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Enhancing Self-Efficacy Levels of EFL Teachers: A Suggested Model for Tertiary Level

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the self-efficacy levels of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers, specifically focusing on three subdimensions: management, planning, and instruction. Employing a quasi-experimental research design, the study aims to assess the impact of an intervention program designed to increase the self-efficacy levels of EFL instructors, thereby proposing a model for self-efficacy development at the tertiary level. Initially involving forty teachers, with seven participating in the intervention program, the study targets EFL instructors teaching in the English preparatory school of a state university in Turkey during the 2021-2022 academic year. Quantitative data was gathered using the EFL Teacher Efficacy Scale (ETES) developed by Chiang (2008), facilitating an examination of teacher self-efficacy levels. Subsequently, an intervention program was implemented for seven instructors, followed by a comparative analysis of pre-test and post-test scores from the ETES to evaluate program effectiveness. Qualitative data, through semi-structured interviews and online entries, was subjected to content analysis. The results indicated high self-efficacy levels among EFL teachers, with the experimental group demonstrating higher scores than the control group. Statistical analysis confirmed a significant difference between intervention and control group self-efficacy levels. Qualitative findings highlighted the positive impact of the intervention on teacher self-confidence, self-awareness, and teaching efficacy, with participants attributing mastery experiences as the most influential source of self-efficacy.

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Introduction

Beliefs play a crucial role in guiding actions, especially in educational settings. Both teachers and learners hold perceptions about their capabilities, influencing their approaches to teaching and learning (Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005; Horwitz, 1985; Pajares, 1992; Victori & Lockhart, 1995). Teacher efficacy, a significant belief, refers to instructors' confidence in

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their ability to achieve educational goals effectively. This belief system, along with learners' beliefs, shapes teaching practices and instructional strategies (Bandura, 1997). In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, teacher efficacy is particularly relevant, impacting teaching approaches and learner outcomes. However, there is a need for deeper exploration of EFL teachers' self-efficacy, especially within university preparatory programs.

Self-efficacy, pioneered by Albert Bandura, refers to individuals' beliefs in their capability to perform specific tasks and attain desired outcomes. Rooted in social cognitive theory, self-efficacy influences behavior, interactions, and goal attainment. Unlike self-esteem, self-efficacy focuses on perceived competence rather than confidence levels. For teachers, self-efficacy extends to their ability to achieve educational goals effectively within specific contexts (Bandura, 1977, 1997). Teachers' sense of efficacy refers to their judgment of their ability to achieve educational goals successfully. It directly influences instructional practices and student outcomes.

Teachers with higher self-efficacy are more likely to create positive learning environments, adapt teaching strategies, and address student needs effectively (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In EFL contexts, teacher self-efficacy is essential for effective language instruction and learner success. Research on language teacher self-efficacy has gained prominence, focusing on its impact on instructional decisions, classroom practices, and learner outcomes (Hoang, 2018). Although there exist numerous studies on the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and its impact, there remains a necessity to conduct further investigations to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how self-efficacy manifests within the beliefs and teaching capabilities of EFL instructors challenged by shifting paradigms in educational contexts.

Review of Literature

Albert Bandura, in his seminal work "Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change" (1977), introduced the concept of self-efficacy. He defined self-efficacy as an individual's judgment of their ability to execute actions required to manage potential situations (Bandura, 1982). Perceived self-efficacy, a broader term, refers to one's belief in their competence to achieve specific outcomes in a given situation (Bandura, 1977). Bandura (1997) highlighted the profound impact of perceived self-efficacy on personal and professional levels, influencing actions, effort investment, resilience in the face of challenges, and cognitive processes. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory provides a theoretical framework for understanding self-efficacy. According to this theory, human behavior is shaped by multiple factors operating through various mechanisms. Self-motivation, for instance, is influenced by emotional self-evaluation, perceived self-efficacy, and personal goal setting (Bandura, 1986). Bandura proposed a reciprocal relationship among thoughts, actions, and the environment, suggesting that individuals' interpretations of their behavior outcomes influence and are influenced by their environment and personal factors. This dynamic interaction, termed "triadic reciprocal determinism," underscores the importance of both internal and environmental influences in shaping individuals' capabilities (Bandura, 1986; 2001). Hence, the reciprocal determinism in human functioning allows for interventions targeting personal, behavioral, and environmental factors. For example, in educational settings, teachers facing challenges with student motivation and confidence can address learners' personal factors, such as emotions and self-beliefs, to improve behavior through self-regulatory practices. Ultimately, they can modify environmental factors, such as classroom structures, to foster a conducive learning environment. Human agency, a central concept in social cognitive theory, portrays individuals as actively engaged in their development and actions through awareness in the learning process (Bandura, 2001). Bandura defined human agency with four key characteristics: intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness, and self-reflectiveness, highlighting self-reflection as a distinct capability for interpreting experiences and exploring self-beliefs. Consequently, individuals engage in self-assessment and adjust their thinking and actions accordingly, with self-efficacy standing out as the core of social cognitive theory, influencing human functioning (Pajares, 1996).

Self-efficacy beliefs, distinct from skills or capacities, are individuals' perceptions of their ability to achieve tasks. These beliefs play a critical role in motivation, well-being, and achievement (Schunk, 1990). For instance, even if individuals possess the necessary knowledge and skills, low perceived efficacy can diminish motivation and lead to avoidance of challenges. Notably, self-efficacy beliefs established early in one's career are influential, although they are not immutable (Bandura, 1997; Pajares, 2002). Changes in self-efficacy can occur through interventions targeting characteristics such as ambition, motivation, and attributions of achievement and failure.

Bandura (1997) identified four sources of information through which individuals develop self-efficacy beliefs: enactive mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states. These sources inform cognitive processing and reflective thinking, contributing to the development or modification of self-efficacy perceptions. *Enactive mastery experiences*, also known as performance accomplishments (Bandura, 1977), or simply mastery experiences (Bandura, 1997), are identified as the primary and most influential source of self-efficacy. These experiences involve individuals interpreting the outcomes of their previous performances, providing direct evidence of their capabilities. Importantly, the development of self-efficacy through mastery experiences involves cognitive processes, behavioral adjustments, and self-regulatory mechanisms to cope effectively with changing situations. In educational settings, teachers tend to evaluate their teaching competence by assessing personal capacities such as knowledge and pedagogical skills in response to specific teaching tasks (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Self-efficacy beliefs are further shaped by *vicarious experiences*, which occur through observing others perform tasks. Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) suggest that modeling and detailed observation are effective methods in teacher education. Collaborative training strategies, such as dyads or triads, facilitate vicarious learning opportunities through peer interaction (Shebilske, Gawlick, & Gluck, 1998). *Verbal persuasion* is another source in developing self-efficacy. While social persuasion alone may not significantly impact self-efficacy, *constructive verbal support* from trusted individuals, such as family members or mentors, can enhance it when combined with other sources. For example, in teaching, constructive feedback provides an opportunity for teachers to assess their efficacy beliefs and improve performance (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). However, harsh criticism may diminish the impact of social persuasion on self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; 19). *Emotional arousal*, also known as physiological states, constitutes the fourth source of self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1977; 1986). Emotions such as anxiety, excitement, and stress greatly influence individuals' perceptions of their self-efficacy. For instance, fear of failure may weaken one's confidence in successfully completing a task (Bandura, 1997).

Enhancing emotional and physical well-being and reducing negative emotional states are effective strategies for improving self-efficacy beliefs. Moreover, since individuals can influence their own thoughts and feelings, increased self-efficacy beliefs can positively impact physiological conditions (Bandura, 1997).

Studies on Teacher Efficacy

Expanding body of research has delved into the concept of teacher self-efficacy, examining its correlations with various factors such as student academic performance, motivation, instructional preferences, teaching commitment, and productivity (Goddard, Hoy and Woolfolk Hoy, 2000; Dembo and Gibson, 1985; Ashton and Webb, 1986; Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001; Swars, 2005; Eslami and Fatahi, 2008; Guskey and Passaro, 1994). However, within the domain of foreign language teaching, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, research on teachers' self-efficacy beliefs remains relatively limited in both quality and quantity, and the range of themes explored is somewhat constrained. Major themes in this area include investigating the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and behavior, identifying sources of self-efficacy beliefs, exploring the development of these beliefs, examining contextual factors affecting self-efficacy, and exploring the correlation between teacher self-efficacy and student achievement

(Hoang, 2018). Notably, the majority of participants in these studies have been practicing or in-service teachers, with fewer studies focusing on pre-service teachers (Chacon, 2005; Phan & Locke, 2015; Wyatt, 2010; Atay, 2007; Liaw, 2009).

One study by Liaw (2004) examined the efficacy of both native and non-native foreign language teachers and their perceptions of language teaching, revealing a positive relationship between teacher self-efficacy and perceived teaching ability. In a recent extensive literature review by Demir (2021), focusing on in-service EFL teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, it was found that recent studies tend to be predominantly quantitative, exploring correlations between teacher self-efficacy and various factors such as teacher personality, student motivation and achievement, burnout, job satisfaction, empowerment, and language proficiency. Additionally, continuous involvement in teacher research studies has been associated with increased efficacy among Turkish English language teachers (Wyatt & Dikilitaş, 2016). Furthermore, a strong link has been observed between EFL teachers' self-efficacy and student motivation, with teachers possessing higher levels of self-efficacy demonstrating greater ability to motivate learners and foster their cognitive development in language learning (Alibakhshi and Labbafi, 2020).

In terms of professional development, self-efficacy is viewed as a dynamic and complex concept that benefits from reflective practices and collaborative activities offered by professional learning communities (Zonoubi et al., 2017; Stoll and Louis, 2007). For example, a study by Chiang (2008) investigated the effects of a training course integrated with fieldwork elements on teacher self-efficacy, finding that fieldwork components supported by reflection on classroom experiences enhanced prospective teachers' awareness of their competence and boosted their self-efficacy.

Teacher self-efficacy research has gained momentum in Turkey, too. The studies on EFL teachers' self-efficacy have primarily focused on pre-service and in-service teachers. For instance, Tavil (2014) found that pre-service teachers' self-efficacy increased through reflective e-journals during their practicum, particularly in instructional self-efficacy. Cabaroğlu (2014) observed a significant improvement in pre-service teachers' self-efficacy and self-awareness after engaging in a 14-week action research project. Koçoğlu (2011) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy among pre-service English teachers, noting a significant correlation between the two. Higher levels of emotional intelligence were associated with greater efficacy beliefs and the use of more productive teaching methods.

Bümen (2009) analyzed the impact of professional development programs on the self-efficacy of in-service EFL teachers, observing positive effects on instructional, classroom management, and student engagement efficacy. However, these changes were primarily at the individual level rather than school-wide. Yilmaz (2011) explored the relationship between English proficiency, instructional strategy, and self-efficacy among Turkish EFL teachers, finding a connection between teachers' perceived English competence and efficacy beliefs. Teachers with higher proficiency felt more efficacious in instructional strategy development.

Overall, these studies suggest that while there has been significant research on EFL teachers' self-efficacy in Turkey, further exploration is warranted to promote teacher development in EFL contexts. There remains a need to explore self-efficacy within university preparatory programs and its implications for teacher professional development. To fill this gap, this study aims to investigate the self-efficacy levels of EFL teachers in a university preparatory program and evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention program designed to enhance teacher efficacy. With this aim, the research questions are follows,

1. What are the self-efficacy levels of EFL teachers in the tertiary level in terms of management, planning and instruction?
2. Is there any difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group's self-efficacy levels in terms of management, planning and instruction after the implementation of the intervention program?
3. Is there any difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the control group's self-efficacy levels in terms of management, planning and instruction?

4. Is there any difference between the post-test scores of the experimental and the control groups' self-efficacy levels in terms of management, planning and instruction after the implementation of the intervention program?

Method

The aim of this study is to investigate the self-efficacy levels of EFL teachers within the English preparatory program of a state university across three dimensions: management, planning, and instruction. To accomplish this objective, an integrated treatment model, informed by social cognitive theory and Bandura's self-efficacy concept, was developed and implemented to enhance EFL teachers' awareness of their efficacy. A quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental research design was adopted, supplemented by both quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

Participants

All the participants in the study were informed about its details, and ethical approval was obtained from the institution. In the initial phase, quantitative data on the self-efficacy levels of EFL teachers were collected using the EFL Teachers Efficacy Scale (ETES), administered both online and in paper format to teachers at the tertiary level within the preparatory school context. Due to voluntary participation, only forty EFL instructors completed the ETES in its entirety. Consequently, the population for this stage comprises forty teachers, including eleven male and twenty-nine female teachers. The participants' ages range from 28 to 45, with the majority (27) in their thirties.

As for the major, more than half of the participants (n=26) graduated from English Language Teaching department while ten participants were from English Language and Literature, three from Linguistics and one from Translation. Nineteen of the participants hold an MA degree, and eleven of them hold a PhD. As it can be concluded, the teachers in the study mostly graduated from the English Language Teaching department and hold at least an MA degree (n=19) as the highest level of education. They also can be considered as having longer years of teaching experiences regarding the degrees they hold and their ages.

Regarding the sampling methods or strategies, convenience sampling was used for both quantitative and qualitative stages due to the ease of data collection, cost-effectiveness, availability and willingness of the participants. For this research, particularly with the aim of proposing a model, a purposive sampling method was deemed appropriate during the qualitative and experimental phases of the study (Cohen, 2007). Consequently, teachers exhibiting a lower level of efficacy, as indicated by the results of the ETES, were invited to participate in the intervention model. Ultimately, seven participants volunteered for the intervention model.

Data Collection Tools

The current study benefited from the EFL Teachers' Efficacy Scale (ETES) (Chiang, 2008), originally known as the EFL Teacher Confidence Scale, in order to measure the self-efficacy level of EFL teachers. This Likert type scale was purposefully developed by Chiang (2008) to specifically measure the efficacy of second/foreign language teachers. It comprises 30 items divided into three sub-scales: 11 items for planning, 11 for instruction, and 8 for management. Chiang (2008) reported a high reliability for the overall scale, with an internal consistency coefficient of 0.92. As for the reliability of the teacher efficacy scale within the context of this study, it was provided via Cronbach Alpha reliability analysis for the internal consistency. The reliability analysis of the ETES for the three subscales of teacher efficacy revealed that Cronbach's Alpha was .91 for planning, .93 for instruction, and .86 for management. For the total self-efficacy score, Cronbach's Alpha was .96.

With the aim of enhancing the self-efficacy level of EFL teachers and increasing their awareness of their teaching abilities, an 8-week program consisting of 16 sessions was designed and implemented using the online platform, *Edmodo*. This choice was made due to the limited opportunities for face-to-face gatherings caused by the pandemic. Additionally, Edmodo was selected because the teachers were familiar with this platform, and it offered a free and user-friendly interface. Its simple design and clear instructions facilitated the posting of important information, task

assignments, comments, and replies, thus fostering interaction among the subject group members.

Finally, a semi-structured interview was used for one group of participants: the teachers in the experimental group. Being open-ended format, it "allows depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee's responses," as Rubin and Rubin put forward (2005, p.88). The interview consisted of three main questions aimed at assessing the effectiveness of the intervention program and eliciting the participants' thoughts and feelings about their experience. Additionally, participants were encouraged to provide further suggestions and recommendations.

Data Collection Procedure

In the first phase of data collection during the quantitative stage, EFL Teacher Efficacy Scale (ETES) was conducted both online and in written form to detect the self-efficacy level of EFL teachers. Upon the analysis of the data gathered from the ETES, an intervention program, taking its basis from Bandura's social cognitive theory and self-efficacy concept, was designed and implemented, resulting in various qualitative data.

The intervention program primarily focused on exploring the four sources of self-efficacy, providing participants with opportunities to recognize and enhance their self-efficacy awareness, and fostering positive self-efficacy beliefs tailored to their personal and professional backgrounds. Following the administration of the EFL Teachers' Efficacy Scale (ETES), seven participants, identified as having a mean score of 2.46 in the pre-test, were selected to participate in the intervention program. Furthermore, an experienced researcher was introduced to the online platform to facilitate observation and offer guidance as needed. The structure and content of the program are detailed session by session in the following table:

Data Analysis

Initially, the scores from the scale were calculated, according to the responses by the participants concerning the scores overall and for three subscales to be able to answer the first research question. For the analysis of the self-efficacy scale, descriptive statistics were employed via "SPSS 22.0" version of SPSS package program (Social Sciences Statistical Package). Mean scores were examined for each three subscale of teacher self-efficacy scale (management, planning, and instruction) as well as overall self-efficacy score.

Regarding the other research questions examining the effects of the intervention program and the difference between the control and experimental groups' scores after the intervention program for self-efficacy, SPSS 22.0 package program was used to analyze the quantitative data. Since the number of the participants from which data was gathered in the experimental and control groups was less than 30, direct non-parametric tests were used to analyze the results. Mann Whitney U test was used for group comparisons and Wilcoxon test was used for repeated measurements. The significance level was taken as 0.05.

Table 1: Content of the Intervention Program

Pre-session	Orientation, the aim of the program, introduction of the program's requirements
Session 1 & Workshop 1	Introducing yourself, getting to know each other
Session 2 & Workshop 2	Depth of reflection, reflective practices, active listening/reading skill
Session 3 & Workshop 3	Introduction to self-efficacy, teachers' sense of efficacy
Session 4 & Workshop 4	Sources of self-efficacy: mastery experiences
Session 5 & Workshop 5	Sources of self-efficacy: vicarious experiences
Session 6 & Workshop 6	Sources of self-efficacy: physiological and emotional states; social persuasion, effort feedback
Session 7 & Workshop 7	Setting a specific teaching task, planning a lesson
Session 8 & Workshop 8	Implementation of the lesson plan, effort feedback, final reflection
Final Session	Program evaluation and further suggestions

In order to analyze qualitative data obtained during the intervention program and from the semi-structured interviews with the teachers in the experimental group, Miles - Huberman model was conducted. The process included the steps of data reduction based on relevance through coding; systematic data presentation through figures, table; and drawing conclusions.

Results

Findings for research questions

In order to see the overall scores of EFL teachers' self-efficacy level, mean scores of the three subscales of the ETES were employed for all the participants. The statistical findings are presented in the table below:

The analysis of the EFL Teachers' Efficacy Scale revealed a mean overall self-efficacy score of 3.23 (SD=0.54), indicating a tendency towards an "Agree" response on the 4-point Likert Scale. Specifically, participants demonstrated high levels of efficacy across the three subscales: planning (M=3.21, SD=0.59), instruction (M=3.29, SD=0.57), and management (M=3.20, SD=0.53). Corresponding to the first research question, these results suggest a strong sense of self-efficacy among the participants in relation to their teaching roles and responsibilities.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of ETES in three subscales

	X	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Management	3.20	0.53	3.18	2.00	4.00
Planning	3.21	0.59	3.40	1.91	4.00
Instruction	3.29	0.57	3.40	2.18	4.00
Overall Self-efficacy	3.23	0.54	3.43	2.03	4.00

The second research question of the study is "Is there any difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group's self-efficacy levels in terms of management, planning and instruction after the implementation of the intervention program?" Whether there was a difference between the self-efficacy pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group regarding management, planning and teaching was analyzed with the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test. The results gathered from the comparison of the pre- and posttest scores of the seven participants in the experimental group are shown below (Table 3) .

It is observed that the self-efficacy post-test scores of the experimental group were higher than the pre-test scores after the intervention program was implemented. Statistically, a significant difference was found between the total self-efficacy post-test scores and the pre-test scores of the experimental group ($p<0.05$).

It was also revealed that there is a significant increase in the self-efficacy level of the EFL teachers in the experimental group as a result of the implemented model program. In addition, all three dimensions, management, planning and instructional

Table 3. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test results of the pre-tests and the post-tests scores of the experimental group

Experiment		Description Statistics			Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	
		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Z	Sig.
Part 1	Management Post-test Score	7	3.13	0.30	-2.375	.018*
	Management Pre-test Score	7	2.52	0.35		
Part 2	Planning Post-test Score	7	3.00	0.23	-2.371	.018*
	Planning Pre-test Score	7	2.35	0.24		
Part 3	Instruction Post-test Score	7	3.03	0.23	-2.371	.018*
	Instruction Pre-test Score	7	2.53	0.34		
Part 4	Total self-efficacy Post-test	7	3.04	0.21	-2.371	.018*
	Total self-efficacy Pre-test	7	2.46	0.23		

*p<0.05

Table 4. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test results of the pre-tests and the post-tests scores of the control group

Experiment		Description Statistics			Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	
		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Z	Sig.
Part 1	Management Post-test Score	7	2.84	0.30	-1.000	.317
	Management Pre-test Score	7	2.80	0.38		
Part 2	Planning Post-test Score	7	2.71	0.27	-2.333	.020*
	Planning Pre-test Score	7	2.62	0.31		
Part 3	Instruction Post-test Score	7	2.74	0.29	-1.000	.317
	Instruction Pre-test Score	7	2.71	0.30		
Part 4	Total self-efficacy Post-test	7	2.76	0.28	-2.332	.026*
	Total self-efficacy Pre-test	7	2.70	0.29		

*p<0.05

efficacy also increased significantly after the intervention program.

The third research question aimed to investigate whether there existed differences between the pre-test and post-test scores concerning self-efficacy levels in management, planning, and instruction within the control group. This comparison was conducted utilizing the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. The outcomes derived from the evaluation of pre- and post-test scores for the seven participants in the control group are presented in Table 4.

It is observed that the self-efficacy post-test scores of the control group, which are measured in terms of management, planning and instruction, are higher than the pre-test scores. On the one hand, there was no statistically significant difference between the management and instruction post-test scores and the pre-test scores of the control group ($p>0.05$). On the other hand, the differences between the post-test and pre-test scores of the control group in the self-efficacy levels in terms of planning ($z= -2.333$, $p=.020$) and total self-efficacy ($z= - 2.232$, $p= .026$) were found to be significant ($p<0.05$).

The final research question of the study investigates whether there is a difference between the post-test scores of the experimental group and the control group concerning self-efficacy levels in management, planning, and instruction following the intervention program. This comparison was conducted through the Mann-Whitney U-test. The results from the comparisons of the post-test scores for the seven participants in each group are presented in Table 5.

It is observed that the self-efficacy post-test scores of the experimental group, which were

Table 5: Mann-Whitney U-Test results of the experimental and the control groups' post-tests Scores

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mann-Whitney U	Sig.
Management Post-test Score	Experiment	7	3.13	0.30	10.500	.066
	Control	7	2.84	0.34		
Planning Post-test Score	Experiment	7	3.00	0.23	11.000	.080
	Control	7	2.71	0.27		
Instruction Post-test Score	Experiment	7	3.03	0.23	10.000	.063
	Control	7	2.74	0.29		
Total self-efficacy Post-test Score	Experiment	7	3.04	0.21	9.000	.046*
	Control	7	2.76	0.28		

*p<0.05

measured in terms of management, planning and instruction, were higher than the control group after the implementation process (z=3.04). It was found that the total self-efficacy post-test scores differed significantly between the experimental and control groups (U=9.000; p=.046; p<0.05). Thus, the results revealed that there was an increase in the total self-efficacy level of the experimental group after the implementation of the proposed model. However, no significant difference was found between the post-test scores of both groups in terms of the three domains: management (p=.066), planning (p=.080) and instruction (p=.063); (p>0.05).

Results of the online entries

During the experimental phase, a total of 15 tasks and assignments were conducted online by the researcher. The seven participants collectively contributed 71 online entries, while the researcher posted 117 online entries containing comments and feedback on the Edmodo platform. These entries included comments, reflections, and completed assignments submitted by the participants. Qualitative analysis was performed on these entries by identifying and coding the most prevalent and pertinent themes under main categories, which were determined based on the primary objectives of the tasks. As a result, three main categories emerged from the analyzed data: *teachers' responsibility for student achievement*, the importance of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, and *mastery experiences as the primary source of self-efficacy*.

Teachers' Responsibility for Student Achievement

Before introducing the concept of self-efficacy and teachers' perceived efficacy, participants were prompted to discuss their assumptions regarding the responsibility for student achievement. The objective was to explore the extent to which teachers believed that they could control the reinforcement of their teaching actions and make changes in their learners' achievement. To facilitate this exploration, an opinion poll was conducted, presenting two statements derived from Webb's efficacy scale (Ashton et al., 1982):

1. A teacher should not be expected to reach every child; some students are not going to make academic progress.
2. Every child is reachable. It is a teacher's obligation to see to it that every child makes academic progress.

Upon analyzing the responses, six out of seven participants voted for the first option, indicating that teachers bear significant responsibility for student achievement. Conversely, one participant chose the second statement, expressing the perspective that "It is not and should not be the teachers' responsibility to reach every student at higher education." It can be inferred that the majority of participants believed it is the teacher's duty to reach every learner, viewing themselves as having a key role in their students' academic progress. However, those who perceived teachers as having greater responsibility emphasized that teaching requires "dedication," "guidance," and "commitment" rather than simply "obligation" and "authority." In summary, while participants accepted responsibility, they viewed themselves more as facilitators and guides in the learning process.

Importance of Teachers' Self-efficacy Beliefs

After the introduction to the concept of self-efficacy and its relation to teaching contexts with the help of the texts, articles and a video, the participants were asked to share their opinions by answering two questions and reflecting on their past experiences in teaching. It was aimed to explore the teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy. The two questions were as follows:

1. Why do you think self-efficacy matters for teachers?
2. What characteristics of self-efficacy could benefit both teachers and learners? How?

Based on the analysis of the responses and the reflections, all teachers are quite aware of the importance of self-efficacy on both parties: students and teachers. According to the responses below, they feel that self-efficacy is influential on both professional and individual lives of the teachers and learners, and teachers are considered as the role models affecting learner's progress.

"I DO think self-efficacy matters A LOT for teachers as we are the very persons to facilitate learning, create a positive classroom atmosphere, help our students to establish some strategies and basis for their own learning, and many more, and I DO think all these holy activities require a great deal of self-efficacy." (T16)

"…self-efficacy really matters for teachers as we are kind of role models for our teachers and even without knowing for our colleagues. … we are in charge of a classroom and we are in front of students who observe us every second while we are teachings. If we have a good level of self-efficacy, we can also believe ourselves in making the most of our teaching hours, solving students' own problems, emphatising with them and coping with extra problems such as teaching hours, syllabus and teacher talk time." (T17)

"… in fact I think, this self-efficacy thing affects our whole life, not only our teaching, or not only our students' learning, whenever we- as an individual- are to learn a new thing, solve a problem, manage our lives, change roles and act as mothers, fathers, daughters, neighbours, students, or antything else, we exactly need "self-efficacy". (T8)

Mastery Experiences as the Major Source for Self-efficacy

Following the participants' introduction to the four sources of self-efficacy, they were prompted to engage in a discussion regarding which source they perceived as the most influential in shaping their levels of self-efficacy. Drawing upon their cumulative experiences, educators articulated their perspectives on the designated platform.

"I was still nervous due to the unfortunate beginning of my online teaching adventure. But gradually, I began to gain experience in methods for how to conduct an online lesson. Basically I reshaped my planning, timing, presentation and practice, group activities and tasks in accordance with the nature of distance education. Now I feel more secure and I believe I'm improving myself." (T8)

"…when I considered the online process during the pandemic, I have realized that our (or at least my) fear stemmed from lack of perceived success in our past instructional experiences. Those times were the first times that we were to use online platforms for teaching, and we didn't even have the slightest idea about what kind of an experience it was to teach online. ... However, after gaining experience to convince us that we could do it, now we are more relaxed." (T9)

"Nothing creates more self-efficacy than having a direct experience of mastery with the task." (T21)

The examination revealed that the primary source contributing to the cultivation of self-efficacy among the educators was mastery experiences, predominantly manifested through the retrospective analysis of their prior teaching endeavors.

Additionally, participants were tasked with recounting their own "mastery experiences" perceived as instrumental in surmounting specific teaching challenges. Concurrently, they were acquainted with four guiding factors for interpreting teaching incidents, as delineated by Morris and Usher (2001), outlined below:

1. Perceived success in past instructional experiences: Self-efficacy beliefs, either positive or negative, could be basically developed through the interpretation of an implemented teaching idea.
2. Mastery of content: Self-efficacy beliefs could be established by feeling competent or incapable of what you teach; the knowledge of the material to be used in teaching contexts.
3. Mastery of pedagogical skills: Apart from mastering the content itself, the skills and being able to teach the content is another source of interpretation of the mastery experience.
4. Students' educational and occupational achievements: Witnessing the breakthroughs, achievements or failures of the students could influence the teachers' interpretation of the mastery experiences.

The teachers reflected on their mastery experiences by referring to abovementioned four factors of mastery experiences and by focusing on how the experience has contributed to their self-efficacy beliefs. Upon analysis of the reflective

entries, it became apparent that educators attribute significant significance to the mastery of both *content* and *pedagogical skills* in bolstering their self-efficacy beliefs concerning their capacity to fulfill specific teaching responsibilities. They also observed that these factors, identified as crucial components of their teaching proficiency and self-perception as educators, were instrumental in interpreting their mastery experiences to comprehend the sources of self-efficacy. One participant (T16) articulated the interconnectedness of these various forms of self-efficacy mastery, while another participant (T28) underlined the paramount importance of the identified strategies in fostering self-efficacy for both teachers and learners by stating "four of the strategies are incredibly important to develop self-efficacy in terms of both teachers and learners" (Table 6).

Table 6. Summary of the participants' perceptions of the self-efficacy sources

Major Source for Self-efficacy Development	*Frequency*
Mastery Experiences	6
Commonly Identified Four Factors for Mastery Experiences	*Frequency*
Mastery of Content	4
Mastery of Pedagogical Skills	4
Perceived Success in Past Instructional Experiences	3
Students' Educational and Occupational Achievements	2

In brief, it can be pointed out that four sources of self-efficacy development suggested by Bandura (1997) have critical roles in teachers' perceived efficacy into the teaching capacities. Moreover, all those four sources of references for mastery experiences are indeed interwoven in the development of teacher self-efficacy beliefs whereas mastery of content and mastery of pedagogical skills are the most influential, as the participants noted in their reflections.

Results of semi-structured interviews

A semi-structured interview was conducted with teachers from the experimental group who took part in an intervention program aimed at enhancing their self-efficacy levels. These interviews occurred after the analysis of pre-test and post-test scores, serving to validate and reinforce the statistical findings. Four questions were posed during these interviews, soliciting the teachers' comprehensive assessments and perspectives on the implemented program, thereby enriching the study's understanding of both professional and personal outcomes for the educators. Transcriptions of these interviews were subjected to content analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns, facilitating the extraction of major categories pertinent to the study's objectives.

Initially, participants were prompted to reflect on their individual gains from the program, encompassing both professional and personal realms. All seven participants reported benefiting from the program in various aspects, with common points emerging regarding the program's perceived advantages as outlined in Table 7:

Table 7. Participants' benefits from the self-efficacy development program

		Number
Professional Personal	Self-awareness of teaching abilities Development of personal skills	5

The teachers conveyed that participation in the self-efficacy development program fostered heightened self-awareness regarding their roles and teaching competencies. This newfound awareness prompted them to critically examine their teaching roles and skills. Moreover, their feedback suggests that many educators capitalized on the opportunity to acquire new skills, including active listening/reading and reflective practices in teaching, thereby enhancing their instructional effectiveness.

Secondly, the researcher asked participants to assess their personal progress, particularly in augmenting their self-efficacy levels, and to articulate their sentiments and perceptions concerning their advancements in management, planning, and instructional self-efficacy beliefs. A majority of the participants noted enhancements in their self-efficacy levels concerning planning and management, attributing this progress to a heightened sense of efficacy in addressing student motivation and

engagement during online lessons facilitated by the integration of web tools. Specifically, four teachers (T8, T16, T17, T22) underscored a newfound confidence and positivity in utilizing web tools, a proficiency honed through frequent usage during the pandemic period. Furthermore, two educators (T22, T28) highlighted the significance of receiving constructive feedback from both colleagues and students during the intervention program, which bolstered their ability to utilize these tools in a more deliberate and assured manner.

During the interview, participants were also queried about the strengths and weaknesses of the 8-week program. Analysis of their responses yielded two primary categories. The strengths and weaknesses of the self-efficacy development program, as reported by the participants, are delineated in the following table 8:

As it can be seen from the table above, the notes of the participants for the third question were centered around two major themes: the content of the program and the procedure/implementation process of the program. Considering the strengths of the intervention program, the majority of the participants (T8, T16, T17, T21, T28) indicated that the tasks and assignments were interesting and engaging in terms of the content. They reported that they enjoyed being involved in these tasks, especially the one with discussions.

Based on their responses, materials including videos, infographics and PowerPoint presentations were also adequate, however; they had a lack of variety as the participant indicated. In addition, the participants stated that the program provided the teachers with a supportive and friendly community as well as encouraging feedback and responses for the tasks by the researcher and the group members during the intervention program.

> "I felt like we came together to discuss some teaching issues and share our thoughts and feelings freely. The group members were very supportive and friendly. I didn't know a few teachers closely but it was good to get to know each other through those practices. I am very happy to work with them." (T17)

> "It felt different and powerful when I did this kind of activity for myself. I felt myself closer to that future that I imagined in the task… Other than this, the interaction between you and me over the posts and comments were amazing. You really provided thought provoking feedback and responses to our posts. I felt being listened to and respected during the program." (T21)

Regarding the weaknesses of the program in terms of the content, two (T8, T16) teachers stated that "the aims and procedure for the tasks were not very clear" for them, and they "did not understand what to do in the task". Two teachers (T9, T16) expressed that assignments that required them to work in pairs and present a final note took longer than expected due to the lack of opportunities for meeting to do the tasks and the participant's personal preference for working alone rather than in pairs. Upon the analysis of the responses considering the procedure, that is, the implementation process of the program, it was

Table 8: The strengths and weakness of the self-efficacy program reported by the teachers

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Content	Challenging, engaging tasks Texts and articles provided on the topics Materials such as videos, infographics, Power-Point presentations Encouraging feedback and responses Supportive and friendly community	Unclear instructions for some tasks Assignments requiring pair works Lack of variety in materials
Procedure	. Conducting the program online . Easy access to the platform . User-friendly online platform, *Edmodo*	Lack of face-to-face sessions Order of the posts and assignments in *Edmodo*

found out that the teachers had two distinct opinions about the fact that the program was implemented online. Four teachers (T8, T9, T16, T28) stated that it was advantageous for them to participate in this program online while two of them (T17, T22) specified certain disadvantages of online components of the program.

> "The best thing about it is that it was online so we could participate in our own pace. But this is also one of its weaknesses I guess. I don't want to say weakness but I would like to have some face-to-face interactions. Because I sometimes had to wait for response or comments to my answer from others and I wanted to discuss the issues face-to-face. I love communication in person." (T22)

> "During pandemic, there were a lot of online seminars, workshops and conferences, even Instagram live sessions. I have joined some of them and I liked it. It was very comfortable at your own home in PJs. But this program was a little bit different because it took longer and there were many elements. Many things to do. It was a quite experience for me actually. I enjoyed during the sessions though." (T9)

> "We used this platform and I am familiar with it. BUT it was more like announcement page. Here it was like Facebook or Twitter. I can comment, like a post and reply to our colleagues any time I want because I used the mobile app." (T8)

As the statements above from the participants show, easy access to the platform Edmodo as well as its easy-to-use interface were indicated as the strengths of the process. In addition, the teachers stated that it was very convenient for them since they had no problems with time and place due to the online implementation. On the other hand, one teacher specifically noted that the platform caused some problems with following the posts and tasks. Moreover, they stated that the lack of face-to-face sessions created difficulties for them to have effective communication. Below two participants stated their opinions about the program being online:

> "…I didn't fully understand some tasks. I mean because of the platform I guess. I posted my answer under a different section or I sent it as an assignment but I was supposed to post as a comment. I mean at the beginning it was difficult to follow the tasks and posts because sometimes I was late and I wanted to comment or post but already a new task began. So it was difficult to find the correct part correct section to write my answer. Maybe it could be better if we (had) met at the school for the sessions and studied together face-to-face." (T17)

> "I guess I can say that it took longer than expected to complete some tasks, especially the one with pair works. I mean it was difficult for us to come together and finish the assignments on time. Pair works should be done face-to-face…" (T16)

Finally, the researcher asked whether the teachers had further recommendations if this program was to be implemented in the future. The table below summarizes the recommendations made by the participants (Table 9).

Regarding the content of the self-efficacy development program, one participant (T9) proposed that the program would be more beneficial if it included additional practical activities relevant to teaching practices, rather than predominantly focusing on the teacher's personal "journey". This entails offering more applicable teaching ideas for classroom activities and incorporating practice-based

Table 9: Further recommendations by the participants for the implemented program

*Recommendations for Conten*t	*Recommendations for Procedure*
rogress tests after each theoretical session More practical activities suitable for classroom practices Variety in materials and resources used	Synchronous online sessions Face-to-face sessions Clear instructions for the assignments More teachers in the community Giving a certificate of attendance Pre-determined tight deadlines for the sessions

activities usable during teaching sessions. Two other participants (T22, T16) recommended integrating progress tests or checklists subsequent to theoretical sessions, focusing on literature covering reflective practices, self-efficacy, and its sources. This would enable them to evaluate their learning progress and take the theoretical sessions more seriously, possibly through online quizzes or tests. Furthermore, four teachers emphasized the importance of diversifying materials and resources utilized during the program. Suggestions included the researcher creating instructional videos, utilizing concise notecards for summarizing presentations, or substituting lengthy texts with more succinct videos.

In terms of recommendations for the procedural aspects of the online self-efficacy development program, the majority of participants (T9, T16, T21, T22, T28) advocated for incorporating synchronous online sessions or face-to-face meetings to enhance group interactions and communication. One participant (T8) suggested increasing the number of participating teachers, while another (T17) proposed issuing certificates of attendance upon program completion as a form of recognition for participants' efforts. Finally, two participants (T22, T28) emphasized the importance of clearly defining deadlines for tasks and assignments for each week in advance, thus enhancing organization and planning for participants.

Regarding the interviews with the teachers in the experimental group, it can be inferred that the findings from the interviews support the results gathered from the comparison analysis of statistical data. The teachers reported that they benefited from the self-efficacy development program by having an increasing awareness of their teaching abilities, which was also shown by the statistical analysis, indicating a significant increase in the self-efficacy levels between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group after the implementation process.

Discussion

The findings regarding overall self-efficacy suggest that experienced in-service teachers holding a master's degree in English language teaching tend to perceive themselves as possessing higher levels of self-efficacy. This aligns with Bandura's assertion that mastery experiences serve as the most influential source in shaping self-efficacy beliefs. Bandura posited that experiences derived from effective performances can profoundly impact individuals' perceived self-efficacy, with repeated successes fostering strong efficacy expectations and mitigating the negative effects of failures. This finding resonates with Tschannen et al.'s (2007) study, which revealed that experienced teachers exhibit higher levels of self-efficacy compared to novices, indicating that practical knowledge and past instructional successes contribute to the development of self-efficacy.

Given the characteristics of the participants, such as their years of teaching experience and educational background, it is unsurprising that EFL teachers reported higher levels of self-efficacy. Considering the prerequisites for EFL teachers at the university level, including possessing a master's degree in educational fields and extensive teaching experience in higher education, alongside proficient language skills, it is reasonable to expect this outcome. This finding is consistent with Ghasemboland and Hashim's (2013) study, which explored the relationship between non-native EFL teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their English language proficiency. Similarly, Yilmaz's (2011) study on teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy, English proficiency, and instructional strategies yielded comparable results, indicating that EFL teachers rated themselves as highly efficacious in instructional strategies. The similarity in findings suggests that teachers in both studies perceived their teaching abilities as effective in facilitating the learning process.

In addition to examining the self-efficacy levels of EFL teachers at the tertiary level, the present study aimed to enhance these levels through an intervention model and explore its effects on teachers' perceptions and views regarding self-efficacy. Statistical analysis of pre-test and post-test scores from both groups revealed a significant increase in the self-efficacy levels of teachers who participated in the intervention program compared to those who did not. This suggests that an online intervention program grounded in Bandura's social

cognitive theory and self-efficacy concept effectively boosts the self-efficacy levels of in-service teachers and instills greater confidence in their teaching abilities.

Qualitative findings gleaned from online entries and interviews with teachers in the experimental group corroborate the notion that the self-efficacy program enhanced teachers' self-awareness of their teaching capacity and fostered positive self-efficacy beliefs. This finding aligns with the results of Zonoubi et al.'s (2017) study, which investigated the impact of interventions, such as Professional Learning Communities, on the self-efficacy of in-service EFL teachers. Like the current study, Zonoubi et al. found an increase in teachers' self-efficacy levels, particularly among novice teachers in classroom management efficacy. Thus, both studies suggest that active participation in professional learning communities through intervention programs can significantly enhance teachers' sense of efficacy, especially when collaborating with other participants. The qualitative findings of the present study further underscore this perspective, as teachers emphasized the positive influence of an encouraging and supportive community on building confidence and self-efficacy within specific teaching contexts during the intervention period.

A recent qualitative study conducted by Wyatt and Dikilitaş (2016) bears several resemblances to the present study. The researchers sought to investigate the processes by which English language teachers acquire practical knowledge and cultivate self-efficacy beliefs. Conducted with three in-service English teachers at a Turkish foundation university, their study revealed that engagement in continuous professional development activities aimed at enhancing specific teaching tasks enabled these teachers to develop positive self-efficacy beliefs. Notably, the teachers initially exhibited lower levels of self-efficacy in implementing practical research into their teaching concerns but became more efficacious as they gained experience through professional development activities. The fact that participants in the current study, who initially had lower levels of self-efficacy, experienced increased self-confidence and efficacy beliefs aligns with the findings of Wyatt and Dikilitaş (2016). These parallels can also be interpreted in light of the qualitative findings of the present study, which demonstrated the professional gains of teachers in addressing their concerns about online teaching as a specific area of improvement. Specifically, participants in the current study reflected on the development of their self-efficacy in integrating web tools during online lessons, echoing the trajectory observed in Wyatt and Dikilitaş's (2016) study.

Another significant finding concerning the sources of self-efficacy was the teachers' strong belief in the predominant influence of mastery experiences as a major source for their self-efficacy beliefs. This discovery mirrors the findings of Morris and Usher (2011), who conducted a study with twelve distinguished professors and similarly identified mastery experiences, along with social persuasions, as particularly potent sources for self-efficacy development. Despite the participants in Morris and Usher's study being highly qualified award-winning professors, the teachers in the current study also recognized the significance of mastery experiences gained through perceived success in past instructional practices.

However, findings from a study by Phan and Locke (2015) present some contrasting results with the present study. Phan and Locke conducted a qualitative study examining the perceptions of self-efficacy sources among Vietnamese EFL teachers. Like the current study, they observed that four sources of self-efficacy beliefs seemed to influence the teachers' sense of self-efficacy. However, unlike the present study, mastery experiences were not identified as the most influential source in Phan and Locke's study. Instead, social/verbal persuasion, supplemented by various vicarious experiences and physiological states, emerged as the primary source of self-efficacy. Another notable finding from their study was that cognitive mastery experiences were deemed more salient than enactive mastery experiences, indicating that mastery of content and instructional skills played a more substantial role in self-efficacy development. This finding aligns with the observations from the current study, as reported by teachers during the intervention.

The contextual and cultural factors, such as limited professional development opportunities and inadequate collegiality in the Vietnamese context, may have contributed to the differences in results favoring social persuasion as the most prominent source in Phan and Locke's study. Conversely, these contextual differences likely influenced the perceptions of self-efficacy sources in the current study, prompting participants to focus on their individual self-efficacy development processes. Additionally, the lack of emphasis on vicarious experiences as an effective source of self-efficacy in Phan and Locke's study may be attributed to individual preferences among participants. This is supported by the negative attitude of some participants toward assignments requiring pair work, indicating a potential bias against collaborative learning experiences.

The present study, incorporating written reflections and responses on an online platform as a vital component of the intervention program, aligns with findings from studies conducted by Cabaroglu (2014) and Tavil (2014). Both researchers investigated the impact of reflective practices on English language teacher candidates enrolled in EFL programs at universities in Turkey. Cabaroglu (2014) examined the effect of action research as a professional development activity on teacher self-efficacy, utilizing reflection journals and self-efficacy scales. Similarly, Tavil (2014) specifically explored the influence of self-reflections through e-journals on pre-service teachers' self-efficacy. Results from both studies indicated that participants experienced an increase in teaching self-efficacy and self-confidence, particularly regarding their engagement in professional development. Consistent with these findings, the present study demonstrated that participation in an intervention program and active engagement through reflections facilitated growth in self-efficacy among teachers in the experimental group.

It is important to note that there are distinctions in the characteristics of participants between these studies, as Cabaroglu and Tavil primarily focused on pre-service teachers, whereas the present study involved in-service teachers. Despite this difference, the consistent findings across these studies underscore the significance of reflective practices in enhancing teacher self-efficacy and professional development.

Conclusion

The results of the present study indicate that an online intervention program incorporating reflective practices and active listening/reading techniques can significantly enhance teachers' self-efficacy when implemented within the framework of Bandura's self-efficacy concept and through collaboration with program members. It was observed that EFL teachers primarily judged their self-efficacy beliefs based on their interpretation of mastery experiences. Additionally, participating teachers became more aware of their teaching capacity and developed consciousness regarding skills such as active listening, which could be applied in their teaching performances. Furthermore, the study identified strengths and weaknesses of the program, highlighting the importance of ongoing support and professional development opportunities for in-service teachers, particularly in addressing personal teaching concerns. This underscores the necessity for needs analysis and monitoring teachers' well-being, especially during periods of significant educational shifts such as the transition to distance learning due to the pandemic.

The perception of mastery experiences as the most effective source of self-efficacy suggests the importance of providing diverse opportunities for teachers to self-reflect on their teaching practices and receive constructive feedback from colleagues or more knowledgeable individuals. Integrating reflective practices and active listening/reading skills into professional development programs can enhance teachers' self-awareness and self-efficacy, as noted by previous researchers. Moreover, the emphasis placed by teachers on mastery of content and pedagogical skills underscores the notion that learning is a continuous process for educators. Therefore, they should be offered practical opportunities alongside theoretical sessions to further develop their skills.

The positive reception of the online program by teachers highlights the value of providing collaborative and supportive environments for professional growth. Institutions should consider leveraging online platforms to facilitate collaborative

learning experiences that enable teachers to realize their teaching potential and feel more efficacious in their roles.

Moving forward, professional development units should take the implications of this study to design and implement intervention programs aimed at enhancing teachers' self-confidence and efficacy within specific contexts. It is crucial to recognize that self-efficacy, while a psychological construct, significantly influences classroom practices and has the potential to foster a conducive learning environment and promote student achievement. Therefore, institutions should strive to develop integrated and contextualized models of professional development to support teachers effectively.

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