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# Student Teacher Anxiety Related to the Teaching Practicum

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**Abstract**

*Problem Statement:* The teaching practicum is an indispensable component of initial-teacher education programs. However, students who go through the teaching practicum have some concerns related to their experience. They have a number of worries and anxieties, resulting in high levels of stress. Various factors may lead students to be anxious about the teaching practicum such as methods used in their teaching, classroom management and materials, or inconsistencies in the way students are evaluated by mentors or supervisors.

*Purpose of Study:* This study aims to find out student teachers' anxiety regarding the teaching practicum, what the possible sources of anxiety for student teachers are, and how different genders are affected.

*Method:* For this purpose, a student teacher anxiety scale has been used for data collection as well as student teachers' interviews. Participants are 101 student teachers in an English Language Teaching department of a Faculty of Education.

*Findings and Results:* The findings reveal that student teachers are anxious about factors such as evaluation, classroom management, pedagogy and staff relations. Next, they are more anxious about evaluation and classroom management than pedagogy and staff relations, and female student teachers are more anxious compared to their male counterparts in the teaching practicum. Our findings also reveal that student teachers' anxiety before and while undergoing their teaching practicum may be

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caused by some inconsistencies: the way student teachers are assessed and evaluated, varying expectations of mentors and supervisors related to their performance in class, lack of conformity among mentors regarding their approach to teaching practice, and finally, the poor quality of feedback given to student teachers by their mentors and supervisors.

*Recommendation:* Findings point to the need for mentors and supervisors to become fully aware of the anxieties held by student teachers. They should review their role in preventing unnecessary problems occurring in the process of the teaching practicum and help student teachers go through the process smoothly by providing necessary feedback.

*Keywords:* student teacher anxiety, stress in the teaching practicum, teaching practicum, student teacher

The teaching practicum is an indispensable component of initial-teacher education programs. McIntyre and Hagger (1993) have pointed out that although various kinds of learning are involved in initial-teacher education, few would question the necessary centrality of learning through practice. They (1993) also maintain that "however clear, however thorough, however sophisticated or simple the learner-teacher's understanding of classroom teaching, it is only by putting these understandings into practice, by putting them to the test of practice, and by developing them through practice that he or she can become a competent classroom teacher" (p.90).

Although they see it as a valuable component of their training, students who have experienced the teaching practicum have expressed their concerns related to their experience. Some researchers (Campbell-Evans & Maloney, 1995; Capel, 1997a; D'Rozario & Wong, 1996; Elkerton, 1984; Kyriacou & Stephens, 1999; MacDonald, 1993; Morton et al., 1997; Murray-Harvey et al., 2000) have pointed out that students regard the teaching practicum as a valuable part of their curriculum; however, they also consider that student teachers experience a number of worries and anxieties, sometimes resulting in high levels of stress.

The term "anxiety" has been used in this study along with previous studies in literature (Capel, 1997a; Hart, 1987; Morton et al., 1997). However, some other terms such as "concern," "problem," and "stress" regarding student teachers in their teaching practicum have been synonymously used by various researchers (D'Rozario & Wong, 1996; Elkerton, 1984; Fuller & Bown, 1975; Furlong & Maynard, 1995; Head et al., 1996; Kyriacou & Stephens, 1999; Murray-Harvey et al., 2000; Swennen et al., 2004; Veenmann, 1984; Wadlington et al., 1998). Through the examination of student teachers' perceptions, concerns, anxieties, problems, or however else they are labelled in the field's literature, "an insight can be gained" regarding the problems student teachers face (Guillaume & Rudney, 1993, p. 65). Thus, we can further understand the processes students undergo to become teachers

In previous studies, these problems, concerns or anxieties that student teachers face have been categorized to various factors. Fuller and Bown (1975) have distinguished four main stages of concerns related to student teachers: classroom management, methods and materials, their own performance as a teacher and their relationships with the pupils. MacDonald (1993) has classified the sources of anxiety as: (1) the anxiety mainly generated by inconsistencies in the way students are evaluated by mentors, (2) varying expectations of student performance and conformity among mentors, and (3) marked variations in the quality of feedback given to students by their mentors. Morton et al. (1997) have analyzed the type of anxieties student teachers have undergone in terms of class management, pedagogy, evaluation, and staff relations, and concluded that student-teacher anxieties are related to demographic, experiential and dispositional variables. Hart (1987) has reported four factors related to anxiety: (1) evaluation anxiety, (2) pupil and professional concerns, (3) class control, and (4) teaching practice requirement. Capel (1997b) used the Student Teacher Anxiety Scale (Hart, 1987) on 132 physical-education students immediately after they had visited the school in which their teaching practice was to take place. Her results showed that these students were moderately anxious about the forthcoming teaching practice, and they were most anxious about issues such as the method of assessment by the supervisor, how the supervisor may react to one or more unsuccessful lessons if they should occur, and how the teaching practice is going in the supervisor's eyes. The student teachers had least anxiety about getting along with school staff.

Furthermore, Guillaume and Rudney (1993) have pointed out that the underlying reasons for student teachers' concerns are that they are influenced by a variety of factors shaping their classroom experiences, and that the personal characteristics such as gender and cognitive structure strongly interact with the development of such concerns. Gender difference related to student teacher anxiety was a significant issue in research conducted by D'Rozario and Wong (1996) and Morton et al. (1997). It was reported in these studies that females generally find the teaching practicum experience more stressful than males. However, in the study conducted by Murray-Harvey et al. (2000), there were no significant differences in reported levels of anxiety between the two intakes of students, between males and females, younger and older student groups, or graduate-entry and undergraduate students.

This study aims to find answers to the following questions: (1) What are student teachers' anxieties in the teaching practicum? (2) What makes student teachers most and least anxious in their practicum, and (3) what are the possible sources of anxiety for them? (4) Is there a gender difference in terms of anxiety related to the teaching practicum?

*Pre-Service Teacher Training in the ELT Department*

Student teachers go through a (preparatory plus) four-year training program consisting of eight semesters, each of which comprises fourteen weeks. The department provides initial training in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language to students, so that they will work in both primary- and secondary-level education.

The training program comprises two components: (1) theoretical academic courses in subject matter, general culture and pedagogy, and (2) work in schools in which they have practical experience in partnership schools at the primary or secondary level. About 44% of the curriculum is for basic English courses and four language skills, 25% is for pedagogical courses, 10% is for literature and linguistic courses, 9% is for general culture courses, 7% is for second foreign-language courses, and 5% is for work in schools. The pedagogy courses (namely, ELT methodology, approaches and methods in language teaching, material development, teaching English to young learners, classroom management, teaching literature, teaching drama, etc.--each of which is a separate three-credit course) and work in schools are taught in English. On the other hand, the courses in general culture and some courses in pedagogical areas are taught in Turkish by staff members from other departments in the same faculty.

*Work in schools.* In addition to the theoretical courses mentioned above, students also work in schools in their 7th and 8th semesters in their fourth year. In the 7th semester, they visit partnership schools for *school experience* in which they spend a day each week to get to know and be familiarized with the teaching profession and the school context. They have structured observations and do some controlled practice under the supervision of their mentors. They also have an hour feedback session in the department with their university supervisor. Their role at this stage can be described as an assistant teacher.

In the 8th semester, they work in schools for their teaching practicum (TP) two days a week in the spring semester of the fourth year. Their purpose is to teach in various classrooms and gain experience in as many subcomponents of foreign language teaching as possible under the supervision of their mentors and university supervisors. While they are having this experience, they prepare lesson plans by consulting their mentors or supervisors on various topics and skills. They also teach at various levels by making use of different teaching techniques and materials. For each session they teach, they are expected to get oral/written feedback from their mentors. During the teaching practicum period, they are encouraged to behave like a member of the teaching staff and take part in all school events together with their mentors. They are eventually expected to improve their teaching qualifications. They also have a two-hour feedback session about teaching practicum issues in the department to share and exchange their ideas and experiences with their classmates, who attend various schools.

Student teachers usually work in various schools in either the primary or secondary level where they are mostly appointed by the Ministry of Education when they are employed. Thus, student teachers have more opportunity to observe and teach in various classes under the supervision of their mentors and supervisors.

## Method

This is a descriptive study. A questionnaire was used to gather data from student teachers about their anxiety related to the teaching practicum, and a follow-up structured interview was performed for obtaining in-depth information.

*Participants*

The participants for this study were 101 student teachers. Their age ranged from 21-34 years; the mean age for the whole group was m=22.93. They were attending an English Language Teaching Department at a Faculty of Education and had various courses to improve their language skills and obtain qualification as "teacher of English." The gender distribution comprised of 28 males and 73 females. All of the student teachers (fourth-year students) in the department volunteered to participate in this study related to student teacher anxiety in the teaching practicum.

*Research Instrument*

For the purpose of data collection, the Student Teacher Anxiety Scale (STAS) developed by Hart (1987) and modified by Morton et al. (1997) was adapted to fit into our context of English language teaching (See Appendix). The scale still had all 26 items with a five-point Likert type; however, nine new items were added to be able to find out student teachers' anxieties, specifically regarding the methodological issues in language teaching. These include (a) teaching four language skills, (b) grammar and vocabulary, (c) using necessary equipment like a tape recorder, VCR or OHP, and (d) preparing worksheets, quizzes and tests. For the pre-test, STAS was written in simple present tense, and for the post-test it was written in the simple past tense form to allow the student teachers to report their feelings when the questionnaire was administered. Student teachers were also asked to write down possible reasons for their anxiety.

In addition, 25 randomly selected student teachers were interviewed before and after their teaching practicum about the possible reasons for their anxiety regarding the teaching practicum. The purpose of the interview was to get in-depth information and be able to triangulate the data collected by means of the questionnaire. It was a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions about language teaching pedagogy, classroom management, evaluation of their performance, staff relations, and any other problems in TP schools. During the interviews, the student teachers were asked to comment on how things were going in the TP school, and the interviewer wanted them to elaborate on issues that arose during the conversation. Comments about anxieties were particularly probed. The student teachers were generally encouraged to follow their own agendas. However, the interviewer periodically asked specific questions, often to pursue issues the student teachers had independently raised, but sometimes to initiate consideration of a particular matter.

*Procedure*

For the data collection, a 35-item questionnaire was administered to each group immediately before and right after their teaching practicum. In addition, 25 randomly-selected student teachers were interviewed before and after their teaching

practicum about the reasons for their anxiety in their teaching practicum to find out their concerns in depth. The interview was comprised of open-ended questions parallel with the questionnaire, regarding pedagogy, classroom management, staff relations, evaluation of their performance by their mentor and supervisor, and any other related problems.

*Data Analyses*

During the process of data analysis, a three-way ANOVA and paired samples t-test were computed by means of SPSS 11.5. The data collected through interviews were analyzed according to Miles and Hubbermann's (1994) qualitative data analysis in which "the researcher attempts to capture data on the perceptions of local actors from the inside, through a process of deep attentiveness, of empathetic understanding, and of suspending or 'bracketing' preconceptions about the topics under discussion" (p. 6). Thus, the data collected through interviews have been analyzed, categorized, and interpreted in line with the statistical data.

## Findings and Results

All data in this study were coded, processed and analyzed using SPSS 11.5. Table 1 indicates the reliability measures (the coefficients) of the student teacher anxiety scale, because we wanted to see to what extent it is reliable after adding nine more new items to the STAS by Morton et al. (1997). The scale has been re-evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. We have discovered that it appears to have adequate reliability.

**Table 1**
*Reliability Measures (The Coefficients) of the Student Teacher Anxiety Scale*

| | **Pre-test** | **Post-test** |
|---|---|---|
| The scale | 0.92 | 0.93 |
| Pedagogy anxiety | 0.88 | 0.88 |
| Evaluation anxiety | 0.87 | 0.88 |
| Classroom management anxiety | 0.77 | 0.77 |
| Staff relations anxiety | 0.66 | 0.81 |

Table 2 reveals the paired t-test results of pre- and post-tests. According to the results, there is a main effect for anxiety scale ratings between pre- and post-tests (p=0.00) (see Table 2). The test results also indicated that evaluation anxiety ratings were significantly higher than classroom management, pedagogical anxiety (i.e., anxiety related to the teaching process in the classroom), and staff relations anxiety (both teaching and administrative staff in the partnership school), (p=0.00). The staff-relations anxiety rating was lower than all other factors (p=0.00), (see Table 2).

The results of the paired samples t-test have also revealed that post-teaching anxiety ratings significantly decreased in all factors: (1) evaluation anxiety (pre-teaching mean=2.96; post-teaching mean=2.18), p=0.00; (2) management anxiety (pre-teaching mean=2.57; post-teaching mean=2.07), p=0.00; (3) pedagogical anxiety (pre-

teaching mean=2.21; post-teaching mean=2.04), p=0.018; and (4) staff-relations anxiety (pre-teaching mean=2.04; post-teaching mean=1.72), p=0.00. It seems that student teachers overcame their anxiety to a considerable extent as a result of their teaching experience in schools (see Table 2).

**Table 2**
*Paired T-Test Results*

| Factors | | N | Mean | Sd | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Evaluation | Pre | 101 | 2.96 | 0.75 | 9.777 | .000 (2-tailed) |
| | Post | | 2.18 | 0.72 | | |
| Management | Pre | 101 | 2.57 | 0.68 | 7.676 | .000 (2-tailed) |
| | Post | | 2.07 | 0.63 | | |
| Pedagogy | Pre | 101 | 2.21 | 0.75 | 2.414 | .018 (2-tailed) |
| | Post | | 2.04 | 0.72 | | |
| Staff Relations | Pre | 101 | 2.04 | 0.70 | 3.921 | .000 (2-tailed) |
| | Post | | 1.72 | 0.75 | | |
| Total | Pre | 101 | 2.45 | 0.51 | 10.580 | .000 (2-tailed) |
| | Post | | 1.91 | 0.49 | | |

Table 3 lists the means and standard deviations for the STAS for each factor in pre-teaching and post-teaching. According to the results, among other factors, the most important source of anxiety for both gender groups was the evaluation of their performance by their mentors and university supervisors. In both pre- and post-teaching, the evaluation anxiety levels of female student teachers were higher than the male ones. The second important source of anxiety is classroom management. As in the evaluation factor, in both pre- and post-teaching, the anxiety levels of female student teachers were higher. Although pedagogy is the third important source of anxiety, the anxiety level of both groups was the same for pre-teaching (mean=2.21, p=0.962). Nevertheless, it seems that the females were a bit more anxious than their male counterparts in the post-teaching evaluation. The least source of anxiety for both groups was the staff relations. For the staff relations, male student teachers were more anxious than female ones in pre-teaching compared with other factors. All in all, in post-teaching, the anxiety level of female student teachers was higher in evaluation and classroom management but lower in pedagogy and staff relations (see Table 3).

*Gender differences*

A three-way (2x2x4) analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the mean ratings for each factor was computed. Gender (male, female), Time (pre-teaching, post-teaching) and Anxiety Scale (evaluation, pedagogy, management, staff relations) were the independent variables. Our results indicate that although there is no significant difference within groups for both pre- and post-tests, female student teachers are

**Table 3**
*Means and Standard Deviations for the Student Teacher Anxiety Scale (STAS) for Each Factor in Pre-Teaching and Post-Teaching*

| Pre-teaching | Gender | N | Mean | Sd | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Evaluation | Male | 28 | 2.78 | 0.76 | 2.315 | 0.131 |
| | Female | 73 | 3.03 | 0.74 | | |
| | Total | 101 | 2.96 | 0.75 | | |
| Management | Male | | | | | |
| | | 28 | 2.32 | 0.55 | 5.388 | 0.022 |
| | Female | 73 | 2.67 | 0.71 | | |
| | Total | 101 | 2.57 | 0.68 | | |
| Pedagogy | | 28 | | | | |
| | Male | | 2.21 | 0.53 | 0.002 | 0.962 |
| | Female | 73 | 2.21 | 0.56 | | |
| | Total | 101 | 2.21 | 0.55 | | |
| Staff Relations | Male | 28 | | | | |
| | | | 2.11 | 0.83 | 0.454 | 0.502 |
| | Female | 73 | 2.01 | 0.66 | | |
| | Total | 101 | 2.04 | 0.70 | | |
| ***Post-teaching*** | | | | | | |
| Evaluation | Male | 28 | 2.07 | 0.52 | 0.940 | 0.335 |
| | Female | 73 | 2.23 | 0.79 | | |
| | Total | 100 | 2.18 | 0.72 | | |
| | | 28 | 1.98 | 0.57 | 0.739 | 0.392 |
| Management | Male | | | | | |
| | Female | 73 | 2.10 | 0.65 | | |
| | Total | 101 | 2.07 | 0.63 | | |
| Pedagogy | Male | 28 | 2.11 | 0.83 | 0.454 | 0.502 |
| | Female | 73 | 2.01 | 0.66 | | |
| | Total | 101 | 2.04 | 0.70 | | |
| Staff Relations | Male | 28 | 1.76 | 0.75 | 0.105 | 0.746 |
| | Female | 73 | 1.70 | 0.75 | | |
| | Total | 101 | 1.72 | 0.75 | | |

more anxious (mean=2.48) prior to the teaching practicum than male ones (mean=2.37), and p=0.331, whereas both gender groups have the similar mean score for post-teaching: males had a mean of 1.89 and females had a mean of 1.91, where p=0.822 (see Table 4).

**Table 4**

*Total Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Pre-Teaching and Post-Teaching*

| | Gender | N | Mean | Sd | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-teaching | Male | 28 | 2.37 | 0.50 | 0.956 | 0.331 |
| | Female | 73 | 2.48 | 0.52 | | |
| Post-teaching | Male | 28 | 1.89 | 0.52 | 0.051 | 0.822 |
| | Female | 73 | 1.91 | 0.79 | | |

*The results of the interviews and students' written responses*

The data collected from interviews and written responses of student teachers were analyzed according to Miles and Hubbermann's (1994) qualitative data analysis. Also, the percentage of students who raised the same or similar issues have been calculated. According to the data, student teachers' anxiety is derived from various sources, and they have been presented below from the most to the least frequent depending on the frequency: (1) the feeling of being observed by either the mentor or the university supervisor, or sometimes by both (100%), and (2) the feeling of being evaluated (100%). For these reasons, student teachers monitor themselves more than necessary, and they are afraid of making mistakes; the most important of all is the feeling of failure. These two factors are parallel with the paired t-test results, and student teachers emphasize the role of evaluation during TP as a major source of anxiety (see Table 3). Besides the first two causes of anxiety, there are (3) expectations of mentors and university supervisors from student teachers such as planning, preparation, teaching, testing or doing some office work (80%). This factor was raised in the post-teaching interview as an important source of anxiety. (4) Student teachers have a lack of knowledge about the pupils they work with and lack of experience as to how to cope with various problems regarding classroom management (76%). This is also parallel with the paired t-test results because student teachers think that this is also another source of anxiety. (5) Student teachers have almost no or insufficient feedback about their performance (64%). This factor was raised in the post-teaching interview as an important source of anxiety because teaching another class without sufficient or no feedback really makes some student teachers anxious. Other anxiety factors include: (6) teaching four language skills, especially in presenting and practicing listening and speaking skills (40%) and (7) using technical equipment such as a tape recorder or a video recorder (36%). These factors related to pedagogy were also in parallel with the paired t-test results, since they were mentioned as the third group in the sources of anxiety. Next, some students mentioned the (8) ignorance of school staff (20%) and (9) paper work done in the teaching practicum school (16%). These factors were raised by a small group of students during the interview. Finally, (10) preparing and using audio-visual

materials effectively (16%) and (11) preparing detailed lesson plans (12%) were raised by a very small group of students as a source of anxiety. It can be pointed out that pedagogical factors like these are not very common among student teachers.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

First of all, it is true that student teachers are anxious about various factors regarding teaching practicum in schools. The data analysis of interviews and students' written responses indicate that their anxiety is derived from various sources. In fact, what they have reported is parallel with findings of D'Rozario and Wong (1996), Hart (1987), MacDonald (1993), and Morton et al. (1997). As a matter of fact, in our study, it seems that going through such an experience has helped them alleviate their anxiety level significantly (pre-teaching; m=2.45, SD= 0.51 and post-teaching m=1.91, SD= 0.49, p=0.00). Thus, we believe that the teaching practicum is an indispensable component of initial teacher training programs. If it is planned and organized well, it could lead to invaluable experience for student teachers just before they step into real life. According to Paker (2000), student teachers should be informed in advance about what is expected from them, e.g., competencies, activities in the teaching practicum school, the evaluation procedure, the role of parties involved, and the context of teaching practicum schools. Furthermore, all the parties involved in TP should be aware that it is inevitable for student teachers to have some anxiety during this process. Thus, both mentors and supervisors should regard their anxiety as part of the learning process and help them cope with their anxiety by providing constructive feedback, depending on their idiosyncratic case. Moreover, mentoring and supervising is a very important skill for both mentors in schools and supervisors in the department. Both mentors and supervisors should be aware of various types of supervision, "from directive to collaborative, and to self-help explorative supervision" (Gebhard, 1990; Morton et al., 1997), and they should guide student teachers, from the first day on, in a constructive way, depending on their idiosyncratic needs.

Secondly, students were most anxious about evaluation, albeit significantly decreased in post-teaching. This parallels the effect noted by Hart (1987) for British students, by Morton et al. (1997) for Canadian students, and by D'Rozario and Wong (1996) for Singaporean student teachers. As Morton et al. (1997, p.72) emphasize, "The evaluation anxiety appears to be paramount regardless of country." According to our interview data, the most rated (100%) source of anxiety by the student teachers is the feeling of being observed by either a mentor or a university supervisor, or sometimes by both, and the feeling of being assessed and evaluated; therefore, student teachers monitor themselves more than necessary, and they are afraid of making mistakes. The most important of all is the feeling of failure. For this reason, both mentors and supervisors should reconsider "the detrimental effects" of the evaluation process (Morton et al., 1997, p. 72). We believe that the anxiety regarding evaluation may be reduced if sufficient amount of constructive feedback is given to student teachers during their teaching practicum and if the assessment is based on process- rather than product-oriented checklists. In cases where the data for the evaluation of student teachers are solely based on observation of their performance

in the classroom, student teachers are under great anxiety. In fact, there should be other components of assessment such as portfolio, student self-assessment as well as supervisors and mentors' assessments.

Next, classroom management anxiety is another important factor for student teachers. During the interview, they also reported that having lack of knowledge about the pupils they work with and lack of experience as to how to cope with various problems regarding classroom management creates anxiety (72%). It is so natural that when a person does not have enough knowledge as to how to go about even a simple task, s/he will be under anxiety to some extent. For this reason, student teachers should be exposed to the schools as early as possible. Indeed, student teachers improve their effective classroom management strategies by the time they reach the teaching practicum. Apart from classroom exposure, students can learn some basic techniques and procedures of classroom management theoretically, but classroom management is something learned through experience, because some classroom events and behaviours of pupils in that context are unpredictable. Maybe, through studying case studies (e.g., watching video records of some teachers or previous students teaching in a classroom), student teachers may have some ideas as to how to go about it. We believe that it is a kind of problem solving activity depending on the context of teaching.

Another important factor is the pedagogical anxiety. Although some student teachers have a high self-esteem about themselves in terms of teaching, others have reported their concerns. Some of the student teachers, in the interview, have emphasized that "they feel they are ready to teach on any topic, and prepare any type of materials or activity to teach thanks to the training they have had in the department." On the contrary, some others pointed out that they had almost no or insufficient feedback about their performance in phrases like "not bad," "good," "it will be better in time," "it is OK," "you made a grammar mistake," etc. Due to the insufficient feedback, some student teachers feel that they are lost or hesitant of whether they are on the right track or not. Indeed, a detailed constructive feedback would help them be aware of their strengths and weaknesses and lead them to seek alternatives to improve their weaknesses. Thus, the source of anxiety will be a trigger for them rather than a barrier.

Teaching four language skills, especially in presenting and practicing listening and speaking skills in the classroom is another source of anxiety (40%) reported by student teachers. We know that some students are very skilful and creative in teaching. However, some of them are still hesitant, and that is why they feel anxious about it. These student teachers should be supported and encouraged individually. It is not because they do not know how to teach these skills, but they lack self-confidence.

Using technical equipment such as a VCR or a computer with a projector is also one of the sources of anxiety (36%) for student teachers. Although they rehearse using audio-visual aids in micro teaching activities in their methodology courses, because the number of students in some groups is high, the frequency of using them individually may be very low. Thus, they may not have much experience about

using them. Each student teacher should be given enough opportunity to make use of all the materials available in the department.

It is a fact that the least important factor for anxiety in the study was concerning staff relations, which is also reduced significantly in post-teaching. The source of anxiety was pointed out by a student teacher during the interview: "We feel alien when we go to TP schools for the first time." This is true for some schools, because teachers work there in shifts, and they are very busy with their tight schedules. Thus, they do not communicate with student teachers much apart from a formal welcome addressing. However, this anxiety is alleviated almost within two weeks or so when they start attending their TP. Some student teachers also reported in their interview that they get accustomed to the environment easily thanks to the welcoming effort of mentors, administrators, and other staff in TP schools. We believe that a mentor or school coordinator may solve the problem if they are careful enough about the relationships going on in the TP school.

Paper work done in teaching practicum school may also cause anxiety (16%) for some student teachers because of a variety of applications. In some schools, administrators give many office tasks, and sometimes this is exaggerated in such a way that a student teacher may work in an office all day instead of teaching in the classroom.

Finally, preparing a detailed lesson plan (12%) could be a problem for some student teachers because of the various expectations of mentors and supervisors. Some supervisors want them to prepare a simple lesson plan and teach accordingly. Others want them to prepare their lesson plan in such a detail that they should write down each detail of activities to be carried out or each example to be given. Consequently, a student teacher has to prepare a 7 to 10 page long lesson plan for each lesson s/he will teach. This is boring and puts them under stress. Moreover, if a student teacher writes each detail on paper then s/he feels that s/he will have to rehearse the plan many times and act it out in the classroom. It may spoil the creativity and spontaneity of the student teachers' performance in the classroom.

When the results of pre- and post-tests are compared, the positive effect of the teaching practicum is encouraging. It is hoped that such positive effects will help student teachers reduce the amount of anxiety that they have reported as a result of the teaching practicum (D'Rozario & Wong, 1996; Hart, 1987; Morton et al. 1997). We believe that the more student teachers are provided opportunities to be exposed to school context, the more they will get used to the school environment and teaching procedures, and by that time, hopefully, they will learn how to cope with their anxieties.

For gender differences, the results indicate that female student teachers are more anxious regarding the teaching practicum than male ones. Although we feel that it is because the number of female participants highly outnumbers the male ones, this result is parallel with the findings of Morton et al. (1997) and D'Rozario and Wong (1996). The following quotations from Morton et al. (1997, p.76) explain the reason for this:

Higher female anxiety may reflect a culturally-linked cognitive phenomenon. Females may have learned from their environment to be more anxious, more apprehensive. Or females may display higher anxiety levels prior to stressful events because of a physiologically-based phenomenon. Physiologically, males show stronger adrenaline reaction than females in stressful situations (Frankenhaeuser, 1980). Thus, females may be comfortable with a greater latitude in entertaining cognitive stressors without a physiological reaction.

The teaching practicum is a vital component of initial teacher training. However, there are some stress factors involved in evaluation, classroom management, pedagogy and staff relations. Specific anxiety factors before and while undergoing the teaching practicum may be reported as the following: inconsistencies in the way students are evaluated by mentors and supervisors, varying expectations from students' performance, lack of conformity among mentors, and the quality of feedback given to student teachers by their mentors and supervisors. No matter what kind of anxieties they have, such an experience prepares student teachers for real life, as Murray-Harvey et al. (2000) point out that "the teaching experience itself might act as an effective strategy." These findings point to the need for mentors and supervisors to become fully aware of the anxieties held by student teachers and to review their role in preventing unnecessary problems from occurring by helping student teachers go through the process of the teaching practicum smoothly by providing necessary feedback.

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# Öğretmenlik Uygulamasına Yönelik Öğretmen Adaylarının Endişeleri (Özet)

*Problem Durumu:* Öğretmenlik uygulaması öğretmen yetiştirme sürecinde programın vazgeçilmez unsurlarından biridir. Bu sayede öğretmen adayları gerçek sınıf ortamlarında mesleğe yönelik ilk deneyimlerini elde eder. İlk defa gerçek öğrencilerle üniversitede öğrendikleri kuramsal bilgileri kullanma ve deneme olanağı bulurlar. Bu süreç onların mesleğe adım atarken daha güvenli ve deneyimli olmaları için bir fırsat sağlamaktadır. Tüm bu olumlu yönlerine rağmen öğretmen adayları bu sürece gerek başlamadan önce gerekse uygulama aşamasında bazı endişelere sahiptir. Hatta bazen endişe düzeyleri o kadar yüksektir ki bu onların performanslarını olumsuz yönde etkileyebilmektedir. Onları endişeye götüren veya stres altında bırakan bir takım etkenler vardır. Bunları kısaca şöyle sıralayabiliriz: bir konuyu öğretmede uygun yöntem ve tekniğin seçimi ve kullanımı, uygun ders materyallerinin seçimi ve kullanımı, sınıf yönetimi sorunları, sınıfta öğretim sırasında kendilerini uygulama okulundaki veya üniversiteden gelen danışmanın gözlemliyor olması ve bu konuda onları değerlendirecek olması gibi çok çeşitli etkenler. Bu durumda bu etkenlerden hangileri nasıl ve ne boyutta öğretmen adaylarını etkiliyor bunu öğrenmek istiyoruz.

*Araştırmanın Amacı:* Bu araştırmadan, İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının öğretmenlik uygulaması sürecinde karşılaştıkları endişe türlerini ve olası endişe kaynaklarını ortaya çıkarması, ayrıca cinsiyetin bundan nasıl etkilendiğini belirlemesi beklenmektedir.

*Araştırmanın Yöntemi:* Bu araştırmada İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı öğrencilerinin öğretmenlik uygulamasında karşılaştıkları endişe türleri ve endişe kaynakları belirlenmeye çalışılmış, ayrıca cinsiyetin önemli bir faktör olup olmadığı araştırılmıştır. Araştırma bu yönüyle betimsel bir çalışmadır. Araştırma tarama modeli için uygundur ve evrenini Eğitim Fakültesi, İngilizce Bölümü son sınıf öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın örneklemini 101 Çukurova Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı son sınıf öğrencisi oluşturmuştur.

Öğretmen adaylarının endişe türlerini ve kaynaklarını belirlemek için konunun kuramsal temeli oluşturulmuş ve yazın taraması yapılmış olup, Hart (1987) tarafından geliştirilen ve Morton et al. (1997) tarafından sınıf öğretmeni öğretmen adayları için uyarlanan "öğretmen adayı endişe ölçeği" araştırmacı tarafından İngilizce öğretmen yetiştirme alanı için uyarlanmıştır. Ölçek orijinalinde 26 maddeden oluşan likert tipinde bir ölçektir. Alana uyarlamak için 9 madde daha eklenmiştir. Bu maddeler İngilizce öğretiminde yaklaşım ve yönteme yönelik dilbilgisi ve sözcük bilgisi kullanımını, dört beceri öğretimini, görsel-işitsel eğitim materyalinin kullanımını, çalışma yaprakları, quiz ve sınav oluşturmayı içermektedir. Sormacanın birinci bölümü öğrenciler hakkında kişisel bilgiyi ölçmeye, ikinci bölümü ise öğrencilerin endişe türleri ve kaynaklarını tespit etmeye yöneliktir. Ölçme aracı için öğrencilerden her maddenin karşısında bulunan *Çok fazla, Orta Derecede, Bazen, Nadiren, Asla* sözcüklerinden birini seçmeleri ve ayrıca seçimlerinin olası nedenlerini açık uçlu ifade etmeleri istenmiştir. Ön-test için (STAS) Öğretmen Adayı Endişe Ölçeği öğretmen adaylarının konuya yönelik genel tutumunu

belirlemek amacıyla geniş zamanda yazılmış, son-testte deneyimlerini yansıtmaları için maddeler dili geçmiş zaman kullanarak ifade edilmiştir.

*Yöntem:* Veri toplama amacıyla Öğretmen Adayı Endişe Ölçeği kullanılmış, ayrıca rastgele belirlenen 25 öğretmen adayı ile konuyu derinlemesine incelemek için yapılandırılmış sözlü görüşme yapılmıştır. Katılımcılar Çukurova Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı'nda okuyan ve öğretmenlik uygulaması dersi alan 101 öğretmen adayıdır.

*Bulgular ve Sonuçlar:* Araştırma sonucunda elde edilen bulgulara göre öğretmen adaylarının endişeleri öğretmen adaylarının performanslarının değerlendirilmesi, sınıf yönetimi, yabancı dil öğretim yöntemleri ve uygulama okulundaki öğretmenlerle olan ilişkiler konularında odaklanmıştır. Bununla birlikte öğretmen adaylarının yabancı dil öğretim yöntemleri ve uygulama okulundaki öğretmenlerle olan ilişkiler konularına göre kendi performanslarının değerlendirilmesi ve sınıf yönetimi konularında daha endişeli olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrıca öğretmenlik uygulaması sürecinde bayan öğretmen adayları erkeklere göre her konuda daha çok endişe duymaktadır. Bulgulara göre bir başka sonuç; öğretmenlik uygulamasında adayların bu kadar endişe duymasının şu tür tutarsızlıklardan kaynaklandığı ortaya çıkmıştır: öğretmenlik uygulamasına yönelik olarak öğretmen adaylarının performanslarının ölçme ve değerlendirme biçimi, okul uygulama öğretmeni ile uygulama öğretim elemanı arasındaki anlayış, tutum, beklenti ve yöntem farklılıkları ile dönüt verme biçimindeki eksiklikler.

*Öneriler:* Bulgular öğretmenlik uygulaması sürecinde, okul uygulama öğretmenleri ve öğretim elemanlarının bu tür endişelerin tamamen farkında olarak konuya yaklaşmaları gerektiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu bağlamda okul uygulama öğretmenleri ve öğretim elemanları rollerini gözden geçirmeli, etkin bir işbirliği oluşturarak doğabilecek sorunları daha ortaya çıkmadan önleyebilmelidir. Böylelikle öğretmen adaylarına gerekli bilgi, uyarı ve yapıcı dönütleri sağlayarak onların öğretmenlik uygulama sürecini az sorunla veya sorunsuz bir şekilde geçirmeleri için yardımcı olmalıdırlar.

*Anahtar Sözcükler:* Öğretmen adaylarının endişeleri, öğretmenlik uygulamasında stres, öğretmenlik uygulaması, öğretmen adayı

## Appendix

Class: Age Gender: ( ) Male ( ) Female

**STUDENT TEACHER ANXIETY SCALE (STAS)**

Please circle the number which best describes how you feel about the following statements with regard to practice teaching. Write down the possible reasons briefly in the space provided if you are anxious about a topic.

| | Very Much | Mode-rately | Somewhat | Rarely | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I am anxious about how to give each student the attention he/she needs without neglecting others. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. I am anxious about being observed by my advisor. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. I am anxious about setting work at the right level for the students. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. I am anxious about class control. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. I am anxious about whether or not my performance would be satisfactory from the point of view of the mentor. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. I am anxious about how the practice teaching would go in my faculty advisor's eyes. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. I am anxious how helpful members of the school staff would be. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. I am anxious about whether or not my plans would be adequate. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. I am anxious about possible problems in the class with individual disruptive students. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. I am anxious about completing lesson plans in the required form. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. I am anxious about getting on with the school staff. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. I am anxious about what my advisor would expect. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13. I am anxious about incidents of misbehaviour in class. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14. I am anxious about how the faculty advisor would react to one or more unsuccessful lessons if they should occur. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15. I am anxious about whether or not I would cover the material adequately. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 16. I am anxious about whether the principal would be happy with my work. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 17. I am anxious about controlling the noise level in the class. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 18. I am anxious about how the mentor would react to one or more unsuccessful lessons if they should occur. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 19. I am anxious about selecting suitable lesson content. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 20. I am anxious about maintaining a "good" enough approach. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 21. I am anxious about cooperation with the school staff. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 22. I am anxious about how to handle problematic students. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 23. I am anxious about maintaining a good enough standard of preparation. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 24. I am anxious about assessment by the faculty advisor. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 25. I am anxious about getting all the paperwork done on time. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 26. I am anxious about what lesson the supervisor would come in to see. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 27. I am anxious about how to teach grammar. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 28. I am anxious about how to teach listening. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 29. I am anxious about how to teach reading. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 30. I am anxious about how to teach vocabulary. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 31. I am anxious about how to teach speaking. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 32. I am anxious about how to teach writing. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 33. I am anxious about how to prepare worksheets. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 34. I am anxious about how to prepare a quiz/test. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 35. I am anxious about how to use some equipment like video, OHP, etc. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |