

Student Misbehavior in the EFL Classroom: Perceptions of Pre- and In-Service Teachers

Yusuf Öztürk

Faculty of Education, Mus Alparslan University, 49250, Merkez, Mus, Turkey

Abstract

From a broad perspective, student misbehavior is described as a set of inappropriate behaviors that can prevent learning in the classroom and seems to be a challenging issue for practitioners. Although it is a contested term in the literature, how teachers perceive misbehavior may contribute to their views of students' needs and how these needs can be addressed. This phenomenon is also challenging for teacher candidates, and their perception could provide significant data for teacher educators. In the literature, studies either focus on in-service teachers or pre-service teachers although examining both groups working at the same environment would present different perspectives and useful data on student misbehavior in this respect. Therefore, this study aimed to examine how pre- and in-service teachers in a Turkish EFL context perceive student misbehavior and its reasons by employing a phenomenological research design to obtain in-depth data on the research topic. The data were gathered through semi-structured interviews conducted with four pre-service English teachers attending teaching practicum at a middle school, and two in-service English teachers working at the same school. Taking an inductive approach, the data were analyzed using content analysis. The types of student misbehavior emphasized by participants included issues such as talking without permission, not participating in the activities and not showing respect to the teacher. As for the reasons behind misbehavior, the participants' statements included families, teachers and books/curriculum. However, there were differences between the perceptions of pre- and in-service teachers, particularly in the reasons behind misbehavior.

Keywords: Student Misbehavior, EFL Classroom, Teacher Education

1. Introduction

Research has confirmed that classroom management is a major challenge for both novice and experienced teachers who are expected to deal with student misbehavior in their classes (Koutrouba, 2013). However, student misbehavior is a "contested term" (Kyriacou & Martín, 2010, p. 415) since types of student misbehavior may differ cross-culturally or across different levels of education. Most researchers described the concept in rather general terms. Kyriacou and Martín viewed student misbehavior as "any behavior by pupils which interferes with the smooth running of a lesson" (p. 415). Brown and McIntyre (1993) referred to the concept as teachers' perceptions of students deviating from the ideal student state. Similarly, Muñoz, Carreras, and Braza (2004, cited in Kyriacou & Martín, 2010) have defined student misbehavior as a set of inappropriate behaviors in students that prevent learning and interpersonal relations.

According to Ding, Li, Li and Kulm (2008), improving students' learning is not possible only through effective pedagogy for presenting the content, but also effectiveness in terms of classroom management and dealing with misbehavior. In this sense, student misbehavior has been an issue widely examined in studies related to educational psychology. The reason why it attracted researchers' attention is that students' classroom misbehavior has negative outcomes for teaching/learning environments such as disrupting students' right to learn, disrupting teachers' right to teach, wasting time, and weakening students' motivation and energy (Charles & Senter, 2005). In this regard, improving the learning environment in the classroom requires teachers to be effective in managing student misbehavior. But, this can be possible by better understanding teachers' perceptions and reasoning of misbehavior and their practices (Koutrouba, 2013).

If understanding teachers' perceptions of student misbehavior is important for enhancing future learning environments, then, studies focusing on student misbehavior and examining teachers' perception of the concept in different contexts and at different levels would be of significance. Since this phenomenon is also a challenge for teacher candidates, their perception could also provide useful data for teacher educators. In the literature, studies either focus on in-service teacher or pre-service teachers. However, examining both pre- and in-service teachers working at the same environments would present different perspectives and useful data. Addressing this very concept, the present study aimed to identify pre- and in-service teachers' perceptions of student misbehavior and its reasons. The pre- and in-service teachers in this study were working together in the same classes at the same school. Therefore, this study could also compare the perceptions of these two groups of teachers observing and teaching in the same classes with respect to student misbehavior.

2. Studies on Student Misbehavior

2.1 Teachers' Perceptions

Arguing that much of the research on behavior problems was conducted on primary school students, Little (2005)

examined secondary school teachers' perceptions of problematic behaviors in Victoria, Australia. The data were gathered from 148 secondary school teachers through a survey. According to the results, the most troublesome and frequent problem behavior was talking out of turn, which was followed by hindering others, idleness, disobedience and unnecessary noise. As discussed by the researcher, these behaviors were similar to those reported in studies on primary school students.

Kyriacou (2010) investigated Japanese high school teachers' views of student misbehavior. Responses of 141 teachers revealed that the top four major factors were the same with those in Kyriacou and Martín (2010), which was a Spanish context, but in a different order. In the Japanese context, parents was the second major factor while students having emotional and/or behavioral difficulties was the first. As for the frequency of student misbehavior, the most frequent behavior types included resting head on desk during lesson, talking out of turn, arriving late for lesson, using a mobile phone during the lesson and interrupting other students.

In a different Asian context, Din et al. conducted two studies with different foci (2008; 2010). The first one (Din et al., 2008) focused on Chinese teachers' perceptions of students' classroom misbehavior. Through a questionnaire developed by the researchers, 244 responses were collected from teachers of different subject areas. According to Chinese teachers, most frequent misbehaviors included daydreaming, talking out of turn and playing with personal stuff while daydreaming, slowness and talking out of turn were among the most troublesome. In a further study (Ding et al., 2010), they examined the same teachers' attributions and coping strategies for student misbehavior. The Chinese teachers first attributed misbehavior to student characteristics (e.g. being lazy) and second to bad learning habits.

Focusing on both primary and secondary schools, Gibbs and Gardiner (2008) examined teachers' attributions for students' misbehavior in England and the Republic of Ireland by making a cross-phase and cross-cultural comparison. Based on the responses of 119 primary school teachers and 102 secondary school teachers, both groups of teachers appeared to attribute misbehavior of students to their own behaviors as a major factor. To some extent, child's personality also existed in primary school teachers' attributions while it was a less important factor for secondary school teachers. As for the differences across cultures, due to the student-centered philosophy in the Irish education system, Irish teachers attributed greater importance to recognizing the salience of students' personality or pressures on children than their English colleagues. On the other hand, English teachers seemed to have rated their own classroom strategies.

In a more recent study in Greece, Koutrouba (2013) examined Greek secondary school teachers' views on and attitudes towards student misbehavior. Handing out questionnaires to a random sample, this study collected data from 869 teachers. The results showed that similar to Chinese teachers (Ding et al., 2010), Greek teachers mainly attributed misbehavior to students (e.g. being lazy or idle) and argued that they were not given any specialized training on classroom management or could establish relationships trust and respect with their students because of strict and inflexible curricula.

2.2 Pre-service/Student Teachers' Perceptions

Moving from an Irish/English context, an earlier study by Stephens, Kyriacou and Tonnessen (2005) examined how student teachers in Norway and England perceive student misbehavior. Using the questionnaire later employed in Kyriacou and Martín (2010) and Kyriacou (2010), data were gathered from 86 student teachers in Kristianstad and 100 student teachers in York. In this study, the student teachers were to rate the acceptability of the 20 named misbehaviors. They rated "vandalism (breaking or damaging furniture or things belonging to other pupils, the teacher or the school)" as the most unacceptable misbehavior, which was followed by "bringing a striking or stabbing weapon into the classroom (e.g. a club or knife), racist remarks, physical aggression towards the teacher, and bullying other pupils (repeatedly harassing the same pupil[s] over a period of time)". On the other hand, "being late for school or lesson" and "getting out of seat (or workplace) without permission" were the least unacceptable. Their perceptions of the seriousness of these misbehaviors were significantly different related to 7 of the items, with the students in Norway being relatively more tolerant.

In a Spanish secondary school context, Kyriacou and Martín (2010) conducted a quantitative study to identify pre-service teachers' perceptions of student misbehavior and their strategies to cope with it. A questionnaire was administered to 176 secondary school student teachers from a broad range of subject areas including English, Spanish, history, mathematics and sciences. The results revealed that the primary reason behind the students' misbehavior was reported to be "parents who do not instill pro-school values in their children" (p. 418) which shows that Spanish pre-service teachers perceived parents as an important contributor to student misbehavior. "Teachers not being skillful at dealing with misbehavior swiftly" was the fourth major following "students lacking self-confidence" and "students having emotional and/or behavioral difficulties."

A larger scope study (Kyriacou, Avramidis, Hoie, Stephens & Hultgren, 2007) with English and Norwegian postgraduate students attending a teacher training course examined their views about the factors accounting for student misbehavior, the frequency of student misbehavior, the strategies for dealing with student misbehavior, and their confidence regarding the skills needed. The results were comparable to Kyriacou and Martín (2010)

due to using the same instrument revealing that the student teachers viewed “parents who do not instill pro-school values in their children” as the major factor accounting for misbehavior while the most frequent student misbehavior was found to be ‘talking out of turn (e.g. calling out, interrupting, inappropriate remarks or distracting chatter during the lesson)’. Regarding the strategies, the student teachers rated evaluated ‘establish clear and consistent school and classroom rules about the behaviors that are acceptable and that are unacceptable’ as the most positive strategy. As for the cross-cultural differences, except the minor differences, only a few items including “interrupting other students” and “making unnecessary noise” perceived as more frequent by Norwegian students appeared to differ across the groups. Regarding the factors, Norwegian students viewed parents and teachers among the major factors with higher percentages than English students.

2.3 Studies in the Turkish Context

Similar to those in the international literature, studies of student misbehavior in the Turkey have focused on both pre-service teachers (e.g. Atici, 2007; Cabaroğlu, 2012) and in-service teachers (e.g. Altınel, 2006; Cabaroğlu & Altınel, 2010). The subject of pre- and in-service teachers in these studies included English and elementary teaching.

Focusing on teachers’ perceptions as well as the methods they use, Atici (2007) investigated elementary teacher candidates’ perceptions of classroom management and methods for dealing with misbehavior through in-depth interviews. Nine students were interviewed before and after their teaching practice. Types of misbehavior reported to be encountered by the students included “talking out of turn or talking when not supposed to talk, physical or verbal aggression towards other children, not paying attention to lessons, involvement in irrelevant activities, and playing games” (p. 20). Regarding the causes of misbehavior, the students indicated three main categories of factors: family, teacher and student-related factors. In a mixed-method study, Cabaroğlu and Altınel (2010) aimed to identify English teachers’ perceptions of misbehavior and its causes while also examining misbehaving students’ explanations and interpretations. Data were collected from 6 teachers and 22 misbehaving students through questionnaires, observations and semi-structured interviews. Misbehaviors mentioned by the teachers included “involvement in irrelevant activities, talking out of turn or when not supposed to talk, making noise (usually by talking), asking irrelevant questions, physical aggression” and “students’ lack of interest in the lesson” (p. 103). The teachers attributed the causes of misbehaviors to mainly to the “characteristics of parents” in addition to “media, socio-economic level, class size and students’ indifference” (p. 105). However, regarding the causes of misbehaviors, the misbehaving students mentioned “boredom, modeling peers, parents’ indifference towards their children, and teacher behavior and attitudes” (p. 107). In sum, the study also revealed how different classroom misbehavior is perceived by teachers and their students.

As for the studies on Turkish pre-service teachers, Cabaroğlu (2012) investigated eleven pre-service EFL teachers’ perceptions of classroom management, misbehavior and their ability to teach in relation to classroom management. As a result of the analysis of the semi-structured interviews, the researcher reported that the student teachers described misbehavior as “behaviors hindering flow of lesson or behaviors spoiling order of lesson” (p. 122). As for the examples of misbehavior, they mentioned “talking out of turn when not supposed to talk”, “indifference towards lesson”, “breakdowns/interruptions”, and “lack of concentration” (p. 122). Regarding the causes, the teacher candidates pointed out “students’ personal/health problems”, “unsuccessful students”, “students may not like the lesson”, “know-it-all students”, and “lack of concentration” (p. 122). Having a similar research design, Altınel (2006) gathered data from six English teachers, 6 teachers from other subjects and 22 misbehaving students. English teachers perceived misbehavior as “disturbing the flow of lesson”, “dealing with other things”, “talking to friends” and “making noise” (p. 40). They attributed misbehavior to the characteristics of parents, socio-economic level, media, class size and students’ indifference. What teachers of other subjects mentioned different from English teachers included “behaving spoiled”, “fighting” and “undesired behaviors” (p. 48) while the cause remained nearly similar.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

This study is qualitative in nature. Qualitative studies aim to explore a problem and elaborately understand a key phenomenon and focus on relatively smaller samples compared to quantitative studies. Cresswell (2007) describes five approaches in qualitative research and among these, this study employs phenomenological research design. In phenomenology, the aim is to describe what all individuals participating in a study have in common while they are experiencing a phenomenon. In this regard, this study examines the phenomenon of student misbehavior, and focuses experiences and perceptions of individuals experiencing this phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

3.2 Participants

Criterion sampling and snowball sampling are the two types of sampling usually preferred in phenomenological

studies. Criterion is usually experiencing the phenomenon that the study focuses. However, in this study, convenience sampling was preferred since it was not possible to go through the whole population, e.g. all pre-service EFL teachers taking school practicum in the department and all in-service EFL teachers in the city, due to time constraints.

For qualitative studies, Sanders (1982) recommends studying 3-6 participants. However, the size of the sample varies depending on the phenomenon and the number of people experiencing it. In this study, the participants were four pre-service EFL teachers and two in-service EFL teachers. The pre-service teachers were studying their fourth/last year at the ELT department of Turkish state university and attending teaching practicum in the two classrooms taught by the teachers participated in this study. The students made observations while their practicum teachers taught in half of the class hours each week. During rest of the time, they had a chance to plan and conduct teaching individually. The students were observed and graded based on their lesson plans, observation/reflection reports and teaching by two faculty members, one of which is the researcher, two times during the semester. At the end of the term, they were invited to participate in this study along with their practicum teachers. Therefore, perspectives of both pre- and in-service teachers observing/teaching in the same classes regarding student misbehavior could be revealed.

The participants were attached numbers in this study. Teacher 1 was female and had a teaching experience of 27 years. She studied ELT at university. Teacher 2 was male and had a teaching experience of 10 years. He also studies ELT, but worked as a translator for several years before starting the profession. Student 1, 2 and 3 were female, and Student 4 was male. The students had nearly the same amount of language learning experience, except Student 4 who graduated from high school in the United States.

3.3 Data Gathering

The primary data gathering tool in phenomenological studies is interviews (Sanders, 1982; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). Therefore, the data were gathered through semi-structured interviews in this study. Although Seidman (2006) recommends researchers to follow a three-step interview process, each participant in this study could be interviewed only once at the end of the term. To form the questions for the interviews, a literature review was conducted, main concepts and problems were considered, and the opinion of a faculty member who was an expert in qualitative research was taken. The questions in the interviews included those related to the participants themselves, and the context they were teaching in. Moreover, the questions that are directly related to the research are as follows:

- (1) What are the types of student misbehavior in your opinion?
- (2) What are the reasons behind student misbehavior?

3.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered through semi-structured interviews were analyzed using inductive content analysis. This analysis process includes several steps as described by Cresswell (2007), which was also followed in this study. Firstly, the researcher went through the data and transcribed the interviews. Then, significant statements, sentences or quotes were highlighted to understand how the individuals in the sample experienced the phenomenon, i.e. student misbehavior. Based on these clusters, codes were identified in the data. Finally, the related codes were combined into categories or themes. In the presentation of the findings, these codes under the themes were also supported with quotations from the participants' statements.

4. Findings

The data gathered through interviews were analyzed using content analysis. At first, the findings from the pre-service teachers' interviews are presented below, followed by those from the in-service teachers' interviews. The similarities and/or discrepancies between pre- and in-service teachers are discussed in the following section.

4.1 Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions of Student Misbehavior and Its Reasons

Considering the dataset as a whole, two main themes, i.e. types of student misbehavior and reasons behind student misbehavior, were revealed. Under these main themes, there were also sub-themes that were formed by combining related codes.

Within types of student misbehavior, the sub-themes included talking, class participation, students' attitudes and characteristics. The first theme 'talking' included types of misbehavior that were extremely common according to the pre-service teachers. These types of misbehavior were noise at the beginning of the class, talking to friends, talking without permission, and disturbing friends. These were mentioned by the pre-service teachers repetitively:

"For instance, they think that they are talking quietly, but they sound like loudspeakers while I'm covering a topic. I try to walk around the classroom to prevent such behaviors." (Student 1)

"They mostly talk without permission. Just like us, the children weren't able to gain the habit of raising hand. That can also intervene with the flow of the lesson" (Student 3)

The second sub-theme under types of misbehavior was ‘class participation’. This theme included a broad range of phenomena, namely, lack of interest, not following teacher’s instructions, not listening to teacher/lesson, not answering a question, not participating lessons/activities, being engaged in something else, not bringing their book, and being late to class. Among these, ‘lack of interest’ was perceived as being related to several other codes:

“As I said at the beginning, the problem exists because they were not interested, and did not like it. Either it was me covering a topic or my friends, they were doing something with the scissors or drawing a picture.” (Student 2)

Student 2 thinks that other than being a type of student misbehavior, lack of interest or not being interested in the lesson is also related to ‘being engaged in something else’ or ‘not listening to teacher/lesson. As for other types of misbehavior under the ‘class participation’ sub-theme, the pre-service teachers’ statements included the following:

“There are students who don’t bring their books and shut themselves down in the lesson, you can’t contact with them. You tell them to use their friends’, but they don’t like to share things, that’s another problem.” (Student 3)

“Such student behaviors include not listening to the lesson, being interested in something else, and disturbing friends.” (Student 1)

Another sub-theme revealed under types of student misbehavior was ‘students’ attitudes and characteristics’. Within this sub-theme, the pre-service teachers emphasized several phenomena including students perceiving themselves as superior to teacher, not respecting teacher, trying to prove themselves and lack of in-class unity and friendship culture. Regarding ‘students perceiving themselves as superior to teacher’ and ‘trying to prove themselves’, Student 4 said:

“For example, perceiving themselves superior to the teacher.. That means.. As we experienced at our schools.. The child probably thinks: ‘OK, you are the teacher, and you are teaching me something, but I don’t need you, I’m the smartest student in this class, I don’t depend on you’, so they try to show themselves off.”

Pointing to a similar point, Student 1 said:

“They try to come to the forefront while you are covering a topic. There were such students. Let me give you an example from the first term. There was the vice-principal’s son. He knew me since he was taking a course from me. He knew me, my method. So he constantly tried to show himself off. Proving himself. He was a 7th grader. For example, I say something, he guesses what I’m going to say next and says it. That may ruin the whole classroom atmosphere.”

Related to ‘not respecting teacher’, Student 2 gave an example from her experience:

“For example, I work on a lesson plan for 2-3 days. I spend time on it. I work hard so that they can learn. I’m not their real teacher, so they think that this is someone I don’t know well. Therefore, they don’t listen to me, which is disrespectful.”

Another phenomenon under this sub-theme was lack of class unity and friendship culture. In this respect, Student 4 said:

“In fact, if the child that I firstly got angry at had accepted.. Well, I didn’t do anything serious, I didn’t beat him or anything. I just slightly yelled at him. If he had accepted and said what happened, and apologized, that would have been over. Instead, he informed on his friend, and that friend informed on another. That’s one thing I observed and that happened in the less successful class. There is a lack of class unity.”

The second main theme revealed from the dataset was ‘reasons behind student misbehavior’. Pre-service teachers mainly attributed student misbehavior to ‘families’ and ‘teachers’. There was also another factor mentioned by one of the pre-service teachers, i.e. ‘changing habits in the society’. The statements of the pre-service teachers include the following:

“I think the major factor is teacher. If their own teachers had provided them a proper education at first, the children wouldn’t be like this.” (Student 4)

“Sometimes the children are a bit aggressive, I don’t know if it comes from the family, either they see it at home or reflect at school what they couldn’t reflect at home.” (Student 3)

Student 3 also attracts the attention to the teachers’ attitude and acts towards students:

“Or it is the teacher’s attitude. For example, as we learn in our methodology classes, there are different types of punishment, for instance type I punishment etc. It is not towards preventing child’s behavior, but may trigger it, or maybe doing it in purpose. The teacher might not even look for a solution. So it can be because of the teacher. He directly reprimands the student severely. Maybe the child won’t repeat his behavior if the teacher does something else.” (Student 3)

Student 2 points to ‘family’ as the underlying factor for the actions of misbehaving students:

"Most of these students were either divorced, separated, abandoned or have a parent in jail and live with a relative. It is the situation in the classroom. It is actually apparent, it is reflected to the lesson. So, they haven't learned to respect or speak appropriately, they didn't care about anything." (Student 2)

With respect to 'changing habits in the society', Student 4 said:

"People have started to be distant to each other in recent times. Since the unity of the old days does not exist, children are also separated. Instead of being with friends, they play video games. They don't have the friendship culture of the past. It is just video games. They don't like to do things together. And that probably affects children, as it is the case in the society in general. It affects the current generation." (Student 4)

4.2 In-Service Teachers' Perceptions of Student Misbehavior and Its Reasons

The interviews conducted with the two teachers participated in the study also revealed two main themes, e.g. types of student misbehavior and reasons behind misbehavior. The first theme 'types of student misbehavior' contained several subthemes which were talking, class participation, and student characteristics. Regarding 'talking' as a type of student misbehavior, the codes mentioned in the teachers' statements included talking without permission and noise, which were also the first things asserted by the teachers:

"Talking, constantly talking to the one next to themselves. I mostly observe this kind of misbehavior." (Teacher 1)

"But, one of the most apparent one that all the teachers complain about is noise. Some of our friends have to warn student once in 5-10 mins. But on the other hand, the lesson flows for about 20-30 mins. in some classes." (Teacher 1)

Although avoiding clear and straight answers, Teacher 2 also provided a few statements in this respect:

"In general, it is talking without permission, talking students or those trying to make jokes to ruin the class atmosphere." (Teacher 2)

The second sub-theme was class participation, which included 'not being interested in the lesson', 'not bringing books', 'not doing homework' and 'being engaged in something else'. The statements of the teachers with regard to this sub-theme included the following:

"The child does not listen to the lesson, may be interested in his/her surrounding. Or, he doesn't even bring his/her books or do homework." (Teacher 1)

The third and the last sub-themes was student characteristics. The code forming this theme was 'getting stubborn'. This was also expressed by Teacher 1:

"The children can get stubborn while you are lecturing. For instance, there was a girl in the first lesson named A.. She is a very successful student and interested in the course, she has good academic achievement, but has some misbehaviors. Namely, you are her teacher, and the class time is free, and she does this, otherwise she wouldn't... Since it is free, she feels comfortable, like at home. She sits lying her legs on the desk. I said "Don't!". "OK. You can't interfere with me" she said. The children can get stubborn like this." (Teacher 1)

As in the interviews with the pre-service teachers, the teachers were also asked about the reasons behind student misbehavior. The sub-themes revealed under this theme was student capacity and demotivation, family, and school/curriculum. The sub-theme 'student capacity and demotivation' contained phenomena such as students being demotivated, their lack of background and language learning ability. This was particularly mentioned by Teacher 2:

"As I said, lack of (language) background. That is the reason. As we say, language is something related to intelligence. Language intelligence may not be possessed by everyone. In other words, the child may not have a tendency to learn English." (Teacher 2)

Another sub-theme highlighted in the interviews was family. Since Teacher 2 provided short and undetailed answers, this sub-theme was again argued by Teacher 1. This sub-theme contained two codes, i.e. family-related problems and socio-economic level.

"This is because of families. In particular, our misbehaving students are those having family problems. Parents divorced or someone is sick. Or, parents are in a constant conflict. If there is a problem in the family, that child is a also a problem in the class. That's what I observed." (Teacher 1)

Teacher 1 also emphasized students/families' socio economic levels. Prior to this question in the interview, she explained that the school was joint by another school due to the change in the Turkish primary education system. According to her, the students coming from the other school had lower levels of socio-economic level. Then, socio-economic level appeared to be one of the reasons for student misbehavior in her statements:

"As I said, it also depends on the students' socio-economic levels. Students with high socio-economic level are more interested in the lesson." (Teacher 1)

As for the sub-theme 'school/curriculum', several codes were revealed. These codes included books/curriculum, lack of computers and projectors, and crowded classrooms. These codes were also uncovered from the interview with Teacher 1:

"The curriculum in our books is loaded with intense vocabulary. Children get tired of vocabulary. Let's say, you move on to a unit, they encounter 50 new words. They should learn 20, but 'learn' them. 10 words or 15 words. Thus, when they can't do it and have difficulty, they keep talking. The books of the Ministry are not sufficient." (Teacher 1)

"You can't find any available classrooms equipped with computers and projectors this year. There are such classrooms, but they are not many. The reason is that the administration thinks there is no need to invest on such equipment since the smart boards will be coming next year." (Teacher 1)

"Children can't get involved in it and push themselves. In fact, we don't let them do it. To do that, the classroom population should be smaller. That is a disadvantage. Let's say 20 students at most, or 15 would be ideal." (Teacher 1)

With respect to the code 'books/curriculum', Teacher 1 criticized the books published by the Ministry of National Education as in the quotation above. However, she then said:

"In that class, something got my attention when the pre-service teachers came. With different methods and resources, you can attract these students' attention. It doesn't work when you only stick to the book." (Teacher 1)

Teacher 1 seemed to accept that although the books were not quite favorable, different techniques could work to engage students, which was the case when the pre-service teachers did it.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to identify pre- and in-service teachers' perceptions of student misbehavior and its reasons. Four pre-service and two in-service teachers working together for teaching practicum at a regular middle school were interviewed. The overall findings show that they had similar views of types of student misbehavior and the reasons behind it. The sub-themes revealed in the pre- and in-service teachers' statements were quite similar. The pre-service statements regarding types of student misbehavior were gathered under the sub-themes of talking, class participation and students' attitudes and characteristics, which was nearly the same for the in-service teachers. But, the notion of 'respect' seemed to be more prominent in the pre-service teachers' statements. According to them, this was because they were not the real teacher of the classroom. Above all, talking without permission was the major type of misbehavior according to the all pre- and in-service teachers.

Perhaps a clearer difference between the perceptions of pre- and in-service teachers is in the reasons behind student misbehavior. The pre-service teachers attributed misbehavior mainly to families and teachers, and to a lesser extent to changing habits of the society. On the other hand, the in-service teachers did not perceive 'teachers' as a reason for the problem. They mostly attributed misbehavior to families as well as students' capacity and demotivation, books/curriculum and school-related problems. Although the teachers did not mention teachers as a factor, Teacher 1 actually accepted that the materials developed by teachers other than sticking to the book only can make a difference, as she observed in the pre-service teachers. Besides, she also argued that with crowded classrooms and books loaded with information, it was difficult to attract students' attention to the lesson and prevent them from misbehaving. She also attributed the reason for crowded classrooms as well as varying levels of socio-economic structure as a reason for student misbehavior to the new primary school education system. Apparently, after the primary school level education was split into two levels, i.e. elementary school (Grades 1-4) and middle school (Grades 5-8) which is also known as the 4+4+4 system in Turkey, the classroom got more crowded and schools from different regions having different socio-economic levels had to be joint. Consequently, Teacher 1 perceived these factors as a reason for increasing misbehaving incidents in her classrooms.

After presenting a brief comparison of pre- and in-service teachers participated in the study, it should also be noted that the findings revealed in this study have similarities and differences when compared to those in the literature. The major type of student misbehavior revealed in the literature (e.g. Cabaroğlu, 2012; Kyriacou, 2010; Din et al., 2008; Little, 2005) based on pre- or in-service teachers' perceptions were talking without permission/out of order, and unnecessary noise, which was the same in the current study. However, most of the studies in the literature did not reveal an extensive account on the books/curriculum as a reason for student misbehavior which was one of the major issues in this study. One other point that can be regarded as different from the literature is that one of the teachers referred to students lack of background and ability for learning English. The teacher perceived this factor as important in the phenomenon of student misbehavior, but it has not been seen as prominent in the literature.

This paper can be regarded as a preliminary study; a further study should be conducted with the participation of a larger sample and with more detailed and extensive discussion. For further research, since

phenomena like student misbehavior may vary depending on different cultures, cross-cultural studies would yield meaningful data and findings in this respect. Another suggestion would be to include different levels of education. This study only focused on middle school level (i.e. teachers of 5th and 7th graders mostly). Further studies can examine elementary, middle and high school levels in a comparative way, which would provide teacher educators useful data in designing courses for future teachers.

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