

## An Investigation on Teacher Candidates' Perspectives about Behaviors Positively Affecting Classroom Atmosphere\*

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### Abstract

*Problem Statement:* A revision of literature shows that there are studies focusing on student and teacher perceptions of classroom atmosphere; however, no research has been found to be related to teacher candidates' perspectives on their behaviors in terms of positive classroom atmosphere. As teacher candidates are the main subject and the future organizers of the teaching environments, it is important to carry out a study on which variables of the classroom atmosphere they are aware.

*Purpose of the Study:* This study aims to investigate teacher candidates' points of view about teacher behaviors influencing the classroom atmosphere. Also, this research intends to determine communication strategies that teacher candidates suggest about positive and effective classroom atmospheres.

*Method:* At a primary school education department of a state university, third-year students were told to prepare a report about the following questions: "According to you; how should the communicative and effective classroom context affect the classroom atmosphere?, What should teachers do? Discuss these issues through examples." The study was based on 70 teacher candidates' reports about these questions. In this research, content analysis – one of the qualitative research methods – was used.

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*Findings:* It was seen that teacher candidates offered some strategies reinforcing a positive classroom atmosphere such as knowing students and the effective use of non-verbal messages and communication methods to struggle with unwanted classroom behaviors. In addition, it was emphasized that the teacher was an important factor in creating the classroom atmosphere. It was given importance that the classroom had to be considered as a democratic and social system and the teacher's positive personal characteristics were highlighted.

*Conclusion and Recommendations:* It can be said that teacher candidates are, to some extent, aware of what should be done or should not be done in creating a positive classroom atmosphere; however, there are some points that they are lacking. Pre-service teacher training programmes should be re-arranged in order to compensate for these lacking points and to guide teacher candidates to a sense of awareness in their classes. In line with this, classroom management, teaching experience and teaching practice courses in the curriculum of pre-school education programmes should be revised through theory and practice entirety.

*Keywords:* Communication, positive classroom atmosphere, prospective teacher, classroom management

### **Introduction**

Education can be defined as a communication activity. The objective of education is to be able to make a behavior change on the behalf of the receiver; therefore, if we would like to be good at influencing, training or co-operating the person we are in touch with, we should have good relationships (Yuksel, 2008). In other words, the aims of the source and the receiver; that is, between the student and the teacher, should be positive and their communication should be based on mutual, effective understanding. In such a situation, although negative feelings and opposing views have been transmitted, the main approach has been to understand and to tell; shortly, to compromise. The relationship between the source and the receiver changes into mutual confidence, value and dialogue (Basaran, 2000). Therefore; it is important to establish the framework of the teacher-student relationship on the basis of trust-value and dialogue. If it is possible to set up a contact between the teacher and the student on the principle of mutual confidence, value and dialogue, it is possible to create the ultimate classrooms. The learning process by means of positive communication will provide a platform in which the mutual confidence and understanding are strengthened, resulting in a positive classroom atmosphere.

Classroom communication is not only a process of teaching but also a process of determining interpersonal interaction (Kuzu, 2003). This is for communication and requires interpersonal skills. Teachers with good and developed interpersonal and social skills both teach well and tackle their students' misbehavior efficiently (Stemler, Elliott, Grigorenko & Sternberg, 2006). Most teachers, however, say that they have difficulties in communicating with students and struggle with managing their behaviors, especially those who misbehave. This may derive from the fact that

teachers are not equipped with a satisfactory level of interpersonal and social interaction training, although they receive systematic education on various teaching aspects of classroom management. Though this is the case, it is known that teachers' effective use of communication skills plays a key role in students' perceptions of themselves and the world around them. This will also pioneer students' effects on their environment. In line with his teacher's communication skills, the student may turn into an individual who finds himself and others important, who is sensitive to people and social problems and who can communicate efficiently. Conversely, the student may turn into an individual who is not taught to value others, who hates learning and causes personal and social problems and who becomes estranged. That is why it is vital that teachers firstly establish good contact with their students.

When we talk about communication, we generally mean transmitting a message; that is, speaking. Communication, however, is not only speaking. Communication means to know what to say, when and where to say it, and how to decide how to say it. Also, it entails presenting what we want to say in a simple, clear and fluent way through eye contact. In addition to this, we should follow if our message is well-received or not. If teachers show understanding and acceptance and provide a tolerant atmosphere for their students, the students will be given a chance to feel secure and behave accordingly. In such a relationship, the child develops in positive way, so he becomes more constructive, positive, productive and creative. When he feels that he is accepted and given importance, he also feels that he is loved.

Effective classroom management is one of the most important factors of teaching. One of the objectives of classroom management is not only to facilitate teaching but also to increase the learning time, to provide and to protect a warm and supportive classroom climate, to prevent students' destructive behaviors and to provide a convenient atmosphere where the students can show good behaviors (Doyle, 1986; Emmer & Stough, 2001; Jones, 1996). In order to achieve all of these, it is essential that the teacher should listen effectively, should give clear instructions, and should use positive body language and "I-messages" while organizing students' behaviors. In short, the classroom atmosphere is made up of interpersonal relationships such as student-student, student-teacher and interaction of various factors such as the clarity of rules, students' wishes, the teacher's support, attitude, expectations, classroom management style and her motivation for the lesson, attendance, lesson plans, innovation, the ability to be up-to-date, and the quality of interaction. Therefore, the classroom atmosphere acquires an environmental characteristic which is unique to the classroom. Also, the classroom atmosphere can be defined as a communication and interaction among individuals and as a pattern of relationships.

A revision of the related literature on classroom atmosphere shows that there are studies focusing on students' perceptions of classroom atmosphere at different levels, the relationship between class atmosphere and students' achievement, the effect of speaking problems on classroom climate and on the effects of the relationship between classroom atmosphere and teacher-student interaction through various aspects (Bilgic, 2007; Bilgic, 2009; Cananoglu, 2011; Erdogan, 2009; Karsi, 2012; Kunkul, 2008; Mumcu, 2008; Ozgok, 2013). No research, however, has been found to be related to teacher candidates' perspectives on their behaviors in terms of positive

classroom atmosphere. As teacher candidates are the main subject and the future organizers of the teaching environments, it is important to carry out a study of which variables of the classroom atmosphere they are aware. At that point, it is vital to determine the weaknesses and probable solutions to include in the curriculum of pre-service teacher training programmes. The contribution and the encouragement of the positive classroom atmosphere on students' development and on effective attendance cannot be ignored, which make this study essentially important.

#### *Aim of the Study*

The main aim of the study is to investigate teacher candidates' points of view about teacher behaviours positively affecting the classroom atmosphere. In line with this aim, the research questions of this study are as below:

1. What strategies are offered by teacher candidates to establish a positive classroom atmosphere?
2. What are teacher candidates' opinions about the interaction that induces a positive classroom atmosphere?

### **Method**

#### *Research Design*

Third-year students of a department of primary school education at a state university attending a classroom management course were instructed to write reports as a response to this question: How should classroom interaction and communication influence a positive classroom atmosphere? The students were told not to refer to the related literature. Instead, they were instructed to report their points of view according to their experiences. They worked individually. Therefore, this was a phenomenological study that focuses on the meaning of individual experiences. Such study designs focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon. The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (Creswell, 2007).

#### *Participants*

The sample of this study consists of seventy third-year students. They were attending the primary school education department at a state university. Also, they took classroom management courses within their teacher education programme.

#### *Research Instruments and Procedures*

At a primary school education department of a state university, third-year students were told to prepare a report about the following questions: "According to you, how should the communicative and effective classroom context affect the classroom atmosphere?, and What should teachers do? Discuss these issues through examples." The study was based on 70 teacher candidates' reports about these

questions. The students were told not to refer to the related literature. Instead, they were instructed to report their points of view according to their experiences and they worked individually. Then, the reports were gathered and evaluated.

#### *Data Analysis*

The data of this study was based on the reports prepared by 70 student teachers. The data was transferred into the computer. The reports were read line by line and coded accordingly. The coding criteria were prepared in line with the related literature. During the analysis, a constant comparative method was followed. This method enables the researcher to work on the intensive data in a clear and short way (Kwale, 1996). Then, the codes were gathered and commonalities were identified. As a result of this, the categories (themes) emerged. The identified codes were related to each other and interpreted (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). The reports were evaluated and the findings were written and transferred into tables in detail. In interpreting the findings, theoretical approaches in the related studies were consulted and related research findings were referred.

### **Results**

The student teachers' points of view about teacher behaviors positively affecting classroom environment, communication strategies offered by them addressing positive classroom atmosphere were regarded in relation to positive classroom atmosphere interaction. The findings are given below. One of the aims of this study is to determine the student teachers' communication strategies for a positive atmosphere in the classroom. In accordance with this purpose, the student teachers emphasize components of communication in the classroom. Thirty-seven of the student teachers pointed out "the teacher" as a main component of classroom interaction. Twelve of them highlighted expressing one's self in a good way, "the skill of giving and receiving the message." Eight of them said that interaction in the school and out of the school were not independent and mentioned that the social environment and culture were influential on interaction. Also, they found the following components important: "importance of source and receiver" (n:8), "the importance of the student" (n:3), "the importance of classroom interaction in terms of social aspect" (n: 3), "the importance of feedback" (n:3), "the importance of message (content)" (n:2), "the importance of channels used" (n:1) and "the importance of techniques used to solve problems" (n:1).

The student teachers' communication strategies suggestions for a positive classroom atmosphere were put into these categories: "communication skills for negative and destructive behaviours," "effective communication skills," "environmental conditions and intervention to the behaviour," "positive acceptance/preventative skills" and "non-verbal communication." The codes under these categories are given in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

*Communication Strategies Suggested by Teacher Candidates for a Positive Classroom Atmosphere*

<i>Communication Skills for Negative and Destructive Behaviours</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Effective Communication Skill</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Environmental Conditions and Intervention to the Behaviour</i>		<i>Positive Acceptance/ Preventive Skills</i>		<i>Non-verbal Communication</i>	<i>f</i>
				<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>		
Using positive/instructional/non-blaming language	25	Listening	17	Being a role model as a teacher	10	Knowing the student	24	Effective use of gesture and mimics	21
The use of "I-language"	21	Emphatic listening and giving reaction	7	Coping with the problem when needed	8	Encouragement	7	Effective use of body language	18
Effective use of the language	13	Using effective listening skill	5	Reinforcement Use	8	Language Use Developing Self Confidence	7	Establishing eye-contact	13
Direct communication with the student	11	Effective feedback	5	Attention receiving, entertaining activities	3	Supporting	6	Effective use of tone of voice and accent	13
Polite talk	11	Using confirmative expressions while listening	4	Playing games	2	Rules	5	Physical contact	9
Negotiation with the Student after the lesson	7			Ignoring	2	Determination of the rules together	4	Being cheerful	6
Using non-verbal messages for warning	6			Sharing rules and expectations with students	2	Realizing the positive behaviour	3	Being aware of students' non-verbal expressions	6
Giving explanations without questioning	6			Cooperation with the parents in problem solving	1	Emphasis on the student's strengths	3	Effective use of non-verbal communication	6

Table 1 Continue

Communication Skills for Negative and Destructive Behaviours	f	Effective Communication Skill	f	Environmental Conditions and Intervention with the Behaviour	f	Positive Acceptance/ Preventive Skills	f	Non-verbal Communication	f
Attention on the verbal communication	5			Eliminating attention-receiving distractors and Organizing the environment	1	Organizing classroom meetings	2	Giving importance to physical appearance	3
Being clear	5			Defining the behaviour	1	Box of wishes and complaints	1		
Using physical contact for warning	1					Giving responsibility and tasks	1		
Allocating enough time for thinking	1					Celebrating special days (birthdays)	1		
						Determining the reasons for the student's behaviours	1		
						Addressing the student by his name	1		
						Encouraging instead of appreciating	1		

As for the student teachers' suggestions for positive classroom interaction strategies, much emphasis was seen on the categories "communication skills for negative and destructive behaviours," and "non-verbal communication." Under these categories, these codes are salient: "Using positive/instructional/non-blaming language," "use of me-language," "Effective use of gesture and mimics," "effective use of the body language." Also, from the category of positive acceptance/preventive skills, "knowing the student" was salient. However, "effective communication skills" and "environmental conditions and intervention to the behaviour" categories were not mentioned so much. In these categories, the codes "listening" and "being a role model as a teacher" were salient. Some examples from the codes and from the categories are given below.

"...While the teacher is teaching, Hüseyin is talking to his friends. The teacher approaches him and receives his attention by touching his shoulder and his desk as if it is not on purpose and helps him to concentrate ..." (K27 touching (physical contact))

"... when we say to our students "you are not listening," they feel that they are attacked and they directly start to defend. Instead of that, the teacher should use me-language such as "I feel disturbed when I am interrupted and I cannot help other students." When they use me-language, this may guide them to behaviour change..." (K31<sub>use of I-language</sub>)

"... he was talking to us softly and warmly, "Can you go to the blackboard now?" This was giving confidence to us. We were not afraid of going to the blackboard. The teachers' expressions were not to scare the students but to raise confidence..." (K53<sub>Using positive/instructional/non-blaming language</sub>)

"...I was in the last level of the secondary school. As I came to the class as a late comer, I was isolated from my friends. Everybody was making fun of me. My teacher talked to them for an hour and told them that it was wrong what they were doing. My teacher wanted them to establish empathy with me ..." (K51 *struggling with the problem when there is*).

"... we should be careful with our behaviours when we are interacting with our students in the classroom ..." (E46 *being a role model as a teacher*)

"When I was in the 5th year of the primary school, my teacher was so understanding and tender... She was using positive language... She was talking to her students politely. For example; when she asked a question in the class, she always asked in a very polite way. She was thanking everyone for their participation in the class..." (K43 *speaking politely, use of positive language*)

"... we had an exam and I got a low score and I felt bad. Because I felt embarrassed, I started to cry. I went out of the class. The teacher followed me and talked to me. She calmed me down and told me that the score did not make so much of difference to her..." (K41 *directly talking to the student*)

"... I was in the 6 level. I did not like my arts teacher. This teacher became our form teacher in the 7th year. I was the class president, so I had to be in contact with the form teacher. As she became our form teacher, she started to get to know us better and behaved closer and warmer. We, as students, started to give her lesson more importance..." (K28 *knowing students*)

"... When the teacher says 'well-done' or when the teacher gives a star to students who do a good job, it will motivate the other students and reinforce participation among students ..." (K30 *use of reinforcement*)

When the student teachers talked about communication strategies for positive classroom atmosphere, they also mentioned strategies which were possible to hinder a positive classroom atmosphere and communication types. The participants' points of view about this were divided into four categories. These categories were "solution messages," "suppressive messages," "indirect messages," and "reactional/traditional." Table 2 shows the codes of the categories.



**Table 2.***Communication Strategies and Message Types Hindering a Positive Atmosphere*

<i>Solution Messages</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Suppressing Messages</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Indirect Messages</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Reactional/ Traditional</i>	<i>f</i>
Ordering	8	Accusing	11	Language affecting self-confidence negatively	6	Use of reinforcement	9
Threatening	4	Judging	8	Looking down on	5	Use of punishment	7
Giving advice	2	Criticizing	7	Underestimating	2	Authoritarian classroom setting	2
Giving ethical/moral messages	1	Nicknaming/labelling	7				
Providing solution alternatives	1	Physical punishment	6				
Warning/scolding	1	Suppressing	4				
Guiding	1	Threatening	2				
		Questioning	1				
		Insulting	1				
		Use of force	1				
		Speaking impolitely	1				
		Undervaluing	1				

When the student teachers' communication strategies and types hindering a positive atmosphere were considered, it was seen that the 'ordering' and 'threatening' codes under the category of "solution messages" were salient. From the category of "suppressing messages," 'accusing,' 'judging' and 'criticizing' codes and from the category of "indirect messages," 'language use affecting self-confidence negatively' and 'looking down on' codes were those mostly emphasized by the student teachers as negative forms of communication. Also, some participants mentioned that from the category of "reactional/traditional," the code of 'use of reinforcement' could hinder positive atmosphere. Here are some direct examples from the participants' points of view in codes and in categories given.

*"When I was at the mathematics lesson in the primary school, I could do the exercises but I had difficulties in problems. My teacher's attitudes and words to me were really bad. Her/His communication was not good..." (K57 language use affecting self-confidence negatively)*

*"...He was such an angry teacher that he was always shouting at all students and he was slapping the students who were moving left or right. He slapped at least three or four students while ordering them to queue in front of all other students..." (K55 physical punishment)*

*"... ordering destroys the communication... threatening is also a wrong behaviour... nicknaming is wrong... no need to criticize, accuse or judge..." (K36 solution messages, suppressive messages)*

One of the objectives of this study is to find out how a positive, interactive classroom should be in line with the student teachers' perspectives. In relation to this objective, when the student teachers were explaining the characteristics of a teacher's behaviours affecting classroom atmosphere positively, they also drew attention to what kind of personal and professional characteristics a teacher should have. These are; "being fair (n=11), being gentle (n=8), being affectionate (n=7), being close (n=7), being transparent (n=6), being consistent (n=5), teacher's liking her profession (n=4), being flexible (n=3), being patient (n=2), being constructive (n=2), experience (n=2), use of jokes and comics (n=2), being sincere (n=1), giving equal chance (n=1), being dynamic (n=1), being natural (n=1), being calm (n=1), liking the children (n=1), being objective (n=1), not comparing (n=1)."

The student teachers' perspectives about positive classroom atmosphere interaction were categorized as physical/instructional, social and preventive. The codes under these categories are given in Table 3.

It was seen that the category "social situation" was a salient one in the student teachers' suggestions about positive classroom atmosphere. In this category, the codes 'valuing the students' opinions,' 'atmosphere where students can express themselves comfortably' and 'a democratic classroom' were salient. The least talked about, but briefly mentioned category was "the preventative environment." In this category, the code 'giving value to the student/respect' was salient. The least mentioned category among the suggestions was "physical/instructional." In this category, 'atmosphere where the students' needs are met' and 'one-on-one interest' were salient. Some examples from the student teachers' ideas under the categories and the codes are given below.

"...while addressing my students, I behaved not as a dictator but as an older sister, a mother or a friend..." (K49 atmosphere where students can express themselves comfortably)

"When I saw Gamze from my practice teaching school, I thought that she was a lazy student, showing no interest on her lesson... but she was a shy student wishing special interest. We should increase our communication with such students and give them the interest they deserve, we should have one-on-one contact with them..." (E42 one-on-one attention)

"...Nese teacher was a very well-known teacher with her teaching in the city. She treated the students as if they were her own children. While her students were playing football, they were sweating and she was changing their clothes so that they would not be ill ..." (E38 valuing the student)

"... if such a person had cleaned my nose in the same way, I would have felt important and valuable ..." (E35 emphatic atmosphere)

**Table 3.***The Student Teachers' Points of View about a Positive Classroom Interaction Atmosphere*

<i>Physical/ Instructional</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Social</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Preventative</i>	<i>f</i>
Atmosphere where students' and teachers' needs are met	14	Valuing the students' opinions	26	Valuing the student/Showing respect to the student	32
One-on-one attention	10	Atmosphere where students can express themselves comfortably	19	Trust for the teacher	16
Working in cooperation	8	Democratic classroom/democratic attitudes and behaviours	13	Mutual respect, love and confidence	14
Use of different method and techniques	8	Life experiences out of classroom	10	Emphatic Atmosphere	7
Giving importance to individual differences	5	Positive attitude towards the student	8	Unconditional acceptance	4
One-group seating chart	2	Positive student-teacher relationship	7	Making the student feel that he is trusted	2
One-on-one work with students through group activities	1	Warm atmosphere in which the orders are well-defined	6	Teacher's effort to be loved	1
Producing a product as a classroom	1	A healthy relationship between the student and the student	4	Atmosphere giving a good and relaxed feeling	1
Student-centered classroom atmosphere	1	Combining and guiding atmosphere	3	Atmosphere improving self-confidence	1
		Close atmosphere	3		
		Atmosphere where the students' and the teachers' expectations are met at a common point	2		
		Mutual interaction	1		

While the student teachers were talking about a positive interactive classroom atmosphere, they also mentioned the factors hindering the positive classroom atmosphere. The student teachers' perspectives about this were given in three

categories as "situations hindering a positive classroom atmosphere." These categories were "physical/instructional," "unsocial" and "other." The codes under these categories are given in Table 4.

**Table 4.**

*Situations Hindering a Positive Classroom Atmosphere*

<i>Physical/ Instructional</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Unsocial</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>f</i>
Distance (The teacher's fixed position)	5	The teacher's focus only on the lesson	7	Discrimination	9
The organization chart of students and their desks	4	Distance (psychological)	3	Prejudice	3
Crowded class	2	Not considering the students' interests and needs	2	Making a role/pretending	1
Not implementing different methods and techniques	1	Indifferent	1		
		Transferring private problems into the classroom	1		
		Not valuing the student	1		

It was seen that the student teachers' perspectives on the factors hindering the positive classroom atmosphere were concentrated on the category "unsocial" behaviours and attitudes. Under this category, the codes 'the teachers focus only on the lesson' and 'distance (psychological)' were prominent. Under the category of "physical/instructional," the participants emphasized 'distance (the teacher's fixed position) and 'the organization chart of students and their desks.' Also, under the category of "other," they mentioned 'discrimination' as a factor hindering a positive classroom atmosphere. The student teachers' points of view about the codes which were placed into categories are given below.

"... one of our teachers was so far away from us in the classroom. When he wanted one of us to go to the blackboard, he had to point as well "You, go to the board" by pointing. That was of course scary and propelling..." (K53 distance *the teacher's fixed position in the class*)

"... I was a third-year student at a primary school. I was late for the class. I was cold and ill. I knocked at the door and went in. The teacher called me over and asked me why I was late and gave me a slap... Then, someone knocked at the door. Another student whose scores were better than me was late. The teacher called him over and listened to his excuses and let him go to his desk..." (E39 *discrimination*)

"... let's draw two models of a teacher. One of them enters the classroom and directly focuses on his lesson, showing no effort to get to know his students more and not considering his students' ideas..." (E69 *(the teacher focuses only on the lesson)*)

## Discussion and Conclusion

Most of the student teachers identify the teacher as a main component of classroom interaction and classroom atmosphere. They also highlight the teacher's personal characteristics (being fair, being gentle, being close, etc.). In the related literature, it has been said that the teacher is as important for the harmony of the classroom as the orchestra conductor is to an orchestra (Doyle, 1986; Gordon, 1996; Martin & Baldwin, 1996; Weinstein & Mignano, 2007). This finding is also significant from the perspective of teacher training programmes. This reveals that student teachers, even in their B.A. education, are aware of their responsibilities for the future. Similarly, when the student teachers talk about the importance of "message receiving and giving," they say that it is the teacher's responsibility to start communication and to provide a continuation. It has been found important that the participants have already mentioned this factor. In contemporary schools, one-way communication in which the teacher tells and the student listens is not valued any more. Giving and receiving messages should be multidimensional and effective. The teacher should also be a good listener, while expressing himself/herself in a good way. According to Yuksel-Sahin (2010), in a modern classroom where speaking and listening should be together, it is a must that teachers learn multidimensional communication skills through which students express their feelings, opinions and ideas. Another factor that the student teachers are aware of is the idea that "social environment and culture affect classroom interaction." In the related references about classroom management, social setting and culture have been emphasized as sources affecting management (Jones & Jones, 2007; Tas, 2005; Watson & Battistich, 2006).

Similarly, the findings from the studies about the reasons for students' misbehaviours are also related to social context, the setting where the family lives, the family structure and friends' circle (Lemlech, 1999; Weinstein & Mignano, 2007). A striking point in the results is that the "student," which is an essential factor, has only been considered by a few participants. This may derive from the fact that the student teachers employ a teacher-centered perspective. If we consider this finding in line with Wolfgang's point of view (2001), the control point where the student teachers are standing is close to the interventionist approach in which the teacher control is at a high level. From the perspective of the control in the classroom in the classroom management attitudes and beliefs, it has been found that teachers and student teachers are interventionists in terms of teaching management but interactive regarding human management (Akdemir, 2014; Martin, Yin & Baldwin, 1998; Okut, 2011; Sadik & Bulut Ozsezer, 2015; Savran-Gencer & Cakiroglu, 2007; Unal & Unal, 2009).

A great number of the communication strategies suggested by the student teachers about a positive classroom atmosphere are mostly related to strategies about how to cope with misbehaviours. In this study, this category has been called "communication strategies against negative and destructive behaviours." The participants say that they prefer more constructive strategies when they encounter unwanted behaviours such as "instructional/non-blaming language" and "the use of me-language." Also, the codes "listening," "the teacher as a role model," and "knowing the student" have been mentioned by the participants. These codes have

been placed in a different category in this study but they are categorized in the dimension of behaviour management in the related literature. This may indicate that the student teachers are aware of the significance of positive behaviour management in establishing and maintaining positive atmosphere in tackling misbehaviours. In the same way, the supporting result comes from the finding that the codes in the category of "non-verbal communication," "effective use of gestures and mimics," "use of body language," "keeping eye-contact," and "effective use of tone of voice and accent" have been reported as factors facilitating communication and as strategies requiring less power in struggling with unwanted behaviours. It has been extensively highlighted in the related literature that the least power should be used to cope with misbehaviours (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; Charles, Senter & Barr, 1996; Emer & Stough 2001; Gordon, 1996; Hall & Hall, 1988; Nimmo, 1997; Nelson-Jones, 1995; Sadik, 2000).

In terms of the student teachers' communication strategies and message types hindering a positive atmosphere, it has been seen that the student teachers prefer communication obstacles, that is, "a rejecting language/not accepting language" which has been referred to as "solution messages," "suppressing messages," and "indirect messages" by Gordon (1996). Such messages in the related literature have been reported to show that the teacher is the authority and the student has to accept his authority. This type of message can also regarded as a "you-message" and it pushes the students to defend, it destructs the students' personalities, and it gives the feeling that the students are not respected and taken into consideration. This affects confidence, love and respect in the classroom atmosphere negatively (Gordan, 1996). The negativity in the relationship between the student and the teacher affects the classroom atmosphere in the same way (Basaran, 2000; Doyle, 1986; Emer & Stough, 2001; Ozturk, 2002; Ozyurek, 2007). The findings obtained in this study have shown that the student teachers exhibit non-interventionist attitudes and use less power in control in maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere. In another study by Bulut et al. (2008); however, it has been discovered that the teachers tend to use more power in control and prefer Gordon's (1996) rejecting/not accepting language in the classroom communication.

In student teachers' suggestions on interaction for positive classroom atmosphere, the following categories have been mostly reported: "valuing the students' opinions," "atmosphere where students can express themselves comfortably," "democratic classroom atmosphere," and "valuing and respecting the student." This shows that the student teachers give importance to providing a secure classroom atmosphere where students can express themselves. This is also in line with the finding that the student teachers have concentrated on "unsocial" behaviours and attitudes as factors hindering a positive classroom atmosphere. This is what social and preventative environments necessitate as reported in the related literature. Traditional, authoritative and/or reactional attitudes damage relationships with students, resulting in a negative effect on a positive classroom atmosphere (Basaran, 2000; Doyle, 1986; Emmer & Stough, 2001; Jones, 1996; Ozturk, 2002; Ozyurek, 2007).

In conclusion, knowing the student, effective use of non-verbal messages and positive skills to cope with misbehaviours have come into prominence in the student teachers' suggestions for communication strategies to establish a positive classroom atmosphere. As for the student teachers' points of view about the positive classroom atmosphere interaction, it has been observed that the salient factors are that the teacher is an important component in building classroom atmosphere and the classroom should be regarded as a democratic and social system where the teacher's positive personality characteristics are important. In light of these findings, it can be said that the student teachers know what to do and what not to do in establishing positive classroom atmosphere. Though this is the finding, it is vital to make some adaptations in pre-service teacher training programmes so that the student teachers can transfer their awareness into their future classrooms. Therefore, the academic courses in the primary school education curriculum such as classroom management, practice teaching and teaching experience should be revised to integrate theory and practice. For example, the student teachers should be given actual classroom opportunities to establish classroom atmospheres. In addition, the student teachers should be given chances to transfer what is in their minds into practice. This can be done by educational counselors in the course of classroom management by means of short simulation experiences.

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### **Öğretmen Adaylarının Sınıf Atmosferini Olumlu Etkileyen Davranışlar Hakkındaki Görüşlerinin İncelenmesi**

#### **Atıf:**

- Bulut Ozsezer, M. S., & Iflazoglu Saban, A. (2016). An investigation on teacher candidates' perspectives about behaviors positively affecting classroom atmosphere. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 66, 139-158  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2016.66.8>

#### **Özet**

*Problem Durumu:* Eğitim bir iletişim etkinliği olarak tanımlanabilir. Çünkü eğitimde amaç kaynak tarafından amaçlanan davranışın ve davranış değişikliğinin alıcıda oluşmasıdır. Bu nedenle karşımızdaki insanı etkileme, eğitme ve birlikte çalışma konusunda başarılı olmak istiyorsak iyi ilişkiler içinde olmamız gerekir (Yüksel, 2008). Yani öğretmen ve öğrencinin bir başka deyişle kaynak ve alıcının amaçları

olumlu olmalı ve iletişim şekli ise karşılıklı etkili anlaşmak temeline dayanmalıdır. Böyle bir durumda olumsuz duygular, karşıt düşünceler iletile bile, temel yaklaşım anlamak / anlatmak yani anlaşmaktır. Böylelikle kaynak ve alıcı arasındaki ilişki güvene, değere ve diyaloga dönüşür (Başaran, 2000). Dolayısıyla öğretmen-öğrenci ilişkisinin çerçevesini güven-değer-diyalog bağlamında oluşturmak gerekir. Eğer öğretmen-öğrenci arasında karşılıklı güvene, değere ve diyaloga dayalı ilişki oluşturulabilirse bunun bir sonucu olarak sınıflarda istenilen ortam oluşturulabilir. Olumlu iletişim ile sağlanacak öğretim süreci, öğretmen-öğrenci arasındaki karşılıklı güven ve anlayışın güçlendirilmesine ortam hazırlayarak sınıfta olumlu bir havanın, olumlu sınıf atmosferinin sağlanması ile sonuçlanacaktır.

Sınıf içi iletişim öğretimi gerçekleştirmenin yanı sıra kişilerarası etkileşimi de belirleyen bir süreçtir (Kuzu, 2003). Bu iletişim amaçlıdır ve kişilerarası ilişkilerde beceri gerektirir. Kişilerarası-sosyal becerisi gelişmiş öğretmenler hem öğretimi gerçekleştirir hem de öğrencilerin istenmeyen davranışlarını becerikli bir biçimde yönetir (Stemler, Elliott, Grigorenko & Sternberg, 2006). Ancak öğretmenlerin çoğu; davranışları yönetme ve istenmeyen davranışa neden olan öğrenci ile iletişim kurma konusunda zorlandıklarını belirtmektedirler. Bu durum öğretmenlerin öğretimin yönetimi ile ilgili sistematik eğitim almakla birlikte kişilerarası-sosyal etkileşimle ilgili yeterince eğitim almamaları ile açıklanabilir. Oysa öğretmenlerin iletişim becerilerini etkili kullanmaları aynı zamanda öğrencilerin de kendilerini ve çevreyi algılamalarına sonra da çevreyi etkilemelerine öncülük edecek kilit önemdedir. Öğrenci öğretmenin kullandığı iletişim biçimine göre kendini ve başkalarını değerli bulan, insanlara ve toplumsal sorunlara duyarlı ve etkili iletişim kurabilen bir bireye ya da değer verilmeden bilgi aktarılan, öğrenmekten nefret eden, bireysel veya toplumsal sorunlar çıkaran, yabancılaşmış bir bireye dönüşebilecektir. Bunun için öğrencilerin önce öğretmenleri ile iletişim kurabilmelerinin sağlanması önemlidir.

Sınıfı etkili yönetme işi öğretmenlik mesleğinin en önemli unsurlarından biridir. Sınıf yönetiminin amacı öğretimi kolaylaştırmanın yanı sıra, öğretim zamanını arttırma, sıcak ve destekleyici bir sınıf atmosferi yaratma ve koruma, öğrencilerin zarar verici davranışlarını önleme, istendik davranışların artması için uygun ortamı sağlama gibi amaçları da gerçekleştirmeye yöneliktir (Doyle, 1986; Emmer ve Stough, 2001; Jones, 1996). Tüm bu sayılanların yapılabilmesi ve olumlu sınıf atmosferinin oluşturulabilmesi öğretmenin etkin dinlemesi, açık ve net yönergeler verebilmesi, davranışa yönelik düzenlemeler yaparken olumlu dili ve ben dilini etkili bir şekilde kullanabilmesiyle ilişkilendirilebilir. Dolayısıyla sınıf atmosferi, öğrenci-öğrenci ve öğretmen-öğrenci arasındaki kişilerarası ilişkiler, kuralların açıklığı-belirginliği, öğrencilerin istekleri, öğretmenin desteği, tutumu, beklentileri ve yönetim biçimi, derse yöneltmesi, katılım, ders düzeni, yenilik, güncellik, iletişimin niteliği ve rekabet ortamı gibi faktörlerin etkileşiminden oluşmaktadır. Bu nedenle, sınıf atmosferi, sınıfa özgü bir çevresel özellik oluşturmaktadır. Bütün bunlardan hareketle aslında sınıf atmosferini sınıf içinde oluşan bireylerarası iletişim, etkileşim ve ilişkiler dokusu olarak da tanımlamak mümkündür.

İlgili literatür incelendiğinde sınıf atmosferini konu alan araştırmaların; öğrencilerin çeşitli kademelerde sınıf atmosferi algıları, sınıf atmosferiyle öğrenci başarısı arasındaki ilişki, konuşma probleminin sınıf iklimine etkisi, öğretmen-öğrenci arasındaki çeşitli konulardaki etkileşimlerin sınıf atmosferine etkileri ile ilgili oldukları belirlenmiştir (Bilgiç, 2007; Bilgiç, 2009; Cananoğlu, 2011; Erdoğan, 2009;

Karşı, 2012; Künkül, 2008; Mumcu, 2008; Özgök, 2013). Ulaşılabilen kaynaklar çerçevesinde öğretmen adaylarının olumlu sınıf atmosferine yönelik öğretmen davranışlarına ilişkin görüşlerini inceleyen bir araştırmaya rastlanmamıştır. Oysa öğretim ortamının hem öznesi hem de gelecekte düzenleyicisi konumunda olan öğretmen adaylarının sınıf atmosferinin hangi değişkenlerinin farkında olduklarını belirlemek önemlidir. Bu konu eksikliklerin belirlenmesi ve gidermeye yönelik hizmet öncesi eğitim aşamasında önlemler geliştirilmesi bakımından da önemlidir. Olumlu sınıf atmosferinin öğrencilerin gelişimlerine katkı sağlama ve onları etkin katılıma özendirme noktasında önemi yadsınamaz bu nedenle de bu araştırma önemlidir.

*Araştırmanın Amacı:* Bu araştırmanın temel amacı öğretmen adaylarının sınıf atmosferini olumlu etkileyen öğretmen davranışları hakkındaki görüşlerini belirlemektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda aynı zamanda öğretmen adaylarının sınıf içi olumlu atmosfere yönelik önerdikleri iletişim stratejiler ve sınıf içi olumlu atmosfere yönelik etkileşim ortamı hakkındaki görüşleri belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır.

*Araştırmanın Yöntemi:* Bir devlet üniversitesinin sınıf öğretmenliği anabilim dalı 3. sınıfına devam eden öğrencilere sınıf yönetimi dersi kapsamında öğretmen adaylarına sınıf atmosferini olumlu etkileyen sınıf içi iletişim ve etkileşim ortamı nasıl olmalıdır? öğretmenler neler yapmalıdır? sorusu sorularak rapor yazmaları istenmiştir. Öğrencilerden literatürden yararlanmadan kendi görüşleri doğrultusunda raporu hazırlamaları istenmiştir. Her bir öğretmen adayının bu görevi tek başına yapması istenmiştir ve daha sonra bu raporlar toplanarak araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirmeye alınmıştır. Araştırmada 70 öğretmen adayı tarafından hazırlanan raporlar araştırmanın çalışma grubunu oluşturmuştur. Bu araştırmada verilerin analizinde nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır.

*Araştırmanın Bulguları:* Öğretmen adaylarının sınıf içi olumlu atmosfere yönelik öğrenciyi tanıma, sözel olmayan iletişim etkili kullanma ve istenmeyen davranışlarla baş etmeye yönelik olumlu becerileri iletişim stratejileri olarak önerdikleri belirlenmiştir. Araştırmada ayrıca sınıf içi olumlu atmosfere yönelik etkileşim ortamı ile ilgili olarak; öğretmenin sınıf atmosferini yaratmada önemli bir öge olduğu, sınıfın demokratik ve sosyal bir sistem olarak ele alınması ile öğretmenin olumlu kişilik özelliklerine vurgu yapıldığı belirlenmiştir.

*Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Öneriler:* Sonuç olarak öğretmen adaylarının, sınıfta olumlu atmosfer oluşturmada, öğretmenlerin yapması gereken ve yapmaması gerekenlerin ne olduğunun az çok farkında olduğu söylenebilir. Ancak yine de öğretmen adaylarının olumlu sınıf atmosferi oluşturma konusundaki bu farkındalığının gelecekte sınıflarına yansıtılmasını sağlamak amacıyla hizmetöncesi eğitim programlarında bazı düzenlemeler yapılmalıdır. Bu bağlamda öncelikle sınıf öğretmeni yetiştirme programında bulunan sınıf yönetimi, öğretmenlik deneyimi ve öğretmenlik uygulaması ders programları teori ve uygulama bütünlüğü sağlanacak şekilde yeniden düzenlenebilir. Örneğin çeşitli uygulamalarla birebir yaşayarak sınıf atmosferi oluşturmalarına fırsat verecek önlemler alınmalı. Ayrıca düşüncede olan öğretmen adaylarının bu tutumlarının davranışa dönüştürülebilmesi için sınıf yönetimi ders içeriğinin eğitsel danışmanlarla, yansıtıcı küçük grup yaşantı süreçleri ve uygulama ile bütünleştirilerek sunumuna yönelik düzenlemeler yapılmalıdır.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* İletişim, olumlu sınıf atmosferi, aday öğretmen, sınıf yönetimi.