activities. Besides, these teachers did plan and implement instructional strategies and classroom management effectively.

Teachers A, E and I- low in self-efficacy, performed least effectively. These teachers made some attempts at implementation, but overall their effort was strong or sustained. The teachers were not flexible in managing the classroom, so their students did not have equal opportunities to approach new knowledge. Therefore, it was to conclude that the more the EFL teachers trust in their classroom management skills, the better they performed in their teaching practice.

According to the obtained in the classroom observations, there was a strong interaction between the teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy in classroom management and their skills in practice. The more the teachers were confident in their skills, the more efficiently they managed their classes.

*Reasons Making Teachers Different in Their Self-Efficacy and Skills in Classroom Management**In Perceptions*

Teachers A and E, who got the lowest mean scores among all twelve interviewees, had some concerns about the values of previous professional development (PD) activities they had participated in. They said,

"Actually, I participated in many PD activities in the past. Of course, some of them were very useful for my teaching practices. However, many events should be considered because I, somehow, feel unsatisfied with them." (A; TQL high school; Male; TEFL; M=2.92)

"Lack of practical values is why I do not want to engage in PD activities anymore. Theory-based training is not useful at all as I want to observe some demonstrations instructing how to deal with classroom problems. Sometimes, I got stuck with the problems in my classes." (E; NTHL high school; Male; Linguistics and Literature; M=2.99)

In order to conduct successful training on developing EFL teachers' abilities, their needs analysis should be taken into considerations. Without analyzing teacher needs, it is not easy to provide efficient support through PD activities and enhance teaching quality as well.

According to the interviews, the teachers highly perceived their self-efficacy in responding to their students' good work by using compliments. Teachers K and D explained,

"In my preservice teacher education, I was trained to understand what factors affecting my students' motivation, and one of them is to use criticizes or compliments for enhancing the students' engagement in classroom activities. Therefore, whenever my students have completed given assignments, I am happy to give some compliments. It is definitely useful for classroom atmosphere." (K; LTT high school; Male; Linguistics and Literature; M=4.33)

"I attended some previous trainings on learner knowledge. They are so helpful because I know more about my students, how they learn and develop, or how they are influenced by teacher words, like criticizes or compliments. And, giving someone compliments as a reward after they have done a good job is not something special, right?" (D; TQL high school; Female; TEFL; M=4.72)

The teachers were highly aware of the importance of their words to their students' learning. Training on learner knowledge improves teachers' communication skills, which positively affects students' learning and strengthens the teacher-student interaction. In Vietnam, EFL teachers would have so many chances to take part in courses of educational psychology training on enhancing teachers' awareness of factors affecting their students' motivation.

The results also showed that the teacher participants faced difficulties in dealing with students' disruptive behaviors and managing their disciplines. Teachers I and F, the two teachers obtaining the low mean scores according to their self-efficacy in classroom management, said,

"Even though I have participated in many trainings on how to deal with students' misbehaviours, it is difficult to manage their disciplines due to the large class-size. It is nearly impossible to take care all students in a class, 40 to 50 students." (I; LTT high school; Male; Linguistics and Literature; M=3.22)

"I am afraid that it is impossible to deal with all students' misbehaviours in the large classes. I was trained to deal with that, but applying the knowledge in those PD activities is something so different. I tried to use the strategies that I have learned in my large classes, but nothing is better, even worse. I do not know why." (F; NTHL high school; Female; TEFL; M=3.20)

Insufficient teaching and learning conditions negatively affected the teachers' classroom management skills. It also showed that the teachers found it difficult to apply what they had been trained in their classes. In conclusion, the interaction between the teachers' previous attending CPD activities and their self-efficacy in classroom management was observable.

In Teaching Practices

Vietnamese preservice teachers often have a belief that proficient teaching abilities are what an effective teacher needs. Therefore, they much focus on learning what related pedagogical knowledge; lesson planning is a typical example. In the interviews before the observations, all participants were aware of the importance of the lesson's objectives and why they should provide their students a clear explanations of the expected outcomes. Teachers D and I stated,

"Providing a clear explanation of the lesson's objectives is important to my students. I used to never tell my students about the lesson's goals or what I expected them to achieve after a particular lesson. At that time, I could recognise that they were confused about what was going on. After observing my colleagues' classes, I realized that I missed this stage. Therefore, I have never forgotten providing the lesson's objectives to my students." (D; TQL high school; Female; TEFL; M=4.72)

"My students are very intelligent. They would never learn if they did not know why they have to learn a particular grammar point or do an assignment or a task. Never. Therefore, it is compulsory to provide them a clear goal for them to know what they should do to achieve that goal after a lesson." (I; LTT high school; Male; Linguistics and Literature; M=3.22)

What, why, and how to learn should be introduced to EFL students at the very beginning of the class. It could prevent students from misunderstanding the lesson contents.

Also in the interviews, the teachers were concerned about whether providing multiple opportunities for each student to voice up is possible or not due to the class size and the time constraint for an EFL class. Teachers A and E stated,

"I suppose it is somehow impossible that all 50 students will have a chance to speak in public in a 50-minute class. Impossible!" (A; TQL high school; Male; TEFL; M=2.92)

"I am afraid that I cannot do it [providing each student multiple opportunities to voice up]. You know, the number of students does not allow me to call all my students in a 45 to 50-minute class. And, let me see...Providing each student multiple times to voice up, it is absolutely impossible to me." (E; NTHL high school; Male; Linguistics and Literature; M=2.99)

Even though Teachers D and L shared the same concern with the above teachers, they did excellently in their observed class. They said in the interviews as,

"Providing each student multiple chances to speak is not something simple, for sure, especially in large classes. However, I think organizing interactive activities is a good way for enhancing the number of students voicing up in the class." (D; TQL high school; Female; TEFL; M=4.72)

"I think most of EFL teachers are afraid of teaching a large class due to its drawbacks, such as designing activities, monitoring students' work, or providing students chances to talk... But I know some activities that may help, such as presentation in small groups, information gaps, think-pair-share, interviews, and so on." (L; LTT high school; Female; TEFL; M=4.69)

As mentioned before, teaching and learning conditions could significantly impact teachers' teaching performance and students' learning outcomes. Only effective teachers with a wide range of knowledge and good classroom management skills could face under-expected conditions. It, therefore, enhanced the values of the PD activities that the teachers attended.

In the interviews, Teachers D and L highlighted the contributions of their previous attending PD activities training them to use mentioned interactive activities, such as presentations, gap-fills, think-pair-share, interviews, debates, etc. They said,

"I have acknowledged these interactive activities by participating in previous PD activities. After engaging in the PD, I would consider whether these activities are suitable for my students or not, due to some reasons like students' levels, objectives, or others. Yeah, there are some losses and wins." (D; TQL high school; Female; TEFL; M=4.72)

"In the previous attending PD activities, the trainers demonstrated some interactive activities that I thought they could be applicable in my classes." (L; LTT high school; Female; TEFL; M=4.69)

The procedures of observing innovations in the previous PD activities, examining the impacts of these innovations on student learning, and adjusting to improve their suitability for teachers' particular teaching contexts did help the high-perceived teachers in self-efficacy of classroom management deal with several issues in EFL classes, particularly large-size classes.

In addition to the abovementioned shortage of the observed teachers, they were not successful in responding to inappropriate behaviours in a calm, emotionally objective and business-like manner though the teachers were confident in their capacities in using words to enhance their students' learning motivation. Teachers H and D said,

"I am confident in my words use which can better the learning atmosphere. I have not found any reason why I have to lose my calm, even when my students misbehave." (H; NTHL high school; Female; TEFL; M=5.00)

"Maybe I would be a little bit angry if my students misbehaved in the classroom. However, I do not think I will lose my calm. I will talk to these students in a very good manner." (D; TQL high school; Female; TEFL; M=4.72)

The mismatch between the teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy in responding to students' misbehaviors and their practice was observable. During the teaching process, the observed teachers paid much their attention to the instructional strategies and their impacts on student learning; it therefore distracted them from noticing their behaviors, such as using bad language, movements, manners, body language, and facial expressions. Therefore, when students' misbehaviors occurred in the classrooms, the teachers inadvertently responded in an inappropriate manner.

In Administrators' Views

In the group interviews, there were three main reasons explaining why EFL teachers were different from others in terms of their self-efficacy in classroom management and skills in classroom management. First, the EFL teachers did not get sufficient pre-training. In the vice-principals' discussion, Principal of School TQL said,

"To those in English teacher education programs, they had chance to learn almost all necessary skills to become a teacher. Therefore, their confidence in their classroom management skills was higher than those in English studies."

In the same view, Principal of School LTT stated,

"Even though the teachers in English studies obtained a teaching certificate, these programs did not instruct the teachers to teach EFL in particular. That is why they could be very good at English but their skills in teaching are somehow insufficient."

Principal of School NTHL strongly agreed due to her own observations. She remarked,

"When I observed my school EFL teachers, I realized that those with TEFL run the classes very smoothly even though they were sometimes confused about some special situations. However, it could be solved

when they enrich their teaching experience. On the other hand, those with plus-teaching certificate messed everything up. Their knowledge of teaching methods in English classes was limited."

Pre-service teacher education always plays an essential role in formulating teachers' identities. It, therefore, strongly affected the teachers' effectiveness in teaching and managing their classes. Furthermore, the undergraduate majors considerably influenced the teachers' teaching performance.

Second, almost no professional development activities held by school-level met EFL teachers' needs for their successful teaching career. In the group interview of heads of the English teams, Head of the English team in School LTT said,

"We often organise team meetings to share our teaching experience. However, these meetings did not contribute much to solving the problems that our EFL teachers had faced in their classrooms."

With the same ideas, Head of the English team in School TQL stated,

"Actually, we spend much of time talking about familial issues, social issues, etc. As a result, we usually end up the meetings with nothing related to classroom management or solving classroom problems that each teacher has been facing."

However, Head of the English team in School NTHL was satisfied with the quality of English team meetings in her setting. Particularly, she remarked,

"It seems that my team is a bit different. Actually, I feel good with the quality of our team meetings because we are rarely distracted by other issues; we therefore focus on discussing the problems that we are facing and providing solutions. I am so lucky because I did have some training on hosting PD activities in a school setting."

Backtracking to the observed teachers' performance, similar to what Head of the English team in School NTHL said, both observed teachers in this school performed well and fairly evenly. Consequently, it can be concluded that the quality of team meetings made teachers from different school settings different in terms of their self-efficacy in classroom management and skills in classroom management.

Third, teacher's learning autonomy played an essential role in distinguishing the differences between one teacher and another one. According to Head of English team in School LTT, some EFL teachers in his setting greatly desired to engage in PD activities held by other organizations because they wanted to gain more knowledge and skills in classroom management. He said,

"Some EFL teachers in my school have made a lot of efforts to become better at their skills in classroom management. They are willing to commute more than 50 kilometres a day to participate in academic conferences, seminars, workshops in order to improve their teaching performance. Amazing! And as a result, their teaching becomes so much qualified."

The development of humankind, and education, in particular, requires teachers to develop their abilities unstoppably. The more teachers perceive themselves as learners and learn like learners, the better teaching performance they are expected to have.

Discussion

EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Their Abilities in Classroom Management

The essential role of PD activities in nourishing teacher quality was determined in the study by Derakhshan et al. (2020). Therefore, the teachers' engagement in PD activities, especially those for developing their classroom management skills, built up their self-confidence. As interpreted, the interaction between teachers' self-efficacy in classroom management skills and their previous attending PD activities was observable. With sufficient training, it is potential to enhance teaching and learning quality. Therefore, it is essential to figure out how to increase the quality of PD events in order to provide EFL teachers with necessary pedagogical knowledge.

EFL Teachers' Classroom Management in Practice

According to the results of the study, there was a strong interaction between teachers' perceptions of their classroom management skills and their teaching in practice. Backtracking to the literature, teachers' self-efficacy is positively correlated with effective classroom management (Choi & Lee, 2018; Hicks, 2012; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990), openness to adoption of innovation (Guskey, 1988; Zonoubi et al., 2017), the effort teachers invest in their teaching and the goals they set (Hoy & Spero, 2005), being less critical of students' mistakes (Webb & Ashton, 1986), and student motivation (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Guskey, 1988). It can be inferred that the EFL teachers did have excellent chances to engage in the PD training on enhancing their classroom management skills.

*Reasons Making Teachers Different in Their Self-Efficacy and Skills in Classroom Management**Participants' Perceptions*

As noted, PD training plays an important role in teacher development; it, however, is difficult to be successful without teacher needs analysis (Yenen & Yöntem, 2020). Spontaneous PD activities are often organized without analyzing EFL teachers' needs. As a result, the contributions of these activities to improving the teachers' teaching performance seemed to be trivial.

Additionally, the teachers were highly aware of the power of words. In Vietnam, the idiom, "courtesy costs nothing", is passed down orally from generation to generation. In educational settings, nice words or compliments are even more important that directly affects student learning. Trainings on learner knowledge is expected to help EFL teachers understand more about their students; especially, how teacher words affect students' feelings or motivation. Therefore, attending these trainings enhanced their teachers' self-efficacy in rewarding students' achievements partly explained the teachers' self-confidence. This result was in line with the study by Gibson and Dembo (1984), in which the authors stated that criticizing students for their failures and being impatient when having difficult circumstances were related to a low level of teacher efficacy.

Moreover, teacher classroom management skills were strongly affected by the teaching and learning conditions. Large classes often cause Vietnamese EFL teachers and students numerous difficulties in terms of teaching and learning practices (Duong & Nguyen, 2021; Harfitt, 2012; Marcus, 1997). According to the excerpts, each class includes no less than 40 students, considered a large-size class, and the teachers therefore found it challenging to manage their classes. However, the excerpts also raised a concern about the contributions of the teachers' previous attending PD trainings on classroom management, especially those related to large-size class problems.

Participants' Practices

Both Gora (1963) and Walshe (2017) agreed that lesson objectives orient teachers on carrying out a particular part of a lesson, designing a specific task, or providing a particular assignment for students to complete. Students would learn more effectively when they know the lesson's goals or why they have to do this or that in the classroom. The intended outcomes might guide the students to where their focus should lie. In other words, providing students a clear explanation of lesson's objectives is explainable as giving them a target for their learning. With high awareness of the role of this work, the highest total score belonged to the sub-skill of providing students a clear explanation of lesson's objectives.

As well known in the literature, large-size class is a significant barrier for EFL teachers to manage their classes efficiently (Duong & Nguyen, 2021; Harfitt, 2012; Marcus, 1997). However, the problem could be solved with a wide range of knowledge in terms of teaching methods and techniques. That is how teachers' previous attending PD trainings on the use of interactive activities was important to their teaching practice.

In Administrators' Views

Pre-service teacher education is significantly essential in informing teachers' judgments and beliefs of the image they will become in their whole teaching career (Clark & Newberry, 2019). Without pre-service English teacher education, the teachers, who graduated with English Linguistics and Literature degrees, faced more difficulties than those with TEFL degrees.

Team meetings as a representative of the professional learning community made differences in teachers' classroom management skills. Through collaborative examining day-to-day teaching practices, the teachers shared their ideas and experience on teaching to meet their students' educational needs (Higgins, 2016; Vescio et al., 2008). Therefore, the outcomes of these meetings also made differences between one's teaching and another's.

There is a strong interaction between teacher's learner autonomy and teacher responsibility for a teacher's teaching and his/her students' learning (Little, 1995). According to the above excerpt, the factor on teacher's learner autonomy differentiated teachers' skills in their classroom management and self-efficacy in their capacities to manage their classes.

Conclusion

The findings could be summarized in terms of teachers' perception of their confidence in their classroom management and practices in classroom activities. There was a positive correlation between their self-efficacy and practices. Regarding the questionnaires, the EFL teachers in general were confident in the effectiveness of their classroom management. They provided appropriate compliments to what their students achieve, encouraged students when they needed, and built up the rules for their students to follow. However, the teachers thought they needed to improve their abilities to deal with students' in-class disruptions.

The teachers indicated that their self-efficacy interacts with their classroom management skills. As a result, if they were optimistic about their abilities and strong at managing their classrooms, they could foster their students' learning outcomes. Then, their efficacy in classroom management could be reflected by their abilities to provide students with an

excellent environment to develop their English proficiency. From classroom observations about teachers' practices in classroom management, it was seen that the classroom and lesson flows were generally run smoothly by the teachers. Findings showed that teachers of different degrees of self-efficacy differed from each other; those with high self-efficacy did not only try to develop students' communicative competence, but they also showed their flexibility and creativity in their classroom practices. In contrast, the ones with a lower level seemed to be inflexible and unable to manage the teaching stages effectively. In light of what made teachers different in classroom management skills, the findings from three group interviews indicated three main reasons, including pre-service teacher education, previous attending PD activities, and teacher's learner autonomy.

The significant findings of the study unpacked some implications for EFL teacher professional development. Teachers' self-efficacy was found to have interacted with their abilities in managing classroom activities. In pre-service teacher education programs and strengthening teacher students' professional knowledge in ELT, EFL teachers need to get more exposed to theories, principles, techniques, and good classroom management practices. In this light, case-based teaching could provide teachers with authentic scenarios of classroom issues where they can solve problems in English classes (Hoffer, 2020). Teacher educators should become more aware of giving constructive feedback and offering encouraging compliments during the teacher training program to lift education students' confidence in their teaching abilities. Once one's confidence increases, they will be well-prepared for that endeavour.

As readiness for teaching could be a prerequisite for success, in-service teachers should have opportunities to benefit from learning at the workplace, in response to such a professional development need, organizational learning (Rashman et al., 2009), where a culture of learning and sharing should be built among EFL teachers. In that learning community, teachers keep one other informed of challenges and solutions or promising practices of managing issues in English classes. It could also be a good professional practice to implement lesson study (Uştuk & De Costa, 2021) as a model for enhancing their self-efficacy and classroom management accordingly. In practicing lesson study, teachers support and coach one another in co-planning, observing others' lessons, and co-reflecting on success or areas for improvements in teachers' classroom management skills.

It would also be a good idea for school administrators to develop training courses for specific groups of teachers who own different levels of self-efficacy to improve their classroom management skills, a prerequisite for enhancing students' learning outcomes. Appraisals to in-service teachers who do well in their teaching should be practiced and promoted. The most important implication is that teachers themselves should set particular realizable goals to intensify their self-efficacy as obvious and unrealistic goals hinder the increase of self-efficacy (Sides & Cuevas, 2020).

Limitations

There was an unavoidable limitation in this current study. The sample size was small that the findings could not generalize the whole picture of EFL teachers' self-efficacy of classroom management skills, their skills in practice, or what made one teacher different from others in terms of classroom management skills.

Recommendations

Based on the abovementioned limitations, increasing number of participants is therefore recommended for practitioners and future researchers. Besides, exploring the impact of teachers' classroom management skills in practice on students' learning achievement is a worth-doing study. In addition, related to further research in the field of teacher self-efficacy, Punyasettro et al. (2021) proposed a new 12-item survey to measure self-efficacy in various educational contexts. There are four self-efficacy aspects in the framework, including mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal. Therefore, it would be worth exploring teachers' self-efficacy in light of the new framework to gain an insightful look into which level of self-efficacy teachers are and what could be done to support teachers to become more confident as effective classroom practitioners.

Authorship Contribution Statements

Trinh: Conceptualizing the study, monitoring the study, ensuring the quality, editing the report. Nguyen: Reviewing literature, planning the study, collecting data. Le: Reviewing literature, analyzing data and drafting the report.

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