| Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi|

An Intended or Alternative Profession?: ELL Undergraduates' Attitudes towards Being an English Teacher
Öncelikli Meslek Tercihi mi Yoksa Alternatif mi?: İDE Öğrencilerinin İngilizce Öğretmeni Olmaya Yönelik Tutumları

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Abstract

Purpose: Prospective teachers are trained with essential knowledge and skills in teacher education programs of all teaching fields at education faculties of universities in Turkiye. In addition, graduates of specific departments at faculties also have a chance to become a teacher by successfully completing pedagogical formation certificate programs. Thus, it is a matter of question what the main purpose of undergraduate students when beginning to study or studying at these departments is: becoming a teacher or not. Along with this inquiry, this paper presents a quantitative study focusing on reasons for department choice of undergraduates studying at English Language and Literature (ELL) department and their attitudes towards being a language teacher within the scope of teacher self-efficacy beliefs.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Data of this quantitative study were collected from 220 undergraduates studying at English Language and Literature department of a state university in Turkiye by administering scales on the research purpose.

Findings: The findings suggested that the primary reason reported was an interest in the department with knowledge and skills to be gained, which was followed by becoming an English language teacher with high level of teacher self-efficacy.

Highlights: Even though there is no explicit focus on becoming an English teacher as part of curricula of non-ELT departments, undergraduates studying at these programs consider being an English teacher as the primary career option, which could lead to a need to evaluate curricula of these programs and teacher education.

Öz

Çalışmanın amacı: Türkiye'deki üniversitelerin Eğitim Fakültelerinde öğretmenlikle ilgili tüm alanlarda öğretmen adaylarına gerekli bilgi ve beceriler kazandırılmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra, çeşitli fakültelerin belirli bölümlerinden mezun olanlar pedagojik formasyon sertifika programını tamamlayarak öğretmen olma şansını edinmektedirler. Bu durum göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, bu bölümlerde eğitime başlayan ya da eğitimine devam eden üniversite öğrencilerinin bölümlerini tercih etme sebeplerinin "öğretmen olmak" olup olmadığı merak konusudur. Bu araştırma konusu doğrultusunda, bu makale İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı bölümünde öğrenim gören üniversite öğrencilerinin bölümlerini tercih etmelerindeki öncelikli sebebi ve bu öğrencilerin öğretmen olmaya yönelik tutumlarını öz-yeterlik inançları çerçevesinde araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Materyal ve Yöntem: Nicel araştırma olarak tasarlanan çalışmanın verisi Türkiye'de bir devlet üniversitesinin İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı bölümünde öğrenim gören 220 üniversite öğrencisinden araştırma amacına uygun ölçeklerin uygulanmasıyla toplanmıştır.

Bulgular: Çalışmanın bulguları, çalışmanın katılımcılarının bölümlerini tercih etmedeki öncelikli sebebin kazandırdığı bilgi ve beceriler açısından bölüme olan ilgileri olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bununla birlikte, katılımcıların büyük çoğunluğunun bölüm tercihindeki öncelikli sebeplerinin İngilizce öğretmeni olmak olduğu ve öğretmenlik tercihi olan katılımcıların öz-yeterlik inançlarının yüksek olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır.

Önemli Vurgular: İngilizce öğretmenliği bölümü dışındaki bölümlerin müfredatlarında öğretmenlikle ilgili bir odak olmamasına rağmen bu bölümlerde öğrenim gören öğrenciler öğretmen olmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, bu programların müfredatlarının ve öğretmen eğitiminin gözden geçirilmesi ihtiyacı ortaya çıkabilir.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper presents a quantitative study aiming to examine attitudes of undergraduates studying at ELL department towards becoming an English teacher with regard to teacher self-efficacy beliefs. As part of pre-service teacher education, teacher candidates are trained with essential knowledge and skills to teach in various training programs. Being successful in fulfilling tasks demanded by these programs is dependent on factors one of which is teacher candidates' self-efficacy beliefs. In this sense, existing research provides insight into readiness of pre-service teachers for the profession and their self-efficacy beliefs. Yet, the focus is on teachers in either long-term or short-term initial training programs such as pedagogical formation certificate program in Turkiye. It is not addressed if undergraduates studying at a department providing an opportunity to attend a pedagogical certificate program, thus, to become a teacher consider teaching as the first career option. Therefore, the current paper, first, introduces theoretical framework for aspects of pre-service teacher education and teacher self-efficacy. Then, details of the study, data collection procedures and analyses, findings and discussion are presented.

Background of the Study

Choosing to become a teacher as profession is the result of consideration of a number of conditions. According to OECD (2022) report on teacher initial education in countries, intrinsic motivation plays a significant role in choosing to become a teacher as the first career option. However, in the same report, it is stated that in *Teaching and Learning International Survey* (TALIS) countries, one-third of teachers who considered teaching as an alternative option before starting to the profession preferred it due to flexible work schedule, better work life conditions and the prestige in the society. With that decision to become a teacher, ongoing educational process starts by shaping teacher identity from being a prospective teacher to an experienced teacher.

Pre-service teacher education or initial teacher training is presented in various forms and duration of programs throughout the world. To this end, in a report published by UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) (2021) on pre-service teacher preparation, it was stated that requirements of becoming a teacher could involve a degree program, a diploma or certificate, and the quality of pre-service education programs is based on the content rather than the time spent on the program. However, according to this report, completing a bachelor's degree is the minimum condition associated with achieving highest student performance. Moreover, it is indicated that teacher candidates being trained in short-term programs are inclined to need more support and training when they begin the profession. The training carries on in the form of in-service teacher education or teacher training/development practices.

Pre-service teacher education in Turkiye dates back to 19th century with initial form of schools (Bilir, 2011; Köksal & Ulum, 2018). Since then, faculties of education at universities have provided four-year pre-service teacher education programs for prospective teachers of various fields to help them be qualified with necessary theoretical and pedagogical knowledge and skills. Keeping up with time and socio-cultural changes, educational systems and, thus, curricula of these programs have been renewed to meet emerging needs. In addition, language teacher education dates back to 19th century in Turkiye starting with training to teach French and carrying on with English that spread around the country in the mid of the century (Balbay & Doğan, 2021). Now, English language teacher education programs are available at faculties of education at about a hundred universities in Turkiye. These programs provide courses and teaching practice to develop prospective English teachers' skills and pedagogical, subject matter and general knowledge (Karakaş, 2012). With latest changes, 30-35 % of courses are on pedagogical knowledge; 15-20 % on general knowledge and 45-50 % on subject matter knowledge in the curriculum of English language teacher education programs. Besides, prospective English teachers practice teaching through practicum experience at basic and high school level in the last year of their four-year training at the faculty. Thus, they get prepared to start their career in teaching.

In addition to pre-service teacher education provided at faculties of education, graduates of various departments at faculties could become a teacher by attending one-academic year pedagogical formation certificate program. In this program, teacher candidates take intensive courses on general and pedagogical knowledge as well as subject matter courses specific to their teaching field, and they practice teaching through a two-term practicum process. Specific to English language teaching, graduates of English Language and Literature, American Culture and Literature, Translation and Interpreting, Translation Studies and Linguistics departments can apply to the program. Therefore, they are trained to be an English teacher through common courses on language knowledge and courses on teaching methods specific to English language teaching. Furthermore, they have teaching experience through practicum at the same type of schools as graduates of bachelor's degree in ELT, which contributes to their readiness to become a teacher.

When the related literature is reviewed in the global context, also in Turkiye, it could be stated that existing research tends to address psychological aspects such as motivation and wellbeing, views of undergraduates studying at departments of education faculties or attending a pedagogical formation certificate program about becoming a teacher and effectiveness of the courses they take during their studies (e.g., Corcoran & O'Flaherty, 2022; Crowe & McGarr, 2022; Holzberger et al., 2021; Mairitsch et al., 2021; Özdemir & Güngör, 2017; Karakış, 2021; Toraman et al., 2016). For instance, in one of the studies, Crowe and McGarr (2022) investigated 42 undergraduates' career preferences for choosing to become a teacher with regard to shaping their teacher identity. The findings suggested that teacher candidates in the study had high level of commitment to teaching profession, so they chose it as the main career option without exploring other options. On wellbeing of pre-service teachers, Mairitsch et al. (2021) conducted a qualitative comparative study through 14 semi-structured interviews in two countries and found out that individual and environmental factors such as work-life balance, social interaction, and the quality of teacher education program are likely to

influence pre-service teachers' wellbeing. Within the scope of pre-service teachers in pedagogical formation certificate program, in Turkish context, Karakış (2021) explored professional engagement, career development goals and motivation of prospective teachers in various fields who were attending that program. Quantitative data collected from 460 participants revealed that their motivation was high to become teachers. In a similar vein, in an earlier study, Toraman et al. (2016) investigated attitudes of teacher candidates in various fields towards teaching profession and their views about pedagogical formation certificate program they were attending. The research findings indicated that 202 participants in the study were relatively satisfied with effectiveness of the program and there was a positive change in their attitudes towards the profession.

Concerning English language teacher education context, research tries to shed light on views of teacher candidates at pedagogical formation certificate program despite very limited number of studies in question (e.g., Mirici & Ölmez-Çağlar, 2017; Köksal & Genç, 2019; Sarıçoban & Kırmızı, 2018). In this sense, Mirici and Ölmez-Çağlar (2017) focused on how non-ELT teacher candidates reflected on practicum experience during the program, and it emerged that these prospective teachers needed more teaching practice since they did not have many opportunities to observe lessons and practice teaching as part of the program. Additionally, Sarıçoban and Kırmızı (2018) searched for how prospective English teachers who attended pedagogical formation program considered the impact of program on their teaching. The findings of that study carried out with 63 participants who were either taking courses on the program or teaching after completing the program set forth participants' positive views about the program as it was beneficial. Overall, findings are likely to suggest perceived effectiveness of the program fostering positive attitudes towards teaching in various fields of teaching one of which is ELT.

Teacher Self-efficacy Beliefs

The concept of self-efficacy referring to an individual's thoughts about his or her capabilities to fulfil a specific task (e.g., Bandura, 1986; 1997) is considered as a fundamental motivational construct in shaping behaviors (Bandura, 1997). To this end, strength of these beliefs and the nature of task to be fulfilled are determinant of self-efficacy levels, in turn, strong sense of self-efficacy is regarded as a path to success. As for the sources of self-efficacy, it has been indicated that an individual's past achievements in tasks similar to the target one (mastery experiences), achievements of a model (vicarious experiences), encouragement (verbal persuasion) and mood (physiological and affective states) could lead to a sense of success, and when these beliefs are established strongly, they are difficult to change (Bandura, 1997). Consequently, it has been related to various areas in human life one of which is learning. To this end, self-efficacy is associated with positive outcomes in learning such as high level of motivation, learner autonomy, self-regulated behaviors, and student achievement (e.g., Bong, 2002; Chong & Reinders, 2022; Jiang et al., 2014; Kim et al., 2022; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Zimmerman, 2000).

Teacher self-efficacy, on the other hand, defined as a teacher's beliefs about his or her abilities to perform teaching related tasks even in challenging situations (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) is stated to affect student achievement (e.g., Caprara et al., 2006; Shahzad & Naureen, 2017) and motivation (e.g., Mojavezi & Taviz, 2012). In the literature, teacher self-efficacy is commonly addressed through "can do" statements on specific teaching related tasks about *instructional strategies, classroom management and student engagement* (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) or more specific tasks about *instruction, adapting education to individual students' needs, motivating students, keeping discipline, cooperating with colleagues and parents, and coping with changes and challenges* (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). Providing a powerful source to deal with these challenging tasks, teacher self-efficacy also has teaching related psychological outcomes which are commitment to teaching, job satisfaction or burn-out and intention to quit (e.g., Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007; 2010; 2014; Klassen & Chiu, 2010). As evidence for positive and negative teacher related outcomes, Klassen and Chiu (2010) put forward that high level of self-efficacy for classroom management and instructional strategies was significantly related to high level of job satisfaction. Regarding possible factors influencing teacher self-efficacy, in the same study conducted with 1430 in-service teachers, it emerged that female teachers had higher level of workload and classroom stress, thus lower level of self-efficacy for classroom management. Moreover, the effect of years of teaching experience was not straight as it increased from early to mid-years in teaching while it decreased through the end of the profession. Similarly, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2014) examined if teacher self-efficacy and autonomy were associated with engagement, job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion in a study conducted with 2569 Norwegian teachers, and they revealed that teacher self-efficacy and autonomy were significantly related to all three concepts in positive or negative sense. Overall, research findings conclude that the higher level of self-efficacy beliefs is, the more positive teaching related outcomes are.

While teacher self-efficacy is associated with concepts abovementioned regarding in-service teachers, strong sense of self-efficacy beliefs is also connected to readiness of pre-service teachers (e.g., Knoblauch & Woolfolk Hoy, 2008; Pendergast et al., 2011). Furthermore, research on the change in self-efficacy beliefs during pre-service teacher education has suggested that teacher candidates tend to have high level of efficacy beliefs throughout their training, but the level of self-efficacy beliefs decreases when they start to profession particularly in their first year of teaching (e.g., Hoy & Woolfolk,1990; Moseley et al., 2003), which is referred to "reality shock" (e.g., Mintz et al., 2020). For instance, Pendergast et al. (2011) examined the change in self-efficacy beliefs of beginning pre-service teachers throughout their teacher preparation. The findings suggested that while the teacher candidates had high level of teacher self-efficacy even in the first weeks of their education, it decreased in the last semester of the final year of education, which emphasizes the reality of facing the real conditions.

Specific to pre-service language teacher education in Turkiye, studies conducted with undergraduates studying at faculty of education set forth that prospective language teachers with high level of self-efficacy feel ready for the profession with positive thoughts about their teaching abilities (e.g., Ercan-Demirel, 2017; Külekçi, 2011). In one of these studies, Külekçi (2011) explored

self-efficacy beliefs of 353 prospective English teachers at two universities in Turkiye with regard to several variables through a quantitative study, and it emerged that the participants had positive efficacy beliefs. Moreover, the variables of academic achievement and study grade were found out to be effective in their self-efficacy. Similarly, the study of İnceçay and Dollar (2012) searched for self-efficacy beliefs of Turkish pre-service English teachers and their readiness for the profession in relation to real teaching conditions. The findings indicated that there was a relationship between teacher self-efficacy regarding classroom management and readiness to handle classroom issues. However, there was no significant difference in self-efficacy beliefs reported concerning transferring management skills into real classroom conditions. Likewise, in a later attempt, the study of Ercan-Demirel (2017) conducted with 208 pre-service ELT teachers in their last year of studies at two state universities in Turkiye addressed their self-efficacy beliefs about teaching career that they were about to begin. The findings of that quantitative study revealed that the participants had high level of self-efficacy for their teaching, and they felt ready for the profession.

Within the scope of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, prospective teachers attending pedagogical formation certificate program were sample of studies in Turkish contexts as well as undergraduates studying at faculties of education (e.g., Güngör & Özdemir, 2017; Şahin, 2013; Yazıcı & Yıldırım, 2017). The studies searching for self-efficacy beliefs of prospective teachers at pedagogical formation program and their attitudes towards teaching profession have revealed that they have positive attitudes towards teaching with high level of teacher self-efficacy (e.g., Şahin, 2013). Yet, there is lack of related research in the field of ELT, and to the knowledge of the researcher, no study has investigated whether these prospective teachers tend to become a teacher when beginning their departments or carrying on studies at their departments. Therefore, the current study aims to examine main reason for department choice of undergraduates studying at departments that provide opportunities to become a teacher when graduating within the scope of teacher self-efficacy in English language teaching context. For this purpose, the following research questions are to be addressed:

1. What is the main reason of undergraduates of ELL department for choosing their departments to study?
2. What is their attitude towards becoming an English teacher when graduating?
   a. If it is positive, how do they perceive their teacher self-efficacy?
   b. How does educational experience relate to teacher self-efficacy beliefs?

METHOD/MATERIALS

In order to address the research questions, the study was designed in two phases based on quantitative research methods. Before data collection, approval was obtained from Ethical Board of the university that the study was aimed to be conducted. Then, quantitative data were collected from the whole sample through a background information questionnaire in the first phase, and in the second phase, a valid and reliable scale on language teacher self-efficacy was used to collect data from the participants whose response was to become a teacher. Data were analyzed through appropriate statistical tests on Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Detailed description of the sample and data collection/analyses procedures is as follows:

Setting and Participants

The setting was English Language and Literature department at Faculty of Human Sciences of a state university in Turkiye. As part of four-year undergraduate education, the department provides courses on English Language and Literature as well as compulsory courses suggested by Council of Higher Education in Turkiye. Students studying at this department may have academic career opportunities. Furthermore, they could prefer being an English teacher by attending one-academic year pedagogical formation certificate program after they graduate. In this program, they are provided with teacher education courses as well as teaching practicum.

The participants were 220 undergraduates studying at each grade at the department including students studying English at prep-school before going on their studies at the department. Before pooling the participants through convenient sampling method, the target group were explained about the procedures and ethical issues through an informed consent form, and the ones agreeing to participate into the study constituted the sample. Description of the sample could be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Background information about the sample

Grade (M=2,44, SD=1.58)	N= 220	Gender (M=1.34, SD=.52)	N=220	Age (M=1.52, SD=.55)	N=220
Prep-school	110	Female	150	18-20	109
1st year	6	Male	65	21-25	107
2nd year	37	Prefer not to say	5	26-30	3
3rd year	31			30+	1
4th year	36				

As seen in background information about the sample presented in Table 1, most of the participants were students studying English at prep-school before carrying on studies at their departments, which made it possible to examine if the participants started to university with an intention of becoming a teacher. The target was to collect data from groups with almost equal numbers, but due to data collection principle of voluntary participation, the number of the participants in groups was unequal. However, except for prep-school and first year students, the number of participants in other grades were similar. The only

background variable considered in research purposes was educational grade, so gender and age variables are presented in the table to only present details about the participants.

Data Collection Procedures

Having decided on setting and sample, the researcher focused on data collection procedures. In line with quantitative research method, a fit-for-purpose instrument to be used was determined. To this end, one of the data collection instruments was a background information questionnaire including multiple-choice items on gender, study year, self-efficacy about language knowledge, the primary reason for choosing to study at the department and their attitudes towards being a language teacher. Appropriateness of the questionnaire was checked by a field expert, and revisions were made accordingly before using it. This questionnaire was administered to all participants. Besides that, for further inquiry to address teacher self-efficacy, the study was carried on with the participants who reported that their primary reason for choosing the department was to become a teacher. To prevent any misunderstanding, explanations were added into the questionnaire, and the researcher noted the procedures while administering the instruments. A 23-item scale on pre-service language teacher self-efficacy developed by the researcher was used to address teacher self-efficacy beliefs. The scale had "can do" items on components of planning, teaching, assessment, and professional development in 7-Likert scale response options from 1 (a little) to 7 (a lot) for the strength of beliefs. To prevent any effect of assumptions that could mislead the participants' responses, 0 (do not know/not applicable) option was added into the scale. The items were translated into Turkish for better understanding of related concepts and terms on the scale, and backward translation process was held for the concern of validity. Furthermore, before employing the scale for data collection, a pilot-study was conducted for reliability analyses, and Cronbach alpha score was found to be .94 suggesting appropriateness of the scale to collect data. As a result, it was administered to the sample in spring term of 2021-2022 academic year.

Data Analyses

Based on quantitative research methods, data were analyzed statistically. To this end, descriptive statistics, frequencies, Kolmorogov-Smirnov normality test and one-way ANOVA test were performed. The findings of these analyses are as follows:

FINDINGS

This quantitative research sought to explore primary reason for department choice of undergraduates having a chance to become an English teacher by obtaining pedagogical formation certificate. For this purpose, background information questionnaire included two Likert-scales questions. One of the questions focused on the main reason for choosing to study at the department by presenting three response options: an interest in the department with knowledge and skills to be gained, academic career opportunities when being graduated and becoming an English teacher by obtaining pedagogical formation certificate. Responses are demonstrated in the table below:

Table 2. Findings about department preferences

Primary reason	Frequency	Percentage
An interest in the department	101	45.9
Academic career opportunities	26	11.8
Becoming an English teacher	93	42.3

As could be seen in the table on findings about department preferences, the primary reason of ELL undergraduates for preferring to study at the department was reported to be their interest in the department followed by the option of becoming a teacher with a small difference between them. The second item included in the questionnaire to sustain the finding about department choice was a 5-Likert scale response question in which participants were asked how much they agreed on becoming a teacher when graduating. Responses are as follows:

Table 3. Responses about preferences for becoming a teacher

How much do you agree on the following statement? "*My primary goal when being graduated is to become an English teacher.*

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly disagree	30	13.6
Disagree	32	14.5
Partially agree	65	29.5
Agree	30	13.6
Strongly agree	63	28.6
Total	220	

In Table 3 presenting responses about preferences for becoming a teacher, it is demonstrated that while the response of *Partially Agree* had the highest value, most of the participants responded as *Strongly Agree* and *Agree*, which matches and sustains the frequency value of the previous item. Thus, further analyses addressed teacher self-efficacy beliefs.

Teacher self-efficacy beliefs of the participants who reported that their goal is to become a teacher (N=93) were investigated through an item on the background information questionnaire and the pre-service language teacher self-efficacy scale. In this regard, first, the participants reported on how they perceived their teaching abilities, which is illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4. Participants' perceptions about their teaching abilities (N=93)

How do you consider your teaching abilities?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Bad	4	1.8
Fair	47	21.4
Good	36	16.4
Very good	6	2.7

With regard to Table 4 demonstrating participants' perceptions about their teaching abilities, it could be stated that participants' thoughts about their teaching abilities tend to be positive when the responses of "very good", "good" and "fair" are considered, and the highest frequency of "fair" response could be regarded as a reliable result as these students do not have any teaching related course in their program. In addition to that general item suggesting average level of perceived efficacy, analysis of data collected through the scale revealed specific findings about the participants' perceived teacher self-efficacy beliefs. That median of the given scores was ≥ 5 for each item could be considered as high level of efficacy. Details about descriptive statistics of the sub-scales could be found in Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of teacher self-efficacy beliefs (N=93)

Sub-scales	Mean	SD
planning	5.75	.93
teaching	5.60	.89
assessment	5.67	1.04
professional development	5.68	1.05

As seen in Table 5 on descriptive statistics of teacher self-efficacy, there is no significant difference in the mean values of the sub-scales. Overall, it could be concluded that the participants had high level of teacher self-efficacy beliefs.

Another research concern of the study was to explore if year of education influenced teacher self-efficacy or if it changed through years. Therefore, the participants' (N=93) efficacy beliefs about the sub-scales above were associated with their year of education. For this purpose, Kolmorogov-Smirnov normality test was performed to determine the correct type of variance analysis. The output of the test revealed that the data had normal distribution (p=.06) with skewness of -1.13 (SE=.25) and kurtosis of 2.16 (SE=.49). Thus, parametric one-way ANOVA test was carried out as there were five target groups concerning participants' year of education. The analyses suggested that there was no statistically significant effect of education year on teacher self-efficacy beliefs [F(4, 88)=.52 p=.72]

To conclude, findings suggested that the participants' main reason for choosing to study at their department was an interest in the department with respect to knowledge and skills provided, and a high number of them aim to become an English teacher by attending a pedagogical formation certificate program. In addition, the participants whose goal is to become a teacher had high level of teacher self-efficacy regardless of their education year.

DISCUSSION

In accordance with the findings abovementioned, this study provides supporting evidence for the related literature. To start with, research on pre-service teacher education around the world and in Turkiye focuses on attitudes of teacher candidates either in faculties of education or at pedagogical formation program towards teaching profession (e.g., Corcoran & O'Flaherty, 2022; Crowe & McGarr, 2022; Holzberger et al., 2021; Özdemir & Güngör, 2017; Karakış, 2021; Toraman et al., 2016). These studies are inclined to suggest either positive psychological aspects such as motivation and wellbeing related to pre-service teachers in a long-term teacher education programs or positive attitudes of teacher candidates attending a pedagogical formation certificate program towards becoming a teacher. In this sense, this study takes it a step further by exploring views of non-ELT undergraduates about becoming a teacher even before attending a pedagogical formation certificate program. Thus, it sheds light on the state of academic studies and teacher education related to English language in Turkiye, which has been reported to be either positive (e.g., Sarıçoban & Kırmızı, 2018) or negative (e.g., Mirici & Ölmez-Çağlar, 2017) concerning pedagogical formation programs. To this end, the current study revealed that students studying at ELL department who also have a chance to become an English teacher by attending a pedagogical formation certificate program have chosen to study at their department mainly because of their interest in it. Yet, a great number in the whole sample (N=93 out of 220) had positive attitudes towards becoming a teacher after graduating, which supports existing research about positive views of prospective teachers (e.g., Özdemir & Güngör, 2017; Karakış, 2021; Sarıçoban & Kırmızı, 2018; Toraman et al., 2016).

Another research purpose of the study was to search for teacher self-efficacy beliefs of undergraduates who intend to become a teacher when graduating from their departments as it was connected to preliminary analyses and what has been proposed in the related literature. Teacher self-efficacy is a motivational construct suggested to influence in-service teachers' performance based on related concepts such as commitment to the profession and job satisfaction or burn-out when the level of it is low (e.g., Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007; 2010; 2014; Klassen & Chiu, 2010). It has also been indicated to affect student achievement and motivation (e.g., Caprara et al., 2006; Mojavezi & Taviz, 2012; Shahzad & Naureen, 2017). Moreover, teacher self-efficacy is associated with readiness of pre-service teachers (e.g., Ercan-Demirel, 2017; Knoblauch & Woolfolk Hoy, 2008; Külekçi, 2011; Pendergast et al., 2011), which was congruent with positive attitudes towards teaching profession. Based on the definition of teacher self-efficacy and pre-service teacher education context, this study has focused on how prospective English teachers considered their abilities about their probable future teaching practices. Findings suggested that they were inclined to have positive perceptions and high level of self-efficacy beliefs considering positive responses ranging from fair to very good to the question on the background information questionnaire and their responses on the teacher self-efficacy scale. High level of self-efficacy even before attending a teacher training program is not in line with research findings suggesting positive change in self-efficacy beliefs by attending a pedagogical formation certificate program in other fields of teaching since they have already reported high level of self-efficacy (e.g., Güngör & Özdemir, 2017; Şahin, 2013; Yazıcı & Yıldırım, 2017). In the same vein, considering change in the beliefs, the last research purpose of the study was to examine if self-efficacy beliefs differ in relation to year of education, and the findings indicated no significant difference in teacher self-efficacy levels among participants regardless of their educational experience. This finding is partially in line with previous research suggesting high level of self-efficacy when starting to pre-service education (e.g., Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990; Moseley et al., 2003; Pendergast et al., 2011). The high level of teacher self-efficacy stated by the participants could be regarded as overestimated as these students did not have any teaching background, and they did not experience real classroom teaching, which is considered as "reality shock" in the literature (e.g., Mintz et al., 2020). Overall, it could be concluded that findings about readiness, positive attitudes towards teaching profession and teacher self-efficacy provide more insight into existing research by presenting recent data from a sample different from common ones in the available studies within the scope of a neglected field: ELT (e.g., Ercan-Demirel, 2017; Külekçi, 2011).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper presents findings of a quantitative study addressing attitudes of non-ELT students studying at English Language and Literature department towards becoming an English teacher with reference to teacher self-efficacy beliefs. The findings indicated that the main reason for department choice was an interest in academic studies of the department. However, study goals of the participants to become a teacher cannot be underestimated as the frequency of the responses was significant, and they had high level of perceived teacher self-efficacy indicating these students' readiness to become an English teacher. As for suggestions for further studies, it could be useful to investigate if it is the case with other participants with the same background in settings since the findings of the current study was limited to one specific setting. On the condition that the trend is the same across other settings, educational implications of the study highlight a need to consider content of the programs. To clarify, pre-service language teacher education is mainly provided at faculties of education through four-year training including essential knowledge areas and skills to become a teacher. In addition, even though there is no explicit focus on becoming an English teacher as part of curricula of programs, graduates of specific departments at faculties have a chance to become a teacher by completing one-year pedagogical formation certificate program. Although it is reported that quality of pre-service education is dependent on content of education rather than duration of it (UNESCO IIEP, 2021), it is clearly started in the same report that pre-service teachers trained in intensive, short-term programs such as a diploma or certificate program tend to need more support when they start teaching. Therefore, considering the amount of the courses, time spent on the programs and intention of undergraduates studying at non-ELT departments to become an English teacher, it could be concluded that the notion of "becoming an English teacher" is to be reconsidered also by looking through structure of related programs.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

Funding

Statements of publication ethics

I hereby declare that the study has not unethical issues and that research and publication ethics have been observed carefully.

Researchers' contribution rate

The study was conducted and reported only by the author.

Ethics Committee Approval Information

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