

Full Length Research

Evaluation of student teachers' presentation strategies and self-efficacy

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Classroom presentations in methodology courses of teacher training departments are very practical ways for student teachers to revise and evaluate themselves in teaching practices. The behaviours of student teachers during the presentations may be constructive for their teaching performances. But the success and failure of their performances may depend on various factors. By assessing the possible factors, necessary feedback can be provided for creating consciousness about their performances. One of the factors may be the degree of their self-efficacy. In this study, therefore, it was aimed at ascertaining what student teachers think about classroom presentations, whether their success and failure in their presentations are affected by the degree of their self-efficacy and if there is any correlation between their presentation strategies and the degrees of their self-efficacy. For data collection, observation reports, interview records and questionnaires were used. The research findings proved that student teachers had positive attitudes towards the presentation activities and gained experiences about teaching practices by applying presentations repeatedly in the classroom. Moreover, positive correlation between the student teachers' presentation performances and their self-efficacy degrees was ascertained.

Key words: Presentation, presentation strategies, self-efficacy, teacher students and teaching practice.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers who stand in front of a class and teach to a group of learners are responsible for both learning and teaching processes. Such responsibility may be more complicated for foreign language teachers. Because they should both present information and use the foreign language they teach efficiently.

The general belief about the success and failure in presentation of a lesson is mainly bound to the teacher (Brophy and Good, 1986; Cajkler and Adelman, 1992). Efficient teaching can be identified by some factors which are teacher enthusiasm, clarity of presentation, variety of activities in courses, achievement-oriented behaviour in classrooms, opportunity to learn criterion material, acknowledgement and stimulation of learner ideas, criticism, and use of structuring comments at the beginning and during lessons by guiding the learner

answers (Williams and Burden, 2000). In this sense, increasing learners' motivation and performance has always been the primary concern of language teachers. Therefore, for providing teaching efficiency in teacher training process, classroom presentations in the courses can be promising ways to enhance student teachers to gain experiences about how to teach efficiently and to encourage them to practise all language systems such as vocabulary, grammar, phonology and language skills - speaking, reading, writing and listening-.

Classroom presentations contribute significantly to student teachers' spoken language which they will teach during their professional life; in addition, during the presentations, they are also improving their knowledge of social topics and relevant vocabulary as well (Ruso, 2007). Accordingly, eligible and satisfactory presentations

and the management of learners' behaviours are the main concepts which determine effective learning and teaching (Swartz, White and Stuck 1990). The qualified presentations can be assessed among the skills to be achieved by student teachers in teacher training programs. Since the presentations of student teachers are assessed by educators and other classmates, those assessments are acknowledged as supportive and motivating tools (Falchikov, 1986, 1988; Boud, 1995; Dochy, Segers and Sluijman, 1999; Lapham and Webster, 1999). Moreover, involvement, assertiveness and system awareness of the learners are triggered by the evolution and assessment processes (Ellis, 2001; Hanrahan and Isaacs, 2001).

The success and failure of presentations may be affected by some factors. Among those factors, the degree of self-efficacy is assumed to be efficient on the quality of presentations. Moreover, self efficacy is thought to be efficient on the applications of educators and student teachers in the classroom and it is stated that self-efficacious teachers are enthusiastic and eager to teach (Bikmaz, 2004; Gibson and Dembo, 1984; Tuckman and Sexton, 1990). In this sense, self efficacy is at the root of self-esteem, motivation, and self-regulation (Bandura, 1997; Scholz, 2002; Allinder, 1995; Ross, 1994) and so it may enhance the teaching/learning performances and achievement of learners.

Depending on these views, in this study, it is aimed at investigating how student teachers' presentation performances are affected by their degree of self efficacy.

METHOD

In this research study, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. For qualitative data collection, classroom observation reports and interview records were used. The qualitative data was collected to highlight the student teachers' attitudes towards presentation tasks and their performances in classroom. For quantitative data collection, questionnaires were administered on the participants in order to ascertain if there existed any correlation between the levels of their self efficacy and presentation performances.

The data of the study was collected in three phases:

The initial phase: classroom observations

As the initial phase, the student teachers were observed while presenting their topics for six weeks in the classroom (eight students for one week and seven students for five weeks). The classroom presentations were designed depending on the following steps and scopes:

Before presentation:

- outlining the presentation
- planning presentation length
- planning the materials and technological aids
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While-presentation

- fluency, lucidity, intelligibility, consistency
- competency in using body language
- intonation, voice, eye-contact,
- taking attention to focal point
- giving examples, interaction with class, elucidating ambiguities
- summarizing presentation
- asking and responding questions

After presentation

- self-assessment and evaluation

The second phase: interviews

After all student teachers presented their topics, they were interviewed to determine how they appraised presentation tasks they implemented and how beneficial these tasks were for them as teacher candidates of English.

The third phase: questionnaires

The third phase of the research was to investigate the correlation between student teachers' presentation strategies and self-efficacy levels. Two questionnaires were administered on the student teachers so as to obtain quantitative data. The evaluation of data gathered by means of questionnaires was computed through SPSS program.

The research questions

The main topic question of the research is "if there exists any correlation between student teachers' presentation strategies and self-efficacy levels". Following this main question, the following questions are thought to be highlighted in the research process:

- How do student teachers prepare and present their topics in the classroom?
- What do they think about presentation tasks?
- How useful are presentation tasks for their teaching practice

Participants

43 fourth class student teachers from English Language Teaching Department at Trakya University, in Turkey, participated in the research. The aim of conducting the

Table 1. The Coefficient for Correlation

Correlation between Self-Efficacy and Presentation Strategies		
N	43	$r = .524$
		$p = .10$

$p < .05$ Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

research on the fourth year student teachers is that they actively have been involved in presentation tasks during their education processes and are assumed to have gained experiences.

Instruments

Observation reports, interviews, and two questionnaires-one is dealing with the presentation strategies of student teachers comprising 20 items with four choices (never, rarely, sometimes, usually) developed by the researcher and a ten-item self-efficacy questionnaire (English version by Ralf Schwarzer and Matthias Jerusalem)-were administered on the participants (the questionnaires are presented in the appendices part of the study).

Findings

The findings of the study are presented in three parts of a set. Initial phase findings: the summaries of observation reports; second phase findings: the findings of interview records; third phase findings: the findings of the questionnaires.

The initial phase findings

During the observation phase, it was reported that the student teachers, in general, were competent enough and determined. They mostly presented efficiently. Although they sometimes got excited, they were generally in control. Most of them managed to use English fluently, whereas a few were hesitant to speak fluently and loudly. Moreover, most of them could use body language proficiently. They managed to take the attention of the class by giving meaningful and explanatory examples and asking questions. In general, they tried to keep eye-contact. Moreover, information provided by them was treated with caution. While presenting their topics, technological aids and materials produced before the presentations were used fruitfully, but a few of them read the slides they prepared. On the other hand, most of them had trouble in consuming time; they could not manage to present their topics in planned presentation length. At the end of the presentation, they

asked questions about their presentations to ascertain whether they were clear and comprehensible. They also coped with summarizing their topics and ending up the presentations.

The second phase findings

The overall ideas reported from the interviews are that the student teachers had positive attitudes towards the presentation activities in the classroom. They stated that they gained experiences about how and when to find solutions to the difficulties by applying presentations repeatedly in the classroom. Most of them also declared that they could defeat the problems and struggle with the difficulties they faced. Moreover, they could overwhelm the ambiguities in their presentations. The student teachers, additionally, noted they were highly satisfied with this communication task by declaring the efficiency of presentations.

The third phase findings

For the analysis of the third phase data gathered through the questionnaires, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was calculated. This analysis is displayed in Table 1. As reported in Table 1, self-efficacy and presentation strategy correlations were found out to be positive.

RESULTS

The results of interview records and observation reports are consistent with each other. The student teachers were, in general sense, reported as self-confident individuals when they accomplished their tasks during their presentations. The same confidence was inferred from their responses during the interviews.

The overall findings of the interviews indicate that the student teachers consider the presentation tasks as beneficial for gaining experience in teaching practice, finding solutions to the problems they face, and involving in communicative tasks for teaching profession. Such statements emphasize the advantages of presentation tasks and may be an indication of the student teachers' self-efficacy degree. Depending on those positive statements, it was examined whether there is any correlation between the levels of their presentation performances and self-efficacy. The statistical analysis of the questionnaires proved that positive correlation exists between the student teachers' presentation strategies and self-efficacy. This means the more self-efficient the individuals are, the more successful they are in their tasks.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The overall findings of the study indicated that the student teachers' classroom presentation performances are affected positively by the degree of their self-efficacy. Such an outcome is significant for student teachers of English or any foreign language. If they feel themselves efficient enough while presenting a topic in front of a group, they can be confident and fluent foreign language speakers while teaching in real classroom environments. Therefore, student teachers need to be encouraged to apply presentation tasks, which lead to significant outcomes, during their education process.

The most significant outcome of presentation tasks can be evaluated with regard to its communicative point. As has been argued by Lightbown and Spada (1993), communicative need is a factor that defines motivation in second language. Through developing communicative competence, they learn how to behave in a classroom environment and how they can interact with class members. The same interaction was reported during the observations in this study. Such achievement could be thanks to the presentations they implemented during their education process as the requirements of the courses in the curriculum. Therefore, in order to engage in classroom teaching, student teachers need to be motivated through classroom presentation applications. The more they apply presentations, the more confident they feel themselves for and during the presentation practices as mentioned by Gibson and Dembo, (1984) and Tuckman and Sexton (1990).

In this sense, presentation tasks can be valued as a channel for learners in education process to share with others what they have learned. Those tasks are the opportunities for teaching practices of student teachers through which they can expand their understanding of the subject topic by informing and having others ask questions. In addition, the degrees of self-efficacy are extremely effective on the development of the presentation skills. Therefore, by practicing teaching through presentations, they can build more self-efficacy. Furthermore, presentation tasks raise awareness, persuade people and enhance speaking skills in second language. The research results indicated that the self confident or self efficacious student teachers were more successful at their presentation process. Such an outcome is consistent with the statements of Swartz, White and Stuck (1990) and Scholz (2002).

The research findings of this study may help educators in teacher training institutions in assisting their trainees. By motivating them for practicing presentations, educators can assist student teachers to develop personal efficacy and teaching expectations, because presentations, which provide opportunities for student teachers to use teaching time efficiently and to make self evaluation and observation, can be appraised as helpful

and directive applications for student teachers before involving into teaching profession.

Class members also can support and encourage each other during the presentations; thus, they may affect each other in professional sense. Such applications can be helpful for getting the hesitant members to be involved in classroom presentations. Because observing a classmate as a model may enhance the rest to prepare themselves for their presentations and to gain self-efficacy for teaching practice. Thus, high degrees of self-efficacy in teaching profession may boost communicative competence and teaching performance.

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Appendices**Presentation Strategies Questionnaire**

	never	Rarely	sometimes	usually
Before presentation I investigate my topic in detail				
I try to include the most informative points to my presentation				
I make eye contact with my audiences				
I try to be effective on my audiences				
In order to evoke interest I speak with easy language structures				
Before the presentation, I present the same presentation in front of a mirror				
To be fluent, I repeat my presentation a few times before the presentation day				
I use body language during the presentation				
I get help from my teaching staff while preparing the presentation				
I get help from my friends while preparing the presentation				
When I forget how to say something appropriately I try to find appropriate statements during my presentation				
I try to control my friends' faces so as to get idea about how clear I am during the presentation				
I interact with my friends while presenting				
I assume my friends as my learners while presenting and give information in this way				
I prepare effective materials for my presentation				
I consume the presentation time efficiently				
I try to find solution whenever ambiguity appears				
I am self assured during my presentation				
I forget my words when I am excited				
I always want to hear the criticisms about my presentations				

Self-Efficacy Scale

	Not true	at all	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough					
If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want					
It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals					
I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events					
Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations					
I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort					
I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities					
When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions					
If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution					
I can usually handle whatever comes my way					
Response Format					
1: not at all true					
2: hardly true					
3: moderately true					
4: exactly true					