

# AN INVESTIGATION INTO EFL INSTRUCTORS' POSSIBLE LANGUAGE TEACHER SELVES

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ÖZLEM KARAAĞAÇ TUNA  
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yayınevi

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Özlem Karaaaç Tuna, Cevdet Yılmaz

**Genel Yayın Yönetmeni:** Yusuf Ziya Aydođan (yza@egitimyayinevi.com)

**Genel Yayın Koordinatörü:** Yusuf Yavuz (yusufyavuz@egitimyayinevi.com)

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**Kitabevi Şubesi:** Eğitim Kitabevi, Şükran mah. Rampalı 121, Meram, Konya, Türkiye  
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bilgi@egitimkitabevi.com

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## **PREFACE**

This study aims to examine the effects of possible language teacher selves on teacher motivation and foreign language teaching and learning. It explored the possible language teacher selves of the lecturers in Turkey and investigated which selves they were close to and the effects of this situation. It also sought ways for the lecturers to move away from their feared language teacher selves and move closer to their ideal selves. In the study, a four-point Likert-type scale was developed for quantitative data, and qualitative data was collected through interviews and reminders. The results provide suggestions for the self-components of the lecturers and their development.

The development of language teachers begins with theoretical training in English/Foreign Language Teaching departments, which is supplemented by school experience and teaching practice. Student-teachers observe and gradually teach, receiving feedback from peers and supervisors, shaping their personal vision of a teacher. This vision, influenced by social conditions, experiences, and beliefs, impacts their professional identity, affecting motivation, self-efficacy, and effectiveness. Although research on possible language teacher selves is limited, particularly in Turkey, this work aims to address three gaps: studying all possible teacher selves simultaneously, examining their effects on instructors, and exploring how to support them positively. The study was conducted in two parts; in the first part, the conceptual framework was drawn and in the second part, field research was carried out.

**ABBREVIATIONS**

ACL	American Culture and Literature
ELL	English Language and Literature
ELT	English Language Teaching
L2MSS	L2 Motivational Self System
MoE	Ministry of Education
PLTS	Possible Language Teacher Selves
PLTSS	Possible Language teacher Selves Scale



## INTRODUCTION

Henry Brooks Adams emphasizes the profound and lasting influence of teachers on their students' lives. Teachers play a crucial role in both academic and social development, impacting the educational journey significantly, as supported by various studies (e.g., Blazar and Kraft, 2017). Understanding the concept of “possible teacher selves” is vital, as it relates to teachers' motivations, job satisfaction, and overall effectiveness. Research, such as Hiver's study of Korean English teachers, reveals that these possible selves—ideal, ought-to, and feared—shape teachers' professional development choices. Hiver identifies three main motives driving teacher engagement: addressing self-inadequacies (feared self), enhancing self-identity (ideal self), and meeting normative obligations (ought-to self) (Hiver, 2013).

Demirezen and Özönder (2016) conducted a study on the Professional Teacher Self of Turkish English instructors at Hacettepe University, involving 43 participants who completed a 40-item questionnaire. The findings indicated that 81% of these teachers had a high professional self-rating, with positive views on personal and professional development being the most prominent. The study also revealed that educational background influenced teachers' self-perceptions, with PhD holders scoring the highest, while teaching experience did not significantly affect their views. The researchers highlighted a gap in existing literature regarding the varied components of teacher selves and aimed to address potential issues related

to gaps between ideal teacher selves and actual experiences, which can impact teacher motivation and job satisfaction. Solutions proposed include program adjustments and training to close these gaps, ultimately enhancing teaching quality and learner outcomes.

# THEORY

## Teaching-Learning

The traditional teaching-learning approach is based on behaviourist theory, emphasizing knowledge as independent from individuals and prioritizing the acquisition of behavior over the learning process. In this teacher-centred model, students receive information without critical questioning and are expected to work alone, which limits communication and social interaction (Saban, 2002; Cırık, 2005).

The learning process is secondary to teaching; students are not encouraged to think critically or construct new knowledge, as they adopt a fixed worldview. Classroom dynamics are strictly controlled by the teacher, with rigid rules that are seen as unchangeable. This approach is prevalent in societies that accept the teacher as the sole authority, potentially hindering personal and social development. Success is measured by rote memorization of information rather than understanding or application (Yıldız & Ardıç, 1999). Students are often evaluated based on what is taught rather than what they learn, leading them to memorize information temporarily for exams and forget it afterward. Traditional assessment methods reinforce this by requiring uniformity in students' answers (Deryakulu, 2001).

Constructivism, shaped by influential scientists like Piaget and Vygotsky in the late 20th century, posits that knowledge is actively constructed by individuals rather than passively

received. Its philosophical roots trace back to Giambattista Vico in the 18th century, who argued that learning is a personal construction process. Originally focused on how knowledge is acquired, constructivism has evolved to examine how knowledge is organized in the mind. It contrasts with realism and positivism, which emphasize objective reality independent of human perception, and behaviorism, which focuses solely on stimulus-response behaviors. Central to constructivism is the belief that knowledge is learner-dependent and uniquely structured by everyone, positioning students as active participants in their learning processes (Glaserfeld, 2007; Akyıldız, 2016). The data emphasizes the student's central role in knowledge construction, with the teacher acting as a guide rather than a presenter of information. Teachers facilitate learning by creating an environment that encourages students to explore concepts independently, foster curiosity, and engage actively in activities. The constructivist approach suggests that knowledge is structured in the student's mind, necessitating classroom setups that promote interaction. Techniques such as cooperative learning and problem-solving are highlighted as effective methods to enhance student engagement and active participation in the learning process (Çalik, 2020).

### **Teacher Training**

Significant changes in teacher education systems worldwide have occurred over the years due to innovation and reform studies. Key drivers of these changes include advancements in knowledge, economic growth linked to the information society, technological development, and increased access to information. A shift from teaching to learning, along with evolving educational ideologies, reflects broader economic, political, and social transformations. The educational paradigm in teacher education encompasses beliefs about the purpose of schools and teaching. It serves as a framework to analyze the principles and practices within teacher education,

revealing underlying ideologies and assumptions that influence educational programs (Gamze, 2011).

### **Educational Psychology**

Education aims to create lasting changes in individual behavior, focusing on the human element. A teacher's role extends beyond merely imparting knowledge; understanding students' developmental needs is crucial for guiding effective decision-making. Educational psychology serves as a vital tool in achieving this goal. It addresses key issues like teacher training, curriculum organization, and classroom evaluation. The field examines how learning occurs and provides insights into students' cognitive and social development. By studying educational psychology, educators gain an understanding of students' progress, learning processes, and effective teaching techniques (Özbay, 2009; Terzi, 2013).

The 21st century has significantly transformed education, requiring teachers to adopt new attitudes and skills. Key characteristics of a good teacher include (Topdemir & Unat, 2012):

1. Knowledge of the Field: Essential for effectively sharing information with students.
2. Effective Teaching Skills: Understanding and applying pedagogical principles to connect teaching goals with students' learning.
3. Realistic Expectations: Setting predetermined outputs for students to evaluate their progress and provide constructive feedback.
4. Effective Communication Skills: Utilizing verbal and non-verbal skills to foster a positive classroom atmosphere and motivate students.
5. Being a Good Role Model: Demonstrating knowledge and social skills that serve as an example for students.

6. Knowledge of Psychology: Understanding students' developmental characteristics and individual differences to focus on their strengths for success.

### **Professional Development**

Continuing professional development significantly impacts language teachers by enhancing their professional identity and rekindling their teaching motivations. It should be viewed as a self-initiated, ongoing process throughout a teacher's career, rather than just a pre-service requirement. This process, which can be emotionally charged, helps address perceived inadequacies and fosters professional growth. Key aspects of pedagogical development include language proficiency, research, mentoring, reflection, and collaborative problem-solving. Overall, these developments are interconnected with teachers' self-sufficiency and emotional experiences (Kubanyiova, 2006; Kalkan, 2020).

Self-sufficiency in teachers significantly influences their decisions regarding participation in professional development activities. According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy, or a person's belief in their capacity to achieve goals, directly affects the choices teachers make and the effort they invest. Teacher self-efficacy reflects their confidence in impacting student learning outcomes and serves as a vital source of motivation and commitment in teaching. Research shows a strong link between self-efficacy and various positive educational outcomes. While some argue that negative self-efficacy beliefs hinder teacher development, others challenge this view by emphasizing the importance of self-efficacy beliefs in teachers' professional growth (Kalkan, 2020).

Emotions significantly impact the teaching profession and are integral to forming a teacher's professional identity (Arslan, 2018; Kalaycı, 2019). They serve as catalysts for ongoing teacher development (Zembylas, 2004). The developmental processes related to self-concept and professional identity



involve emotions, which are linked to perceptions of the self and discrepancies between present and future states (Papi et al., 2019; Erikson, 2017).

### **Teacher Selves and Teacher Identity**

The concept of teacher identity has gained attention from researchers in psychology and education, who view identity as multifaceted and influenced by both internal self-identification and external societal assignments. Identity is formed through personal claims and external perceptions, which can sometimes conflict, leading to identity negotiation. Factors such as social roles, statuses, and community contexts contribute to diverse and sometimes contradictory identity aspects. Individuals may hold multiple identities that can coexist or conflict, such as being a language teacher and a parent. While identities evolve over time, some characteristics, like gender, tend to remain stable, showcasing varying degrees of durability based on personal resilience and environmental factors (Reeves, 2018; Rapoport, 2020).

The development of identity occurs through discourse and practice, involving language, social interaction, and individual behavior within communities. Teacher identity research incorporates both perspectives, emphasizing their interconnection. Teachers constantly negotiate their identities through interactions with students, institutions, and media. Farrell (2011) identified sixteen roles for teachers, categorized into three identity positions, with experienced teachers more adept at adopting roles that align with their preferences. In contrast, Trent's (2010) study showed that pre-service teachers held rigid views about their identities, often experiencing identity crises and fluctuating perceptions due to their limited experience. Tsui (2007) highlighted how identity conflict during the appointment of new teachers can impact their development and retention. Such conflicts may foster new practices and relationships or lead to feelings of marginality

and exclusion. The formation of a solid teacher identity is crucial for the successful integration of new teachers, and embracing flexibility and diversity in this process is beneficial. Teacher identity is influenced by social and institutional power dynamics, with research indicating that native English speakers tend to excel more in teaching roles compared to their non-native counterparts.

### **The Interaction of Teacher Egos in Professional Development Preferences**

The data discusses the role of “possible selves” in teacher professional development, highlighting how teachers’ self-perceptions influence their preferences and experiences. Drawing on the work of Markus and Nurius (1986), it defines possible selves as individuals’ ideas about what they can become, wish to be, or fear becoming. Three types of possible selves—ideal, needed, and feared—are emphasized for their motivational impact. The ideal self represents a positive vision of one’s future, while the needed self relates to perceived obligations and responsibilities. In contrast, the feared self symbolizes undesirable future traits that individuals strive to avoid. Overall, these concepts bridge cognition and motivation, affecting future behaviors and experiences (Carver, 2005).

The motivational functions of future self-guides—ideal self, feared self, and necessity—drive behavior by influencing the desire to minimize discrepancies between the real self and ideal self. This self-regulation is linked to emotional states and self-concept, as feelings about oneself are influenced by conflicts and inconsistencies. Possible selves encompass agency and are informed by past and present experiences. Initially rooted in self and motivation theory, the possible self-model has expanded into second language motivation and is increasingly relevant in language teacher motivation (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006; Kubanyiova, 2009).

## **The Self-discrepancy Theory**

The data discusses the evolution of the concept of possible selves, initially introduced by Markus and Nurius in 1986, through the lens of Higgins' self-discrepancy theory from 1987. Higgins argued that understanding self-knowledge requires considering future elements of the self, as individuals experience different emotional problems not solely tied to their actual selves. He proposed a model that delineates the self into three areas: the actual self (true self), the ideal self, and the ought to self (the self that should be). This model aims to explain how various self-states interact and affect one's emotional experiences (Higgins, 1987).

The data distinguishes between three self-representations: the actual self, ideal self, and ought-to self. The actual self reflects an individual's current traits; the ideal self encompasses aspirations and desired qualities; and the ought-to self represents traits one believes they should possess, often tied to social responsibilities and norms. Scholars note the challenges of separating the ideal and ought-to selves due to societal influences, leading to overlapping yet sometimes conflicting elements (Ryan & Irie, 2014). Higgins' self-discrepancy theory suggests that individuals are motivated by their comparisons of their actual selves to their ideal and ought-to selves, seeking to align them and minimize discrepancies. Higgins and colleagues differentiate between the ideal self, which focuses on promotion and aspirations, and the ought self, which emphasizes prevention and safety. While self-discrepancy theory and possible self-theory both address self-motivation, they utilize different approaches to highlight how future self-representations can motivate behavior towards achieving these selves. Higgins (1987) suggests a rational link between possible selves and motivation, proposing that individuals strive to align their actual selves with their ideal selves. This motivation arises from the desire to reduce discrepancies between one's current state and future goals, with both ideal and ought selves

guiding individuals towards their aspirations. Higgins (1998) identifies the future self-guiding trend as distinct, emphasizing the avoidance of negative outcomes linked to failing to achieve one's ideal self. This trend is motivated by future aspirations and the role of ideal guides, highlighting that the gap between current and ideal selves drives individuals to seek pleasure and sidestep discomfort.

### **Teacher Motivation**

Recent research has increasingly focused on teacher motivation, particularly in the context of language (L2) education. While studies on L2 learner motivation have been extensive, research on language teacher motivation remains limited, highlighting an imbalance between the two areas (Mercer & Kostoulas, 2018). Language teachers and learners are key stakeholders in the language education process, and understanding their motivation can help improve teaching and learning dynamics. The close relationship between learner and teacher motivation suggests that insights from L2 learner motivation research could inform and enhance the understanding of L2 teacher motivation (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Hiver, Kim & Kim, 2018).

Teacher motivation is crucial for education policy makers and researchers for three main reasons. First, it influences teacher behavior, which affects student motivation and success; enthusiastic teachers can inspire students, while those lacking motivation may demotivate them. Second, teacher motivation impacts job satisfaction and psychological well-being, influencing teacher retention. Third, motivated teachers are more likely to engage in progressive education practices. However, many teachers face motivational challenges, particularly in economically or politically strained societies, where resources are limited and teacher status is undermined (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007).

## The Possible Selves Theory

The concept of possible selves, introduced by Markus and Nurius (1986), reflects an individual's hopes, fears, and aspirations shaped by their sociocultural context. Possible selves include the desired self, the self-one ought to be, and the feared self. Higgins (1987) expanded on this with his self-discrepancy theory, identifying three self-components: the actual self, the ideal self, and the ought self. Discrepancies between these selves motivate individuals to align their actual self with their ideals. Critiques of possible selves' theory highlight its egocentrism and neglect of social influences, although it is acknowledged that possible selves develop within social environments and experiences. While primarily used to study student motivation, fewer studies have explored its impact on teacher motivation, particularly focusing on novice or prospective teachers' ideal and feared selves (Hamman et al., 2010).

Kubanyiova (2012) noted that Slovakian English teachers' ideal teacher selves significantly influence their teaching motivation, methodology choices, and responsiveness to professional training. Similarly, Hiver (2013) highlighted that intrinsic motivation drives Korean teachers' ideal selves and their commitment to developing English skills. Both studies emphasize the dynamic nature of teachers' possible selves, indicating that educators may hold multiple, often conflicting visions of themselves that evolve throughout their careers. Additionally, psychological research has long focused on identity and self-concepts, underscoring emotional and motivational factors within these constructs, particularly following the introduction of the concept of possible selves by Markus and Nurius (1986), which challenged the idea of a stable, one-dimensional self-concept.

Markus and Nurius (1986) defined possible selves as individuals' perceptions of who they could, wanted, and feared to become, categorizing them into ideal, expected, and feared

self-forms. These self-representations serve as a framework for interpreting current behaviors and guiding future actions. Possible selves incorporate mental images that drive behavior and performance, differentiating them from mere goals. They encompass both long-term self-views and concrete images, reflecting emotional and empirical aspects of identity. Ultimately, possible selves influence individual behavior by motivating the pursuit of desired self-states while avoiding those feared.

### **The L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS)**

Most studies on L2 motivation are based on Gardner's (1985) integrative motive framework, part of a socio-educational model that highlights how socio-cultural contexts influence students' behaviors towards a target language and society. This "integrativeness" emphasizes positive engagement with the target culture. However, Dörnyei (2009) challenged this concept, suggesting it fails to account for students seeking integration with a universal society rather than a specific one. This shift led to a focus on situational educational views. Additionally, the L2MSS model introduced by Dörnyei (2005) incorporates principles from self-related psychology, emphasizing possible selves as motivational guides and marking a significant influence in second language acquisition studies.

The L2MSS model highlights how L2 learners' self-systems, encompassing future-oriented visions, can drive motivation in language learning. Dörnyei (2009) notes that motivational potential from possible selves emerges under specific conditions, such as having a vivid future self-image, perceived plausibility, and alignment between the ideal and expected selves. The effectiveness of possible selves also relies on their detail and realism, enabling them to provide proper self-guidance. Action plans play a crucial role in transforming future selves into motivating factors, while the presence of a feared self can further enhance this motivational potential



(Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System model redefined innovative motivation, emphasizing the active possible self-system as its core component. Possible self-conception encompasses an individual's aspirations and aversions regarding who they might become, predicting their future selves based on emotions, images, and goals. Markus and Ruvolo (1989) noted that possible selves guide individuals closely to their current thoughts and feelings during motivated actions. Dörnyei further posited that engaging possible selves enhances motivation by adding clarity to desires and fears. Higgins (1987) introduced the educational perspective of possible selves as "academic self-guides," consisting of an "ideal self" that represents personal aspirations and an "ought-to self" that reflects expected behaviors, which may differ from personal wishes. The ideal self and ought-to self-differ in their motivational influences regarding future estimations. The ideal self focuses on improvement and ambitions, while the ought-to self emphasizes responsibilities and engagement (Higgins, 1998). Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System has spurred research in EFL, with Taguchi et al. (2009) examining Japanese, Iranian, and Chinese contexts. They found cultural differences in the importance of "attitudes towards L2 culture" and "instrumentality-promotion" for the Ideal L2 Self. Notably, Japanese students place a higher value on cultural attitudes compared to instrumentality, while Chinese students regard cultural attitudes as less significant than their Iranian and Japanese counterparts in motivating English learning efforts.

Shahbaz and Liu (2012) found that Pakistani students are motivated to learn English for various reasons, including the influence of Pakistan's colonial history and the global significance of English. Their motivations are shaped by factors like Ideal L2 Self, worldwide orientation, language learning experience, and instrumentality. Takahashi (2013) explored the ideal L2 selves of Japanese learners, revealing

that these selves evolved based on various goals, indicating the importance of nurturing these identities to enhance motivation. Dörnyei (2010) introduced the L2 Motivational Self system, comprised of Ideal L2 Self, Ought-to L2 Self, and L2 Learning Experience.

**Ideal L2 Self;** The ideal L2 self-concept, as defined by Dörnyei (2009), reflects the qualities and aspirations individuals wish to attain in a second language (L2) context, influenced by idealized figures proficient in the language. This ideal self can enhance motivation by striving to bridge the gap between one's real and ideal selves. The ideal self encompasses both integrative and internalized instrumental motives and is crucial in shaping learners' academic engagements. Dörnyei suggests that the L2 motivational self-system is closely linked to the ideal L2 self, highlighting the importance of integrating these concepts to foster effective language learning motivation.

**Learning Experience;** The third component of the L2 motivational self-system is the L2 learning experience, which relates to situational motives influenced by the immediate learning environment, such as the teacher, curriculum, and peer group. This aspect reflects students' attitudes toward their learning experience and highlights the importance of successful past behaviors. Dörnyei (2010) links this component to Ushioda's (2001) concept of "everyday motivation," suggesting that these experiences significantly shape students' motivation. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) assert that positive learning experiences enhance motivated behavior.

**Ought-to L2 Self;** The "Ought-to L2 Self" refers to the attributes one believes they should possess to meet external expectations and avoid negative outcomes, as defined by Dörnyei (2010). It focuses on skills developed to mitigate potential future negative situations rather than personal desires. L2 motivation is characterized by the individual's desire to learn a target language to prevent negative consequences from language ignorance, influenced by societal expectations from

parents, friends, or employers. It is primarily seen as extrinsic and controllable motivation, lacking alignment with personal wishes (Dörnyei et al., 2006; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). The ideal self represents an individual's aspirations and goals, driving them towards desired outcomes, while the ought-to self is influenced by external expectations, focusing on avoidance of negative consequences. The ideal self-promotes personal advancement, whereas the ought-to self emphasizes safety and fulfilling obligations. Self-evaluation often references either the ideal or ought-to self; alignment with the ideal self brings satisfaction, while discrepancies between the actual self and either self can lead to discomfort (Delamater et al., 2014).

### **Possible Language Teacher Selves**

The framework of possible selves has been increasingly applied in applied linguistics since the late 2000s, following foundational studies by Markus and Nurius (1986) and Higgins (1987), which highlighted the future aspect of self-concept. Dörnyei's L2 motivational self-system (L2MSS) model contributed significantly to the understanding of second language acquisition (SLA) by linking language learner and teacher motivation to self-concept. Kubanyiova (2009) further expanded this by exploring possible language teacher selves, bridging teacher cognition and motivation with self-development theories. This approach underscored the importance of future self-guides in both learner and teacher motivation, establishing a strong correlation between motivation and self-concept through the lens of possible selves and self-discrepancy theories. Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2MSS model has been effectively adapted in language education theories. Kubanyiova's research emphasizes the significance of L2 teacher motivation within their self-system, linking it to teacher cognition, motivation, and development. His work highlights the "possible selves" concept, which integrates a future-oriented dimension into language teacher cognition, encompassing teachers' thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs.

This future focus adds complexity to teacher identity and self-perceptions, indicating a divergence in the construction of various selves across different self-structures.

Kubanyiova's (2009) concept of possible language teacher selves focus on the cognitive representations of L2 teachers regarding their professional identities. The model comprises three components: the ideal language teacher self, the ought to language teacher self, and the feared language teacher self. The ideal self represents the aspirations and visions of what a teacher hopes to become. The ought to self reflects externally imposed responsibilities and expectations, while the feared self embodies the negative outcomes teachers worry about if they do not achieve their ideals. This model suggests that L2 teachers are motivated to bridge the gap between their real and ideal selves. Kubanyiova (2009) emphasizes the concept of the feared self in relation to motivation in language teaching, which is not explicitly defined in Dörnyei's L2MSS and Higgins' self-discrepancy theory. The motivational impact of possible selves is amplified when desired selves are aligned with compensatory feared selves. Additionally, the ideal language teacher self can evolve from the ought to language teacher self. The motivational capacity of these possible selves relies on specific conditions, such as attainability, detail, and balance. While possible language teacher selves show significant motivational potential, realizing this requires structured involvement in the language learning process and an effective learning environment. Teacher motivation, alongside inspiration for a vision, is crucial for transforming classrooms positively (Kubanyiova, 2012, 2014).

### **Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs**

The concept of self-efficacy, introduced by Bandura in 1977 as part of Social Cognitive Theory, is defined as the belief in one's ability to plan and execute behaviors to achieve performance goals. Various researchers have expanded on this

definition: Luszczynska et al. describe it as the confidence in tackling difficult tasks, while Salas and Cannon-Bowers emphasize overcoming job responsibilities. Özerkan links self-efficacy to social learning, asserting the importance of acknowledging one's abilities, and Zimmerman regards it as personal judgments about task accomplishment. Wood and Bandura emphasize the role of actions, cognitive resources, and motivation in building self-efficacy, highlighting that success requires both skills and a strong belief in one's abilities. Self-efficacy is defined by an individual's ability to organize skills and behaviors to meet goals, draw on past experiences to tackle current challenges, and manage emotions when facing difficulties. According to Bandura (1997), belief and perceived competence are crucial for motivation and success in tasks. Self-efficacy is assessed in three ways:

- (1) task-specific self-efficacy, where individuals gauge their competence in fulfilling task-related responsibilities,
- (2) field-specific self-efficacy, which correlates an individual's expertise in their domain with their success,
- (3) general self-efficacy, which applies to various problems and features a more stable structure.

Self-efficacy is crucial, and understanding its origins is important. Bandura (1994) identifies four sources of self-efficacy beliefs:

- (1) Mastery experiences,
- (2) Representational experiences,
- (3) Verbal persuasion,
- (4) Physical and emotional states.

Indirect experiences, a key source of self-efficacy, are derived from observing the actions and successes of others. Individuals enhance their self-efficacy beliefs by comparing their skills to those of others, particularly when they identify with them. Successful behaviors need to be observed to maintain high self-efficacy. Notably, individuals are more likely to adopt

the experiences of those they perceive as similar to themselves, which boosts their confidence in overcoming obstacles. It's important for individuals to admire those with competence and professionalism, as such role models offer effective solutions and facilitate the development of self-efficacy (Pajares, 2003).

Complete and accurate experiences, which are essential for self-efficacy, arise from an individual's life experiences comprising both successes and failures. These experiences provide various pathways to success and motivate individuals through rewarding outcomes. They enhance self-efficacy beliefs, influencing behavior and problem-solving abilities. However, easily gained self-efficacy can lead to uncertainty in complex situations, while beliefs formed in challenging contexts tend to be more enduring. Consequently, individuals develop rational plans to navigate difficult circumstances by considering all possibilities (Bandura, 1994; Aksoy & Diken, 2009).

Verbal persuasion, as described by Korkmaz (2009), refers to the encouragement and advice individuals receive regarding their ability to accomplish tasks, which can enhance their self-efficacy beliefs. Feedback that highlights positive performance can boost self-efficacy; however, if individuals fail despite such feedback, the improvement in self-efficacy may be short-lived (Schunk, 1991). The effectiveness of verbal persuasion depends on the credibility and expertise of the source. Encouragement from teachers is generally more impactful for primary school students than from peers, as feedback should be specific and tailored to support positive behaviors (Brophy, 1983).

The fourth source of self-efficacy is influenced by physical and emotional states, which affect how individuals perceive their capabilities. Physical symptoms, such as rapid heartbeat and sweating, along with emotional stress, can lower self-efficacy, particularly in high-pressure situations like exams. Conversely, positive emotional reactions can enhance self-efficacy. Factors such as stress and anxiety negatively impact

self-efficacy, while mental comfort boosts confidence in one's abilities. To improve self-efficacy, individuals should be self-aware and seek solutions to mitigate negative physical and emotional conditions (Bıkmaz, 2002).

The data emphasizes the significance of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in maximizing their potential and effectiveness in the classroom. According to research, teachers who believe in their ability to teach successfully are more likely to adopt progressive, student-centered methods and manage their classrooms effectively. Higher self-efficacy correlates with improved job satisfaction, better relationships with parents, and a more humane approach to education. Conversely, teachers with lower self-efficacy tend to rely on traditional, teacher-centered methods and may struggle with classroom management and time efficiency. Overall, fostering high self-efficacy in teachers is crucial for enhancing educational outcomes. Çolak, Yorulmaz and Altınkurt (2017) examined teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in four sub-dimensions;

- Academic self-efficacy beliefs refer to a teacher's confidence in organizing individual learning activities. To enhance these beliefs, teachers should stay updated on field developments, engage in continuous learning through in-service training, and create relevant projects. Overall, confidence in knowledge significantly influences teachers' academic self-efficacy.
- Professional self-efficacy beliefs refer to a teacher's confidence in their professional abilities. Effective teachers manage time wisely, organize a conducive teaching environment, maintain high student motivation, and collaborate with colleagues. These beliefs contribute to a positive classroom atmosphere.
- Social self-efficacy beliefs refer to a teacher's ability to form positive relationships and communicate effectively in their surroundings (Çolak, Yorulmaz, & Altınkurt,

2017). Palancı (2004) suggests that these beliefs act as a form of social security, providing a supportive environment for teachers in various aspects of their professional lives.

- Intellectual self-efficacy beliefs refer to a teacher's confidence in their ability to interpret, adopt, synthesize, and evaluate new knowledge using cognitive processes. This includes understanding new educational programs, interpreting developments, synthesizing emerging problems, and evaluating outcomes effectively (Çolak, Yorulmaz & Altinkurt, 2017: 23).



# PRACTICE

## Methodology

The study aims to investigate the language teacher identities of English instructors in Turkey, identifying which identities they resonate with and the implications of these identities on their teaching. Utilizing a mixed-methods research design, which combines quantitative and qualitative data, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the instructors' experiences. This approach leverages the strengths of both methods: quantitative data allows for broader generalizations, while qualitative data offers deeper insights into participants' thoughts and feelings.

Mixed research synthesizes qualitative and quantitative approaches, enhancing research outcomes by providing diverse perspectives and richer data, as stated by Johnson et al. (2007) and Creswell (2014). It improves the validity and reliability of findings, offering a deeper understanding of phenomena through contextual insights (Greene, 2007). This method effectively corroborates different findings and addresses complex research questions that other methods may not clarify (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). Consequently, mixed methods have been selected for the current study.

Creswell (2014) categorizes mixed methods into basic and advanced designs. Basic designs—convergent, explanatory, and exploratory—form the core, while advanced designs include intervention and social justice. The current study employs a

convergent mixed methods design, where qualitative (QUAL) and quantitative (QUAN) data are collected and analyzed separately but are given equal importance. Research questions for both strands are developed beforehand. QUAL data is gathered through interviews, stimulated recall, and reflective journals, while QUAN data uses a specific scale. The analysis of both strands is independent, with integration occurring during interpretation.

Quantitative data is characterized by measurable information that can be quantified and analyzed statistically. It primarily focuses on the quantity of the phenomena observed (Rasinger, 2013). Quantitative methods are defined as systematic observations to generalize human behavior (Allen et al., 2008). In this study, a new scale was developed to quantitatively assess the interplay of language teacher selves and actual teaching experiences, as no existing scale addressed all three aspects simultaneously. The data outlines the procedures for developing a scale for a main study, emphasizing the importance of validity and reliability as highlighted by Türkeç (2012). Following Dörnyei's (2007) steps, the development process included creating an item pool, conducting initial feedback with colleagues, a final piloting phase, statistical item analysis, and post hoc analysis after administering the final questionnaire. These steps aimed to refine the scale and ensure its effectiveness in research. The literature review focused on concepts such as possible selves, L2 motivational self-system, and teacher identity, leading to the formulation of an open-ended questionnaire aligned with the research questions. The questionnaire, which consisted of four main questions and sub-questions, underwent expert review and piloting for clarity and structure. Following the piloting, purposive and snowball sampling methods were utilized to select 21 participants, chosen for their relevant knowledge and willingness to contribute, ensuring data saturation as recommended by Strauss and Corbin. Descriptive information about the participants is presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics of the participants in the open-ended questionnaire

	1-2	4
	3-5	2
Experience	6-10	13
	More than 10	2
	BA	10
	MA	4
Education	MA Student	2
	PhD	1
	PhD Student	4
Department	ELT	17
	ELL	4

The questionnaires underwent content analysis to distill diverse responses into key issues, ensuring reliability by having a second researcher conduct analysis for inter-rater agreement. This approach leads to more consistent outcomes when examining qualitative responses. The resulting items were assessed against criteria by Dörnyei, which emphasized the need for simplicity, clarity, and avoidance of ambiguity or bias. Ultimately, this process led to the creation of 94 items for the scale.

In this process, as Dörnyei (2003) suggests, initial feedback on a scale was obtained from a non-specialist to identify unnecessary jargon. Based on this input, revisions were made, and a form was prepared for expert review to ensure content validity. Four experts provided feedback, assessing the

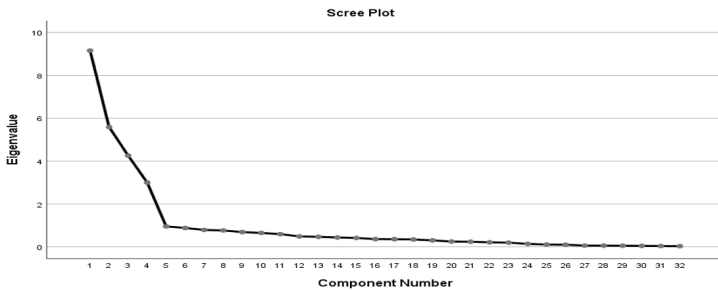
item's clarity, suitability, and potential ambiguity. Necessary adjustments were then implemented. Subsequently, the scale was tested with teachers from various institutions to verify item comprehension and instruction clarity, leading to further improvements and deletions based on participant feedback. The piloting of the measurement scale was conducted with participants under various conditions, and the collected data were analyzed using SPSS 25 and AMOS 16 for validity and reliability. Initial KMO and Bartlett tests assessed the data's suitability for factor analysis, followed by Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analyses. Factor separation was achieved through principal component analysis, and factor loads were checked using Varimax rotation. Items with factor loadings below 0.30 were discarded. In social sciences, a factor loading above 0.30 and at least 40% explained variance are deemed sufficient. Ultimately, the validity of the remaining 38 items was confirmed through Pearson's  $r$  test.

The dependability of the scale was assessed using internal consistency coefficient computation techniques. The internal consistency level was assessed using the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient, split-half reliability coefficient, Spearman-Brown, and Guttman split-half reliability methods.

Validity refers to how well a measurement tool accurately assesses the intended variable without interference from other variables (Balci, 2009). There are several types of validity, including Content, Criterion, Construct, and Face validity. To evaluate the content validity of the "Possible Language Teacher Selves Scale" (PLTSS), input was gathered from three field experts and one measurement expert. Face validity was ensured by creating a clear title, concise instructions, and a clear statement of the measurement tool's purpose. For construct validity, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, along with item-factor and item-test correlations, were conducted, and the findings are detailed in the subsequent sections.

To assess the construct validity of the PLTSS scale, KMO and Bartlett's test analyses were conducted. The KMO value was found to be 0.878, and Bartlett's test yielded  $\chi^2 = 4608.480$  ( $p = 0.000$ ), indicating that factor analysis could be applied as KMO exceeds the acceptable threshold of 0.60. In Exploratory Factor Analysis, Principal Component Analysis was utilized to identify whether scale items could be consolidated into distinct factors. The Varimax Rotation technique clarified the relationships among these factors. Items with factor loadings below 0.30 or ambiguous placements across factors were recommended for removal.

Principal Components Analysis was conducted to assess the scale's suitability for factor analysis using Varimax rotation. Eight items with loadings under 0.30 or overlapping factors were removed, resulting in 30 items categorized into four distinct factors. The scale showed a KMO value of 0.860 and explained 68.216% of total variance, with loadings ranging between 0.498 and 0.939 before rotation and between 0.603 and 0.969 after. The analysis indicates that the first four factors significantly contribute to variance, while subsequent factors do not.



**Figure 1.** Eigenvalues by Factors

The analysis identified four factors based on the items examined: "FEARED" (F1) with 8 items, "OUGHT TO" (F2) with 7 items, "IDEAL" (F3) with 8 items, and "ACTUAL" (F4) with 7 items. Findings concerning item loadings for the

30 items, eigenvalues, and variance explained by the factors are detailed in Table 2.

**Table 2.** PLTSS Common Variances, Item Factor Loadings, Variances Explained by Sub-Scales and Item Analysis Results

Items	F1	F2	F3	F4
FQ15	.963			
FQ2	.955			
FQ25	.953			
FQ14	.952			
FQ11	.951			
FQ60	.947			
FQ24	.943			
FQ52	.935			
OQ36		.873		
OQ44		.850		
OQ51		.842		
OQ59		.808		
OQ64		.802		
OQ32		.793		
OQ49		.770		
IQ50			.808	
IQ33			.781	
IQ42			.757	
IQ18			.749	

IQ23				.728
IQ34				.701
IQ47				.698
IQ9				.674
AQ55				.773
AQ57				.727
AQ38				.691
AQ17				.685
AQ65				.674
AQ16				.672
AQ30				.603
<b>Eigenvalues</b>	<b>7,438</b>	<b>4,492</b>	<b>4,473</b>	<b>3,563</b>
<b>Variance Explained</b>	<b>24,793</b>	<b>16,639</b>	<b>14,908</b>	<b>11,876</b>
<b>Total Variance Explained</b>	<b>68,216</b>			

IQ23				.728
IQ34				.701
IQ47				.698
IQ9				.674
AQ55				.773
AQ57				.727
AQ38				.691
AQ17				.685
AQ65				.674
AQ16				.672
AQ30				.603
<b>Eigenvalues</b>	<b>7,438</b>	<b>4,492</b>	<b>4,473</b>	<b>3,563</b>
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<b>Total Variance Explained</b>	<b>68,216</b>			

The factors identified in the scale include “FEARED (F1)” with 8 items and highest loadings (0.935-0.963), contributing 24.793% to total variance. “OUGHT TO (F2)” has 7 items (0.770-0.873), contributing 16.639%. “IDEAL (F3)” comprises 8 items (0.674-0.808) with a 14.908% contribution, while “ACTUAL (F4)” includes 7 items (0.603-0.773) contributing 11.879%. Overall, the four factors account for 68.216% of the total variance in the measurement tool.

The exploratory factor analysis aimed to confirm the four-factor structure of the PLTSS scale through confirmatory factor

analysis (CFA). The results indicated a  $\chi^2/sd$  ratio of 1.414, which is adequate for model-data fit, as a ratio of 5 or less is acceptable. Additionally, a  $\chi^2/df$  ratio less than 3 suggests good fit. The study's value of 1.491 further supports the scale's four-dimensional structure. The RMR index was determined to be 0.039, falling within the acceptable range of 0 to 1, indicating a well-fitting model. Other goodness of fit indices were also evaluated and summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Goodness of fit indices of the measurement model

Goodness of fit indices	Recommended Value	Obtained Value
$\chi^2 / sd$	$\leq 5,00$	<b>1,414</b>
GFI (Goodness of Fit)	$\geq 0,90$	<b>0,761</b>
AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of fit)	$\geq 0,90$	<b>0,721</b>
NFI (Normed Fit Index)	$\geq 0,90$	<b>0,834</b>
RFI (Relative Fit Index)	$\geq 0,90$	<b>0,819</b>
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	$\geq 0,90$	<b>0,944</b>
IFI (Incremental Fit Index)	$\geq 0,90$	<b>0,945</b>
TLI (Tucker – Lewis Index)	$\leq 0,90$	<b>0,939</b>
RMR (Root Mean Square Residual)	0 - 1	<b>0,039</b>
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)	0.00 – 0.10	<b>0,060</b>

The recommended fit indices should ideally range between 0.80 and 0.90, with values above 0.90 indicating a good fit. The RMSEA was calculated as 0.060, suggesting an acceptable model-data fit since it's less than 0.10, and exhibiting a better fit as it is under 0.05. The measurement tool is composed of four dimensions: FEARED, OUGHT TO, IDEAL, and ACTUAL, based on the evaluation of  $\chi^2/sd$ , RMSEA, and RMR values. Standardized Structural Equation Model parameter values are illustrated in Figure 4.



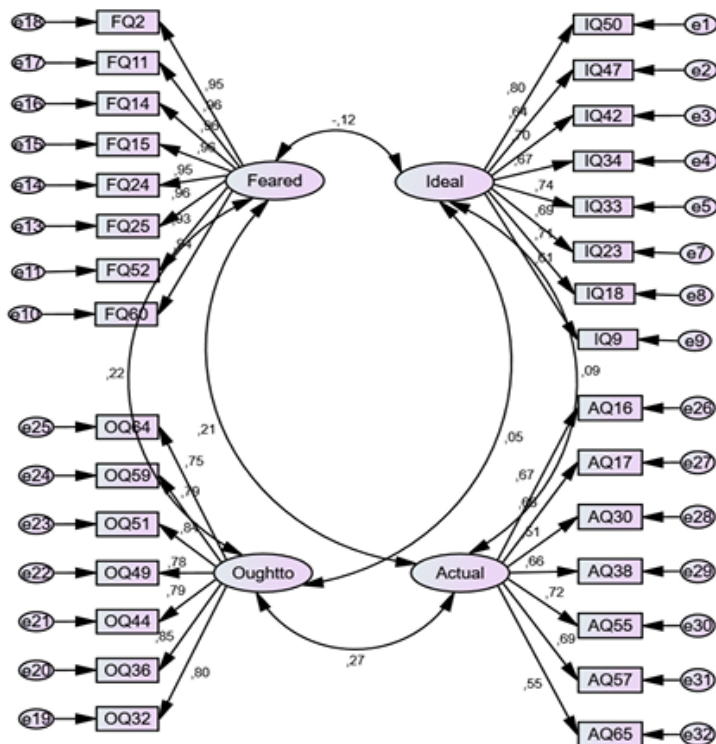


Figure 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis results of the scale

Correlation coefficients were calculated between individual item scores and overall test scores to assess item discrimination and their contribution to the scale's purpose. The findings aimed to clarify how each item and its associated factor function collectively within the scale. The item-factor and item-test correlation values for each item are detailed in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Item-Test Correlation Analysis Results

Items	Item-Subscale Correlation Values	Item- Test Correlation Values
FQ15	,953	,712
FQ2	,947	,730
FQ25	,955	,759
FQ14	,953	,765
FQ11	,954	,785
FQ60	,932	,683
FQ24	,942	,749
FQ52	,930	,757
OQ36	,808	,474
OQ44	,762	,350
OQ51	,796	,507
OQ59	,764	,441
OQ64	,715	,365
OQ32	,760	,542
OQ49	,749	,527
IQ50	,736	,310
IQ33	,696	,326

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IQ42	,661	,307
IQ18	,670	,359
IQ23	,634	,382
IQ34	,601	,329
IQ47	,601	,305
IQ9	,581	,354
AQ55	,658	,358
AQ57	,613	,407
AQ38	,599	,359
AQ17	,583	,345
AQ65	,510	,392
AQ16	,581	,336
AQ30	,464	,343

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Correlation coefficients were calculated between individual item scores and overall test scores to assess item discrimination and their contribution to the scale's purpose. The findings aimed to clarify how each item and its associated factor function collectively within the scale. The item-factor and item-test correlation values for each item are detailed in Table 4.

Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement results when a tool is used repeatedly. The PLTSS Scale, identified through Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis, includes 30 items across four factors: "FEARED", "OUGHT TO", "IDEAL", and "ACTUAL". To assess the internal consistency reliability of these factors, various coefficients such as Cronbach's alpha, split-half, Spearman-Brown, and Guttman split-half were calculated, with the results summarized in Table 5.

**Table 5.** The Results of Reliability Analysis of the overall Scale and its Factors

Factors	The number of Items	Cronbach Alpha	Split Half	Spearman – Brown	Guttman Split Half
F1	8	,987	,977	,988	,907
F2	7	,924	,851	,919	,877
F3	8	,877	,856	,922	,908
F4	7	,825	,724	,840	,795

The reliability analysis presented in Table 5 shows that split half correlation values range from 0.724 to 0.977, with Spearman Brown reliability coefficients between 0.840 and 0.988, Guttman Split-Half values from 0.795 to 0.908, and Cronbach alpha values ranging from 0.825 to 0.987. Reliability coefficients closer to +1.00 indicate a more reliable measurement tool. Generally, a Cronbach alpha of 0.60 and above is acceptable in Social Sciences, while psychological tests expect 0.70 and above. The findings indicate that the scale's internal consistency coefficients are high, confirming the reliability of the measurement tool.

The scale was administered online with obtained permissions and participant consents. Instructions were provided at the start. A total of 147 participants from eight state universities in Turkey, including Akdeniz University and Selçuk University, completed the scale. Demographic details of the participants are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Descriptive statistics of the participants of the scale

N=147		n	%
Gender	Male	34	23.1
	Female	113	76.9
Years of experience	1-5	48	32.7
	6-10	44	29.9
	11-15	33	22.4
	More than 15	22	15.0
	ELT	113	76.9
BA Department	ELL	22	15.0
	Linguistics	2	1.4
	ACL	4	2.7
	Translation	6	4.1
MA	Yes	60	40.8
	No	68	46.3
	In progress	19	12.9
PhD	Yes	36	24.5
	No	99	67.3
	In progress	12	8.2

The analysis of the participant data reveals that there were 34 males and 113 females. Experience levels were distributed as follows: 48 participants had 1-5 years, 44 had 6-10 years, 33 had 11-15 years, and 22 had over 15 years of experience. In terms of educational backgrounds, 113 participants graduated from ELT departments, 22 from ELL, 2 from linguistics, 4 from ACL, and 6 from translation. Additionally, 60 participants held an MA degree, while 36 had a PhD.

Qualitative research aims to understand the perspectives of insiders regarding the phenomena being studied (Guest et al., 2013; Lapan et al., 2011). In this study, interviews, video stimulated recall, and reflective journals were utilized as data collection methods. Questions for these tools were developed from a literature review and were validated by experts in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). After revisions based on expert feedback, a pilot study with

four instructors was conducted to identify potential issues and assess question clarity. The pilot study determined that five weeks for reflective journals and two hours of video recordings per skill taught were effective for data collection in the actual study. Before collecting qualitative data, participants were thoroughly informed and consented via a form. The study explained language teacher identities and ensured researcher availability during data collection. Ultimately, ten participants, deemed sufficient per Dörnyei (2007), were selected after accounting for dropouts. These instructors came from five Turkish universities, comprising eight females and two males. Data were collected via written forms and analyzed using qualitative software. Findings were subsequently shared in an online meeting with participants for verification, allowing for discussion and adjustments based on their feedback.

An open-ended interview was conducted as the initial step in data collection for the qualitative study. Instructors participated according to a timetable created based on their availability and were briefed on the study's topic and relevant terminology beforehand. Following the interviews, the data was transcribed and analyzed using qualitative data analysis software. Interview questions can be found in Appendix 4.

Reflective journaling involves documenting recent experiences and analyzing key aspects that influence learning over time (Lutz and Paretti, 2019). It serves as a valuable resource for researchers to understand participants' experiences (Atak Damar, 2019). In this study, participants completed a reflective journal questionnaire daily for five weeks to capture their daily thoughts and feelings after classes. Stimulated recall is a research method used to explore cognitive processes by having participants reflect on their thinking during an event while viewing related video recordings. This method involves participants videotaping their lessons, then watching the videos to answer prompts about their thoughts and actions. They have the freedom to pause and replay the footage, allowing them to

recall their experiences without pressure, as only they would view the recordings. Participants were encouraged to engage in this recall process daily to enhance data collection.

## Results

### Results and Discussion for Research Question

#### 1. 'What are the Ideal Language Teacher Self components for language teachers in Turkey?'

Two distinct data gathering techniques were employed to produce comprehensive findings for this study question. The scale was the first of these, and the interviews were the second. The following are the scale's findings in relation to this research question.

**Table 7.** The idea of an ideal language teacher for the instructors according to the scale results

Ideal	N	M	S. D.	Min	Max	
provides sufficient samples	147	3,77	0,44	2	4	Always
sets achievable goals for the students	147	3,75	0,44	3	4	Always
evaluates fairly	147	3,91	0,35	1	4	Always
promotes creativity	147	3,82	0,41	2	4	Always
helps students feel secure	147	3,80	0,43	2	4	Always
makes concepts and principles simple and clear	147	3,76	0,49	1	4	Always
creates real life situations	147	3,71	0,52	2	4	Always
provides students with sufficient input	147	3,80	0,40	3	4	Always

The table presents Turkish English instructors' perceptions of an ideal language teacher. Analysis reveals that all characteristics listed are deemed important, with 'evaluates fairly' rated highest (M: 3.91) and 'creates real life situations' lowest (M: 3.71). This indicates a strong belief among instructors that fair evaluation and equal treatment of students are critical traits for effective teaching, supported by previous research. 'Promotes creativity' follows closely with a mean of 3.82, further underscoring the value of creativity in language teaching as highlighted in various studies.

The data discusses the characteristics of an ideal language teacher, highlighting that “helps students feel secure” and “provides students with sufficient input” share the third highest mean rating (M: 3.80), followed closely by “provides sufficient samples” (M: 3.77) and “makes concepts and principles simple and clear” (M: 3.76). The significance of a secure classroom atmosphere for effective learning is emphasized, supported by Külekçi’s (2018) findings. However, it is noted that practical teaching aspects like sufficient input and clarity are not rated as highly as expected, contrasting with previous studies that underlined their importance.

The data discusses the importance of certain teaching practices, emphasizing that setting achievable goals for students (M: 3.75) ranks slightly higher than creating real-life situations (M: 3.71) among instructors. Despite being lower than other items, both remain in the “always” category, highlighting their significance. Additionally, Külekçi’s (2018) study indicated real-life situations as the most valued aspect among 65 items. To further explore the ideal language teacher concept among Turkish instructors, interviews were conducted, posing questions about their perceptions of an ideal language teacher and their aspirations in this role.



**Table 8.** The idea of an ideal language teacher for the instructors according to the interview results

Opinions	Participants	Number
Having the knowledge of field	T1,T2,T7,T8,T10	5
Choosing appropriate materials	T3,T8,T9,T10	4
Giving feedback	T3,T8,T9,T10	4
Being a role model	T4,T5,T10	3
Motivating	T3,T4,T6	3
Following the developments	T1,T7,T9	3
Being able to involve students in the lesson	T8,T10	2
Being able to communicate effectively	T8,T10	2
Encouraging critical thinking	T8,T10	2
Caring the students	T9,T10	2
Developing all skills of the students	T4,T9	2
Having interesting and fun lessons	T2	1
Being planned	T8	1
Speaking English correctly and fluently	T8	1
Not being dependent on the coursebook	T3	1
Having student-centered lessons	T3	1
Being patient	T3	1
Having a high motivation	T3	1

The table outlines sub-themes related to the characteristics of an ideal language teacher, emphasizing “having knowledge of the field,” “choosing appropriate materials,” and “giving feedback.” Participant insights highlight the importance of a teacher’s subject expertise in building student trust and engagement. For instance, T1 stresses the need for a teacher to captivate students through their knowledge, while T2 emphasizes the ability to clarify students’ questions. T7 desires to be seen as an expert, capable of effectively addressing students’ inquiries, and T10 notes the necessity of having adequate subject-matter knowledge.

Teachers believe it is crucial to make a good impression on students, which involves impressing them, answering

questions, being seen as experts, and possessing adequate knowledge. A study by Kubanyiova (2009) highlights that some teachers prioritize this impression over effective student learning. Confident teachers can better manage questions and create a positive perception among students, which enhances motivation and learning outcomes. Additionally, teachers need to select and develop appropriate materials tailored to students' age and skill levels, incorporating visuals and diverse activities to facilitate knowledge transfer effectively.

The data emphasizes the importance of selecting appropriate teaching materials based on students' age and language levels. It advocates using a variety of materials, including visuals and authentic resources, to enhance student motivation and engagement. The data also highlights the significance of providing constructive feedback, as it helps students become aware of their learning progress. Participants express strong support for effective feedback practices, underscoring their role in fostering a positive learning environment. The study highlights the critical role of feedback in student learning, with instructors prioritizing effective feedback to support student development. This feedback not only demonstrates the teacher's expertise in the subject but also fosters a motivational environment. Teachers serve as role models, inspiring students through their proficiency and communication, which enhances student admiration and aspiration to emulate their teachers. Overall, the interconnectedness of feedback, motivation, and role modeling is emphasized as essential for fostering a positive learning atmosphere.

Participants emphasized the importance of teachers as role models and motivators. They believe an ideal teacher should help students become better individuals by encouraging self-improvement and valuing students' ideas. Demonstrating good behavior and effectively using the target language can inspire students to learn and emulate those qualities. Overall, being a role model in both personal conduct and language

usage is seen as essential for fostering student motivation and growth. The instructors believe that an ideal teacher should stay updated with current developments, especially regarding technology and topics of interest to students. This engagement helps to maintain student attention and motivation, as teachers must be aware of their students' world to create suitable learning materials. Additionally, participants emphasized the importance of involving students in lessons through effective communication and activities that promote critical thinking. Overall, continuous self-improvement in teaching methods and language skills is essential for educators.

Engaging students in lessons is crucial for effective language teaching and achieving educational goals. To enhance student involvement, teachers should stay updated on current developments and communicate well with their students, creating a supportive environment. This approach not only boosts participation but also encourages critical thinking through appealing materials. Key themes include caring for students' needs and developing their skills, with participants emphasizing the importance of addressing individual differences, guiding studying techniques, and providing relevant practice across all language skills. The ideal language teacher should be attentive to students' needs, psychology, and individual differences. Emphasizing the development of all language skills is crucial, and performing a comprehensive needs analysis can aid in this process. Key themes include creating engaging lessons, being well-planned, and ensuring correct and fluent English speaking. Participants highlighted the importance of making lessons enjoyable and the desire for teachers to demonstrate good planning and effective communication skills. The ideal language teacher should create engaging and enjoyable lessons, be well-prepared, and communicate fluently and accurately in English. These qualities enhance student participation and demonstrate care for learners. Planning is essential for effective teaching, allowing

teachers to implement various approaches. Fluency and good pronunciation boost teachers' confidence and make them role models for students. Additionally, essential traits for language teachers include moving beyond strict textbook adherence, fostering student-centered environments, and showing patience. The most crucial aspect is teacher motivation, which enables the development of materials, a focus on student needs, and the capacity to engage students effectively. The literature reveals consistent findings regarding the characteristics of ideal language teachers. Studies, such as Javid's (2014) and Al-Khairi's (2015), highlight that effective teachers are knowledgeable, well-organized, responsive to student needs, and capable of adapting their instruction to fit learners' levels. Key traits valued by students include selflessness, determination, motivation, and the ability to create engaging learning environments. Additionally, students appreciate teachers who communicate well, maintain fairness, and exhibit empathy, while also employing diverse teaching methods and being mindful of their appearance. Olaniyan-Shobowale, Sekinat & Mogaji (2021) identified key characteristics of an effective language teacher based on undergraduate students' opinions, including being experienced, creative, caring, and enthusiastic about the target language. Professional traits highlighted include strong vocabulary and grammar knowledge, the ability to alleviate language anxiety, and the use of technology and visual aids. Javid (2014) emphasized the importance of teachers involving students in learning, treating them equitably, and making lessons enjoyable, while Al-Khairi (2015) noted that ideal teacher traits include expertise, clarity, and organization. Additionally, Olaniyan-Shobowale et al. found students least favored teachers who lecture without listening to them or adopt authoritarian approaches. Holt (1964) and Cole & Chan (1986) further emphasized the importance of content knowledge and a welcoming classroom to enhance student learning.

Gillett-Karam (1994) emphasized the importance of blending personality and professional attributes in effective teaching.

Ideal teachers engage students by setting high expectations, providing guidance, and reducing learning obstacles, which fosters lifelong learning. Teaching effectiveness is linked to achieving learning goals like improved academic skills and attitudes, which requires understanding students' learning preferences and adopting suitable teaching styles (Elliott et al., 2000). Research indicates that effective teachers positively influence student learning, while modern shifts toward student-centered and technology-enhanced learning create new opportunities for personalized instruction. As a result, ideal teachers must balance professional and interpersonal skills to meet diverse student needs.

## Results and Discussion for Research Question

### 2. 'What are the Feared Language Teacher Self components for language teachers in Turkey?'

A scale and an interview were employed as data gathering methods in order to address this study issue. The following are the scale's findings in relation to this research question.

**Table 9.** The idea of a feared language teacher for the instructors according to the scale results

Feared	N	Mean	S. Dev.	Min	Max	
uses visual materials	147	1,44	0,82	1	4	Never
is motivated	147	1,41	0,86	1	4	Never
is supportive	147	1,45	0,89	1	4	Never
is motivating	147	1,47	0,89	1	4	Never
provides positive reinforcement	147	1,44	0,83	1	4	Never
listens to the students carefully	147	1,42	0,82	1	4	Never
teaches essential/ key vocabulary	147	1,44	0,83	1	4	Never
builds background knowledge	147	1,46	0,81	1	4	Never

The table presented outlines the perceptions of English instructors in Turkey regarding feared language teacher selves. Analysis indicates that all items related to this theme are recognized by participants, with "is motivated" having the lowest mean score (M: 1.41), signifying that low motivation is their

greatest concern. A motivated teacher is more likely to exhibit ideal teaching characteristics, while lack of motivation leads to feared traits. This emphasizes the significance of motivation, as highlighted by Karimi and Norouzi (2019) and supported by Erdem Coşgun's (2021) study. The interdependence of teacher and student motivation is also noted, underscoring its importance in avoiding feared language teacher characteristics. The importance of listening to students is emphasized, with a mean rating of 1.42, as it is crucial for building good teacher-student relationships and supporting students effectively (M: 1.45). Research indicates that these relationships significantly affect student motivation. Instructors express concern about not using visual materials (M: 1.44), which enhance learning and engagement, particularly in teaching vocabulary (M: 1.44). Using visuals helps build background knowledge (M: 1.46) and is essential for effective teaching, leading instructors to prioritize this method to maintain their professional reputation. Instructors in the study highlighted the importance of using visuals and positive reinforcement in teaching, with a mean value of 1.44. They expressed concerns about their ability to provide positive reinforcement, which can improve learning behavior (Uddin et al., 2017). To gather more detailed insights into their fears as language teachers, interviews were conducted. Participants were asked about their perceptions of a "feared language teacher" and the qualities they wished to avoid in their teaching styles. Results from these interviews were subsequently analyzed.

**Table 10.** The idea of a feared language teacher for the instructors according to the interview results

Opinions	Participants	Number
Rude, boring and discouraging	T1,T8,T10	3
Not innovative and out of date	T7,T10	2
Having teacher-centered lessons	T3,T10	2
Unable to provide a safe and friendly environment	T9,T10	2
Having an insufficient field knowledge	T2,T5	2
Having a low motivation	T3,T8	2
Sticking just to the coursebook	T3,T8	2
Not being able to speak correct and fluent English	T5,T8	2
Not getting prepared for the lessons	T6,T8	2
Looking very strict	T1	1
Reflecting personal problems to the students	T3	1
Inability to communicate effectively	T2	1
Ignoring students and their learning	T6	1
Not respecting the self and the students	T10	1
Not being respected	T7	1
Not encouraging students to speak English	T4	1
Unfair when grading	T3	1
Not being punctual	T3	1

The data discusses sub-themes related to the feared self-perception of language teachers, highlighting that many participants express concerns about being “rude, boring, and discouraging.” Instructors emphasize their desire to avoid these negative traits, indicating a genuine concern for their students’ feelings and learning experiences. This aligns with findings from Coşgun’s (2021) study, where participants also identified not caring for students and being unengaging as aspects of their feared teaching selves. Overall, instructors strive to create a positive learning environment and actively care for their students. The data discusses concerns regarding language teachers, specifically focusing on sub-themes such as being “not innovative and out of date,” “teacher-centered

lessons,” “unable to provide a safe and friendly environment,” and “insufficient field knowledge.” Participants express that teacher perceived as outdated and unprepared fail to engage students effectively. Key quotes highlight issues like excessive teacher talk time, lack of relevant skills, and a failure to create a supportive classroom atmosphere. These shortcomings can demotivate both students and instructors, negatively impacting the learning process. Overall, the need for teachers to stay current and foster a positive classroom environment is emphasized.

The data discusses characteristics of a feared language teacher self-identified by participants, including “low motivation,” “reliance on the coursebook,” “inability to speak correct and fluent English,” and “lack of lesson preparation.” Participants expressed concerns about being unmotivated, dependent on course materials, lacking English fluency, and entering classes unprepared. These issues highlight the negative impact of a demotivated teacher on student learning and the importance of instructors speaking English fluently and preparing lessons effectively. These themes align with findings from previous studies on language teaching. Participants expressed concerns about teacher behaviors that negatively impact student motivation and classroom dynamics. Key issues highlighted include strictness, personal problems affecting teaching, ineffective communication, and a lack of respect for both students and one. For instance, some participants noted that a rigid approach discourages student learning, while others emphasized the importance of fairness in grading and punctuality. Overall, respect and encouragement in the classroom are crucial for fostering a positive learning environment, as emphasized by the necessity for teachers to support student engagement and motivation. Previous studies show consistent fears among pre-service teachers regarding their future roles. Sallı and Osam (2017) found that these teachers fear becoming dominant or monotonous in their



teaching and worry about their English proficiency. Ölmez Çağlar (2019) echoed similar concerns, identifying unfavorable teacher traits, lack of content knowledge, and weak student-teacher relationships as key issues. The present study aligns with these findings, particularly regarding fears of insufficient English proficiency and professional development. However, it diverges from previous studies in certain areas, such as not highlighting fears of strict classroom discipline or lecture-heavy teaching. Other unique concerns noted include fears of not being liked by students and being ineffective in their roles.

### **Results and Discussion for Research Question 3. 'What are the Ought to Language Teacher Self components for language teachers in Turkey?'**

To obtain comprehensive findings for this research issue, a scale and an interview were employed as data gathering techniques. The following are the scale's findings in relation to this research question.

**Table 11.** The idea of an ought to language teacher for the instructors according to the scale results

Ought to	N	Mean	S. Dev.	Min	Max	
increases students' self confidence	147	3,37	0,80	1	4	Frequently
makes lessons interactive	147	3,39	0,80	1	4	Frequently
increases student talk time	147	3,18	0,83	1	4	Frequently
encourages spontaneous speech	147	3,00	0,94	1	4	Frequently
creates effective learning opportunities	147	3,40	0,76	1	4	Frequently
integrates different skills	147	3,38	0,81	1	4	Frequently
makes lessons enjoyable	147	3,37	0,86	1	4	Frequently

The analysis of language teachers in Turkey regarding their "ought to" selves reveals that instructors believe they should possess certain qualities at a moderate level. The most valued attribute is "creates effective learning opportunities" (M: 3.40), highlighting the need for continuous professional development and effective lesson preparation. Instructors also emphasize the importance of making lessons interactive (M: 3.39) and integrating different skills (M: 3.38), reflecting their awareness

of the need for up-to-date knowledge. Other significant qualities include increasing student self-confidence and making lessons enjoyable (both M: 3.37), crucial for student motivation and engagement. Additionally, increasing student talk time (M: 3.18) and encouraging spontaneous speech (M: 3.00) are recognized as important, aligning with teachers' fears about inadequate student participation. An interview further explored teachers' perceptions influenced by external expectations.

**Table 12.** The idea of an ought to language teacher for the instructors according to the interview results

Opinions	Participants	Number
Adhering to the curriculum	T1,T3,T4,T9	4
Being a stricter teacher	T1,T3,T6	3
Communicating effectively	T7,T8	2
Giving more homework	T1	1
Fulfilling the responsibilities given by the management	T7	1
I have to do my best	T2	1
Involving the students into the lesson	T3	1
More flexible and kind	T10	1
Having a routine in the classroom	T10	1
Being more fun	T10	1
Having more realistic expectations	T10	1
Motivating	T8	1
Translating every word	T8	1
Integrating all skills	T9	1
Having a good level of field knowledge	T9	1

The data discusses participants' views on ideal teacher qualities, focusing on the importance of adhering to the curriculum, being stricter, and effective communication. Many participants noted that adherence to the syllabus is emphasized by school administration, which can hinder teaching effectiveness as the curriculum may not engage students. Teachers express a need to be strict in managing issues such

as absenteeism and mobile phone use, reflecting pressure from both administration and parents. Participants working in university preparatory classes feel particularly compelled to follow strict syllabi, limiting their ability to foster creativity and real-life applications in teaching. This tension between obligations and ideal teaching practices leads instructors to feel distanced from their ideal self as educators.

In Coşgun (2021)'s study, participants highlighted the benefits of using extra materials to enhance syllabi but noted that time constraints often prevented instructors from doing so, causing frustration. Key themes emerged, including the pressure to assign more homework, meet administrative responsibilities, and strive for excellence in teaching. Instructors expressed the need to be more flexible, polite, and enjoyable in the classroom, while also aiming for realistic expectations and maintaining routines. Overall, the study revealed the challenges instructors face in balancing their responsibilities with the desire to create an effective learning environment. The data discusses the concept of "feared language teacher selves" among language instructors, highlighting the desire to create enjoyable lessons. It references Özsoy's (2020) study, indicating that not achieving enjoyable classes conflicts with the instructors' ideals. A participant emphasizes the importance of motivation, noting that students expect teachers to motivate them and translate every word, despite instructors preferring to avoid constant translation. The study identifies motivation as a critical element across all teacher selves examined. Additionally, the themes of "integrating all skills" and "possessing good field knowledge" are highlighted, with one participant expressing the pressure to be creative and knowledgeable in vocabulary and pronunciation. The integration of skills and knowledge is crucial for instructors, aligning their ideal and feared teacher selves with their actual roles. Previous studies support this, indicating that pre-service teachers emphasize flexibility and the importance of relationships with students and staff. Common

findings across studies include the need for expertise and responsibility in school management. Differences arise when comparing pre-service with in-service teachers; experienced teachers may have altered perceptions of their roles. This evolution is supported by research showing that teachers are concerned with shift with experience, potentially influenced by cultural factors observed in varied contexts.

### **Results and Discussion for Research Question 4. 'How do the language teachers perceive their Actual Language Teacher Selves?'**

Two distinct data collection techniques—a scale and interviews—were employed in order to arrive at comprehensive conclusions for this research subject. The following are the scale's findings in relation to this research question.

**Table 13.** How do the instructors see themselves while actually teaching according to the scale results

Actual	N	Mean	sd	Min	Max	
takes psychological factors into consideration	147	3,22	0,74	1	4	Frequently
promotes critical thinking	147	3,08	0,75	1	4	Frequently
avoids expecting students always to produce correct sentences	147	3,22	0,74	1	4	Frequently
has engaging lessons	147	3,26	0,61	2	4	Frequently
teaches chunks	147	3,07	0,75	1	4	Frequently
teaches idioms	147	2,61	0,83	1	4	Frequently
mainly uses L2 in class	147	3,13	0,72	1	4	Frequently

Analysis of the teaching experiences of instructors in Turkey reveals that all components are rated as 'frequently,' with the highest mean (M: 3.26) for "has engaging lessons" and the lowest (M: 2.61) for "teaches idioms." Engaging lessons correlate with the instructors' ideal and ought to language teacher selves, indicating they align closely with their teaching ideals. The instructors show a strong emphasis on psychological factors (M: 3.22) and the importance of building rapport with students. They also value fostering an environment where students are not expected to always produce perfect language, promoting

greater participation. Other significant components include using the target language (M: 3.13) and promoting critical thinking (M: 3.08). Conversely, teaching chunks (M: 3.07) and idioms (M: 2.61) are less emphasized and do not impact their language teacher selves. Interviews supported these findings, particularly regarding instructors' self-perceptions in teaching.

**Table 14.** How do the instructors see themselves while actually teaching according to the interview results

Opinions	Participants	Number
I motivate the students	T1,T2,T4,T6,T8	5
I have interactive lessons	T1,T8,T9	3
I can communicate effectively in lessons	T6,T8	2
I can manage the time	T3,T8	2
I depend on the syllabus and the textbook	T3,T9	2
I have fun and interesting lessons	T1	1
I use different activities in lessons	T2	1
I focus on the speaking skill	T5	1
I care about the students and their learning	T6	1
I am planned	T8	1
I can involve the students into the lesson	T8	1
I am an idealist teacher	T10	1
I do not give sufficient feedback	T3	1
I am not prepared for the lessons	T3	1
I have shortcomings and do not fix them	T3	1
I do not give much homework	T5	1

The data discusses participants' self-perceptions as language instructors, highlighting positive views, particularly on their ability to motivate students. The sub-theme "I motivate the students" is emphasized, with several instructors sharing their commitment to encouraging student engagement and conveying the benefits of learning English. Motivation is identified as crucial for effective teaching and for transitioning from their feared selves to their ideal selves as educators. Other notable sub-themes include "I have interactive lessons," "I can communicate effectively in lessons," and "I can manage the

time,” reflecting participants’ approaches to making lessons interesting and providing a supportive learning environment. Participants highlighted the positive traits desired in language teaching, emphasizing the importance of enjoyable lessons, meeting student needs, and careful planning. For instance, instructors mentioned the necessity of engaging students and focusing on speaking skills while creating a supportive learning environment. Several emphasized their organization, creativity, and dedication to fostering motivation among students. Conversely, some voiced concerns about relying heavily on syllabi and textbooks, indicating limitations in flexibility and resource development due to curriculum constraints. Sticking strictly to the syllabus and textbooks can hinder the learning process due to monotony, primarily driven by instructors’ obligations to administrations and students concerned about exams. Participants expressed issues such as not giving much homework, insufficient feedback, lack of lesson preparation, and unaddressed shortcomings. Specific comments highlighted a reluctance to assign homework and quizzes, which are essential for learning assessment. Overall, these practices detrimentally impact instructors’ ability to align their teaching with ideal teaching standards, potentially lowering their motivation and creating a negative cycle in their professional development. Instructors’ teaching experiences reveal both positive and negative aspects that influence their development towards their ideal or feared language teacher selves. Key characteristics that enhance their ideal selves include effective communication, engaging lessons through humor, and genuine care for students’ learning. These traits align with findings from various studies highlighting the importance of interaction and student involvement in lessons. Professional features such as motivation and interactive teaching methods also emerge as essential traits of an ideal language teacher, supported by relevant literature.

### **Results and Discussion for Research Question 5. 'How close the teachers perceive themselves to their Ideal Language Teacher Selves?'**

Two distinct data gathering techniques were employed in order to arrive at comprehensive findings for this study subject. Reflective diaries were the first of these, and video-stimulated recalls were the second. The following are the findings from the reflective journals. The data discusses instructors' perceptions of their proximity to their ideal teacher selves, categorized into three sub-themes: "far," "not far not close," and "close." The majority of instructors felt they were "close," attributing this perception to factors such as conducting lessons in English, creating enjoyable and interactive classes, and effectively motivating students. Several participants provided specific examples of their experiences, highlighting the positive impact of language use and engagement strategies in their teaching practices. The data discusses instructors' reflections on their alignment with their ideal language teacher selves. Key factors supporting effective learning include using English during lessons, engaging students, and incorporating diverse activities. Participants expressed that they felt closer to their ideal selves when they were motivated, punctual, and capable of relating new material to prior knowledge. For instance, one instructor noted success due to a smaller class size, which facilitated interactive teaching. Conversely, several instructors identified barriers to achieving their ideal, citing lack of direction, reliance on textbooks, and challenges in balancing teacher and student interactions as common issues. An instructor's lack of preparation negatively impacts lesson efficiency, particularly if students are not engaged. Both issues highlight deficiencies in the instructor's ideal language teacher self. Additionally, the pressure to complete the syllabus can overlook student learning needs. Instructors also cited low motivation, insufficient effort, lack of technological knowledge, neglecting student care, failure

to find authentic materials, inadequate skill practice, ineffective teaching methods, and fatigue as reasons for straying from their ideal selves. Personal reflections from instructors reveal feelings of demotivation, tiredness, and an inability to adapt lessons to maintain student interest. The data discusses instructors' self-assessments regarding their teaching effectiveness and challenges. Many instructors expressed frustration due to pre-selected course materials imposed by management, which limits their ability to plan and implement courses effectively. Participants noted that technological issues, such as problems with PCs and projectors, also hindered their performance and contributed to feelings of not aligning with their ideal teaching selves. Comments from participants indicate varied reasons for their self-criticism, including student attendance, pacing of lessons, and language use during classes. Overall, these factors significantly affect instructors' perceptions of their teaching capabilities and their desired teaching identities.



## CONCLUSIONS

The study aimed to explore the components of language teacher selves among instructors at foreign language schools in Turkey. It sought to understand instructors' perceptions of their closeness to their ideal and ought to selves, and their strategies for approaching these ideals while distancing themselves from their feared selves. Utilizing a convergent parallel mixed-method design, the research involved developing a scale for language teacher selves, alongside interviews, reflective journals, and video recalls. Data were gathered from eight state universities for quantitative analysis and five for qualitative insights. Results indicated common aspirations among instructors, including the desire to choose and develop lesson materials, be innovative, adopt a student-centered approach, and enhance their alignment with their ideal teacher selves. Instructors at foreign language schools wish to choose and develop their own teaching materials due to the constraints imposed by centralized material offices. These offices create a uniform syllabus intended to maintain consistency for students preparing for a common exam. However, instructors feel this limits their flexibility, hindering their ability to support slower learners and incorporate engaging activities. They often struggle with time pressures to adhere to the syllabus, which can impede student understanding. Furthermore, they find the provided materials inadequate but lack the authority to modify them. Consequently, this situation prevents instructors from

innovating or adopting a student-centered approach, moving them away from their ideal teaching practices.

The study highlights key features essential for effective language instruction, including lesson preparation, field knowledge, and motivation. Instructors reported that inadequate preparation hinders their performance and confidence, making them feel disconnected from their ideal teaching selves. Heavy workloads limit their ability to prepare adequately for each lesson, impacting their professional and personal balance. Additionally, a deep understanding of the subject matter is crucial; instructors feel pressured to have extensive knowledge and often experience humiliation when unable to answer challenging questions from students. This knowledge empowers self-confidence among instructors when they are well-prepared. Motivation is crucial for both language instructors and their students; motivated teachers enhance their teaching effectiveness and positively impact student motivation. Preparedness in lesson plans boosts instructors' confidence, leading to increased motivation and better classroom management. Instructors' feelings about their teaching identities—ideal, ought to, and feared selves—significantly affect their emotions. Proximity to their ideal and ought to selves fosters positive feelings like satisfaction and confidence, while distance from their feared selves leads to negativity such as stress and dissatisfaction. Positive feedback from administration and students further enhances instructors' motivation.

Instructors experience negative feelings when they approach their feared language teacher selves, which indicates a distance from their ought to language teacher selves. This stress stems from concerns about reactions from administration, colleagues, and students. Negative feelings create a cycle that makes it difficult for instructors to improve their teaching. While instructors' ideal and ought to selves generally align, they often feel dissatisfaction related to rigid syllabi and materials

dictated by their institutions. This pressure restricts their ability to engage with students personally, cover essential topics, and implement varied teaching activities. These challenges drive instructors closer to their feared selves rather than their ideal selves. The data discusses the challenges language instructors face in aligning their teaching methods with their ideals and the prescribed syllabus. Instructors struggle between adhering strictly to syllabus requirements, which aligns them with their “ought to” teacher selves, and incorporating engaging activities that reflect their “ideal” teaching persona. While they aim to create student-centered, enjoyable lessons, this often results in falling behind the syllabus, leading to dissatisfaction among students and potential administrative warnings. Instructors may feel pressured to prioritize grammar-focused teaching, which contrasts with their beliefs about effective language education. To reconcile these conflicting selves, the data suggests various recommendations for instructors.

The study outlines key suggestions for instructors aiming to bridge the gap between their ideal and feared language teacher selves. Key recommendations include being well-prepared for lessons, incorporating communicative activities, using visual materials, involving students, and giving constructive feedback. Instructors are advised to follow lesson plans, maintain organization, and adopt a student-centered approach. To distance themselves from their feared selves, instructors should start lessons energetically, engage in communication with colleagues, and continue to prepare effectively. Overall, preparation is emphasized as the most vital step for enhancing teaching experiences and fostering motivation and job satisfaction. Additionally, sharing concerns with colleagues and administration is encouraged to collaboratively address discrepancies in teaching identities.

The study recommends that institutions assist instructors in becoming their ideal language teacher selves and moving away from their feared selves. Key suggestions include providing

diverse materials, technological support, flexible syllabi, and reducing teaching hours. Institutions should also revise their syllabi and promote instructor development. Additionally, to help instructors distance themselves from negative self-perceptions, it is advised to enhance material support, motivate students, and foster a positive institutional atmosphere. Active material offices and in-service training are essential for bridging the gap between instructors' aspirations and realities. Engaging students through games and competitions could further enhance motivation and participation in English learning. Preparing for lessons is crucial for language instructors, but the overwhelming number of lessons causes challenges. Reducing lesson loads could allow instructors more time for preparation. Flexibility in syllabi is recommended to accommodate student needs and pacing. Institutions should actively listen to instructors' concerns through regular meetings or anonymous feedback to address their challenges. Involving instructors in decision-making about materials and syllabi can help them align their aspirations with their actual roles, fostering a more supportive environment. Additionally, recognition from administration is essential to appreciate their efforts.

The study explored language teacher selves among state university instructors, examining their alignment with ideal selves and identifying improvement strategies. It suggests that similar research should be conducted with instructors from private universities, the ministry of education, and distance education to broaden understanding. Additionally, engaging with institutions and administrators for suggestions on supporting instructors in achieving their ideal selves while distancing themselves from feared selves is recommended. Longitudinal studies could further investigate the development and changes in language teacher selves over time based on the study's findings. Instructors expressed a conflict between their "ideal" and "ought to" language teacher selves when deciding whether to use the target language (L2) in the classroom. While

some felt that not using L2 distanced them from their ideal, they also believed that using it enhanced student interaction, complicating their decision. One instructor faced pressure from these “ought to” components, resulting in a disconnect from their ideal self. Ultimately, the study aims to help instructors reconcile these differing aspects of their teaching identity. Additionally, data from reflective journals was complemented by a video-stimulated recall study for further insight. The data presents participants’ self-assessments of their alignment with their ideal language teacher selves. Key points include:

- T3 felt close by engaging students through group work and humor, creating an enjoyable lesson.
- T5 emphasized asking diverse questions to stimulate student responses.
- T6 appreciated the safe environment cultivated, fostering student communication and confidence.
- T7 successfully engaged students with lead-in activities, promoting a supportive classroom atmosphere while addressing mistakes constructively.
- T8 reported closeness to the ideal through structured lessons, using the textbook and providing necessary feedback.
- T9 aimed for a fun and motivating atmosphere, which they successfully created.

Overall, participants expressed varying degrees of alignment with their ideal teaching selves, highlighting effective strategies and student engagement. Participants who feel close to their ideal language teacher self primarily attribute this to their ability to engage and motivate students within their lessons. They find satisfaction in student participation and sense of security in the classroom, reinforcing the significance of motivation in achieving their teaching ideals. Additionally, some noted adherence to the syllabus, providing feedback, and encouraging the use of the target language as factors contributing to their

perceived closeness to the ideal. Conversely, a few participants expressed feelings of distance from their ideal selves due to a lack of engaging activities and insufficient student interaction during lessons. Participants expressed that they feel distant from their ideal language teacher selves due to factors such as limited activities, excessive teacher talk, and lessons lacking engagement. A significant reason for this distance is the pressure of adhering to their institution's syllabus, leaving little time for varied teaching methods. Some participants felt they were "close enough" to their ideal selves but acknowledged difficulties, such as managing speaking time and emotional states. Various views highlighted the struggle to balance teacher and student interaction effectively, with one participant noting that even with effort, achieving the ideal was challenging.

### **What are the effects of being close to or distant from the Ideal Language Teacher Self for the instructors?**

Two distinct data collection techniques were employed to get a response to this subquestion: video-stimulated recollections and reflective journals. The following are the findings from the reflective journals.

**Table 15.** The feelings of the instructors concerning their closeness to their ideal language teacher selves according to the reflective journal results

Opinions	Participants	N
Good	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T8, T10	8
Could be better	T4, T6	2
Stresses	T7, T10	2
Satisfied	T6, T9	2
Proud	T2	1
Bad	T1, T2, T5, T6, T7, T9	6
Anxious	T2	1
Bored	T2	1
Indecisive	T5	1

The data discusses nine sub-themes related to participants' feelings about their closeness to their ideal language teacher selves. Predominantly, participants reported feeling good, with reasons including being a role model and experiencing student motivation. Statements from participants highlight positive emotions like happiness and contentment when aligned with their ideal selves. Conversely, those feeling bad cited issues such as lack of preparation and inadequate speaking activities, indicating a level of self-awareness about their challenges. Additional feelings noted included anxiety, stress, satisfaction, pride, and indecisiveness, reflecting a mix of positive and negative experiences in their teaching roles. The findings suggest that proximity to their ideal selves enhances motivation among instructors. Instructors struggle with motivation and job satisfaction when they feel distant from their ideal language teacher selves, leading to more negative comments about their teaching. Conversely, a closer alignment with this ideal self-results in more positive reflections and improved teaching experiences. This highlights the importance of instructors' self-perception in their motivation and effectiveness. Data were also collected using the video stimulated recall method to further explore these insights.

**Table 16.** The feelings of the instructors concerning their closeness to their ideal language teacher selves according to the video stimulated recall results

<b>Opinions</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Number</b>
Good	T1,T2,T3,T4,T5,T6,T7,T8,T10	9
Bad	T2,T3,T4,T5,T10	5
Happy	T5,T8,T9	3
Not so bad or perfect	T2,T4	2
Unsuccessful	T5	1
Enthusiastic and motivated	T6	1
Self confident	T7	1

The table presents participants' feelings about their distance from their ideal language teacher selves. Most participants expressed positive feelings, noting that fun and control during

lessons boost their confidence and eagerness to teach. Key comments included feelings of enjoyment and connection with students. Conversely, about half of the participants reported negative feelings when they felt far from their ideal selves, with comments indicating frustration and a sense of inadequacy in communication and understanding. A few participants also expressed happiness and satisfaction when reflecting on their teaching roles. Overall, positive experiences are linked to preparation and effective student engagement. Participants expressed a range of feelings about their teaching experiences. Most felt happy and confident, believing they were fulfilling their roles adequately. Some felt less than perfect, with one participant noting feelings of failure due to unmet expectations. In contrast, others reported feeling enthusiastic and motivated, viewing their roles not just as teachers but as mentors. The study aligns with findings from similar research, highlighting that teachers feel more motivated and fulfilled when they perceive themselves as approaching their ideal teaching identities, with enthusiasm seen as a key trait of effective language teachers. The study highlights that teachers' emotions regarding their closeness to their ideal language teacher selves play a crucial role in achieving that ideal. Proficiency and competence are identified as significant factors for this alignment. However, challenges arise, particularly for language teachers, who often experience stress and anxiety when they feel distant from their ideal selves. This disconnect can occur when teachers must adhere to expectations that conflict with their personal ideals.

### **What can be done in order to close the gap between the Ideal Language Teacher self and the Actual Teaching Experience?**

Two distinct data collection techniques were employed to get a response to this subquestion: video-stimulated recollections and reflective journals. The following are the findings from the reflective journals about what the instructors claim they are capable of.



**Table 17.** The solutions the instructors think they can do to get closer to their ideal language teacher selves according to the reflective journal results

Opinions	Participants	N
Should be prepared for the lesson	T1,T2,T3,T7,T8,T9,T10	7
I can prepare communicative activities	T2,T5,T6,T9	4
I can play games during the lesson	T1,T8	2
Can motivate students	T4,T9	2
Students may be given the opportunity to participate in the lesson.	T5,T7	2
I might not stick only to the syllabus	T6,T9	2
More activities can be carried out	T8,T10	2
Feedback can be given to students	T4,T7,T9	2
More emphasis can be placed on English listening and speaking exercises.	T2,T4	1
Better try not to reflect my personal problems in the classroom	T3	1
Don't let students' reluctance affect me	T3	1
Getting students to do more speaking activities	T4	1
I can get some ideas from my colleagues	T2	1
Authentic listening activities can be done	T9	1
Students' ideas can be asked	T10	1
Peer reviews can be made	T10	1

The table outlines sub-themes from instructors on achieving the ideal language teacher. Key sub-themes include “getting prepared for the lesson” and “preparing communicative activities.” Participants emphasize the importance of lesson preparation, with comments highlighting the need for effective planning and engaging activities. Instructors recognize that since English isn’t widely practiced outside the classroom, embedding communicative activities in lessons can enhance learning retention. They also believe that providing corrective feedback will aid in reaching their ideal teaching goals. Overall, thorough preparation and interactive teaching methods are essential for effective language instruction. The data discusses the importance of incorporating speaking activities and providing corrective feedback to enhance student motivation

and participation. Participants emphasize the value of games and diverse activities beyond the standard syllabus, suggesting that such approaches can boost both student and instructor motivation. Key points include the need for flexibility in lesson planning, as instructors often follow a rigid curriculum dictated by administration, which limits their ability to customize activities. The consensus is that a balance of structured and flexible teaching methods can foster a more engaging classroom environment. The data discusses the importance of enhancing English listening and speaking skills in language education. Key points include participants' suggestions for increasing the focus on authentic listening exercises to aid student comprehension and motivate them in speaking. One participant noted the importance of not allowing personal issues to affect classroom dynamics, as instructor motivation is linked to student engagement. Participants also shared strategies for professional growth, such as collaborating with colleagues, soliciting student feedback on activities, and implementing peer evaluation to foster a supportive learning environment. Overall, the importance of communication and collaboration in improving teaching effectiveness was emphasized.

The same issue is likewise supported and further information are obtained through the use of video stimulated recall. The following are the outcomes of the video-stimulated recall for the identical sub-question about what the instructors claim they are capable of.

**Table 18.** The solutions the instructors think they can do to get closer to their ideal language teacher selves according to the video stimulated recall results

Opinions	Participants	Number
Involving students into the lesson	T1,T7,T9	3
Using visual materials	T2,T5,T8	3
Being prepared for the lessons	T2,T3,T5	3
I'm doing my best	T4,T5,T6	3
Using materials effectively	T4,T5,T7	3
Increasing activities	T2,T4	2
Planning less tiring activities	T9,T10	2
Decreasing vocabulary teaching	T1	1
Improving reading skills and sub skills	T1	1
Being patient	T5	1
Being less dependent on the book	T7	1
Giving more examples for new words	T7	1
Attracting the students' attention	T8	1
Identifying the deficiencies of the students	T8	1
Trying to reach all students	T8	1
Focusing on the needs of the students.	T8	1
Teaching the cognitive skills	T8	1

The data outline's sub-themes related to achieving the ideal language teacher self, emphasizing the importance of student inclusion in the teaching process. Key points include reducing teacher talk time to encourage engagement, preparing thoroughly for lessons, and utilizing diverse visual materials. Participants stressed the need for energetic teaching and creativity through authentic materials, moving away from reliance on textbooks. Overall, preparation and effective use of varied resources are highlighted as essential for enhancing student participation and progressing toward the ideal teacher profile. Participants expressed their commitment to improving as language teachers through various sub-themes, such as "I am doing my best" and "planning fewer tiring activities." Many acknowledged their efforts under challenging conditions and emphasized the importance of creating time for engaging

activities without overwhelming themselves. Some highlighted the need to reduce vocabulary teaching in favor of enhancing reading skills and incorporating more practical examples in lessons to reach their ideal teaching selves. Additionally, the importance of understanding student needs, attracting their attention, and utilizing effective teaching materials was discussed. One participant advocated for conducting a needs analysis to tailor teaching more effectively, which would benefit both students and instructors. Furthermore, instructors were encouraged to identify support their institutions could provide to help them achieve their ideal teaching goals.

**Table 19.** The solutions the instructors suggest doing to help them get closer to their ideal language teacher selves according to the reflective journal results

Opinions	Participants	N
Different materials and games can be provided	T1, T2,T3,T9	4
Technical personnel and technology support should be provided	T3,T7	2
The syllabus should be flexible	T4,T9	2
Participation in the course may be compulsory	T4,T5	2
Students should have a sense of responsibility	T5,T8	2
Class hours per day may be less	T7,T10	2
Administrators should motivate teachers	T3	1
More communicative activities can be added to the syllabus	T6	1
Observation and feedback	T7	1
Textbooks should be suitable for student level	T8	1
There may be more breaks	T10	1
Classroom walls can be more colorful	T10	1

The data discusses sub-themes focused on helping instructors achieve their ideal teaching selves, emphasizing the importance of providing diverse materials and games to enhance student motivation and engagement. Participants noted that varied resources could lead to more effective lessons and lasting learning. Key sub-themes include the necessity of technical support, syllabus flexibility, mandatory student participation, and promoting student responsibility. Instructors

expressed that support in these areas, especially technological enhancements and reduced teaching hours, could significantly aid them in becoming better educators and improving the overall learning experience. Strict adherence to the syllabus may diminish student qualifications, necessitating flexibility for instructors. Several instructors propose making student participation compulsory to enhance motivation and reduce disruptions caused by varying attendance. There's a consensus on the need for fewer class hours, as many instructors find themselves overwhelmed with up to 42 classes, hindering their ability to plan effectively. Administrators' support is deemed crucial for motivating teachers. Suggestions include integrating more communicative activities into the syllabus and ensuring textbooks align with student levels. Additionally, participants advocate for longer breaks and more colorful classroom environments to improve overall learning conditions.

The findings of the video-stimulated memories of what the instructors claim their schools can do are shown below to bolster and provide additional context for the previous discussion.

**Table 20.** The solutions the instructors suggest doing to help them get closer to their ideal language teacher selves according to the video stimulated recall results

Opinions	Participants	Number
Material supply	T2,T4,T5,T8	4
Changes in the curriculum	T2,T3,T10	3
Students must be active in class	T5,T9,T10	3
Letting teachers have some flexible time	T4, T5	2
In-service training	T3	1
Online contributions should be mandatory	T4	1
Student evaluation at the end of the semester.	T7	1
Peer observation	T7	1
Students can practice more	T8	1

The data outline's key sub-themes identified to help teachers become their ideal language teacher selves. Notable subthemes

include the need for “material supply,” “changes in the curriculum,” and encouraging “active student participation.” Participants emphasized the importance of providing authentic materials and suggested adjustments to the syllabus to omit less effective content, allowing teachers to meet students’ needs better. Flexibility in teaching schedules and more time for interactive activities were also highlighted as crucial. Additionally, the need for in-service training, peer observation, and effective student assessment was noted, with a cautionary note about ensuring these processes do not overwhelm teachers. Overall, the focus is on creating a supportive environment that enables teachers to thrive in their roles. Previous studies indicate that preparation is crucial for student teachers to align with their ideal teacher selves, as shown in Sallı and Osman’s (2017) research. They emphasized that being “well-prepared and organized” enhances teacher effectiveness. Contrarily, this study suggests content knowledge growth is vital, a view supported by several other researchers. Ölmez Çağlar (2019) highlighted that experience boosts self-esteem and diminishes fears of inadequacy. Janene (1987) identified patience as essential from students’ perspectives, alongside politeness and thoughtfulness, which were not emphasized by the present study’s instructors.

### **Results and Discussion for Research Question 6. ‘How close the teachers perceive themselves to their Ought to Language Teacher Selves? How? Why?’**

Two distinct data gathering techniques were employed in order to arrive at comprehensive findings for this study subject. Reflective diaries were the first of these, and video-stimulated recalls were the second.

The study identifies four sub-themes regarding language teachers’ perceptions of their “ought to” selves: “close,” “far,” “not close not far,” and “not sure.” The predominant sentiment was “close,” attributed to timely coverage of topics, adherence to syllabi, and effective lesson delivery. Many instructors

expressed that they met administrative expectations, leading to feelings of closeness to their ideal selves. However, reliance on syllabus and course materials contributed to a sense of distance from their ideal teacher selves. This reflects the idea that the “ought to” self is driven by external expectations rather than internal beliefs, resulting in conflicting views among instructors about their teaching identities.

The data discusses feedback from participants regarding their alignment with their envisioned selves as language teachers. Two sub-themes, “I gave feedback” and “I included students in the lesson,” were noted by only one participant each, indicating they align with the instructors’ ideal selves. For example, T7 highlighted the importance of providing feedback, while T3 mentioned scoring student presentations. In contrast, the dominant sub-theme indicating distance from their ideal selves was “I could not follow the syllabus.” Participants expressed challenges with syllabus adherence, suggesting that flexibility can detract from fulfilling their ideal teaching roles, despite the pressures to conform to a common curriculum in preparatory classes. The data discusses the reflections of language instructors on their performance relative to their ideal teaching selves. Some participants reported challenges such as not providing adequate information at the lesson’s start, technical issues, and a lack of engaging activities, which affected their self-assessment. For instance, T7 cited technical problems that delayed lessons, while T9 and T10 mentioned efforts to make lessons enjoyable but felt these detracted from covering the syllabus. Additionally, two instructors reported being neither close nor far from their ideal selves, feeling satisfactory about their overall teaching after a long session. The emphasis is on how external factors and time constraints impact instructors’ perceptions of their effectiveness. Participants expressed mixed feelings regarding their alignment with their ideal language teacher selves. One noted a lack of reason for feeling neither close nor far from

this ideal, implying dissatisfaction due to a monotonous lesson where students mainly engaged in activities while the instructor offered feedback. This adherence to the syllabus did not lead to a fulfilling learning experience. Another participant expressed uncertainty about their effectiveness, stating a lack of clarity regarding student comprehension of grammar, which suggested discomfort with their grasp of the lesson's objectives despite following prescribed materials. The data discusses the perceptions of language teachers regarding their alignment with their "ought to" self, which represents their ideal teaching identity. Most participants reported feeling close to this ideal, citing adherence to syllabi, effective use of lesson time, and following prescribed materials. For example, one teacher emphasized that pressure from exams influenced their focus on vocabulary teaching. Others confirmed their closeness to their ideal self by completing lessons on time and conducting classes in English. Additionally, aspects like student-centered teaching and effective communication in English were highlighted as important traits for achieving their ideal teaching roles. Two participants expressed feelings of being distant from their ideal language teacher selves. Participant T5 indicated a lack of engagement with the coursebook and uncertainty about meeting student expectations. In contrast, T6 emphasized their understanding and supportive approach, focusing on student emotions and motivation to foster enthusiasm. While one participant struggled to follow the textbook, T6's student-centered methods led them to feel far from their ideal role. This disconnect suggests a potential misunderstanding regarding administrative support and motivations for student care, especially given that many administrators have education backgrounds.

### **What are the effects of being close to or distant from the Ought to Language Teacher Self for the instructors?**

Two distinct data collection techniques were applied in order to get a response for this subquestion. Reflective diaries were



the first of these, and video-stimulated recalls were the second. The following are the findings from the reflective journals.

**Table 21.** The feelings of the instructors concerning their closeness to their ought to language teacher selves according to the reflective journal results

Opinions	Participants	N
Good	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10	10
Nothing	T8,T10	2
Bad	T1	1
Stressed	T5	1
Restricted	T7	1
Inexperienced	T7	1

The study identifies six sub-themes related to instructors' feelings about their alignment with their "ought to" language teacher selves: "I felt good," "I felt nothing," "I felt bad," "I felt stressed," "I felt restricted," and "I felt inexperienced." The "I felt good" sub-theme received the most focus, with participants expressing feelings of satisfaction primarily from meeting administrative expectations rather than personal fulfillment. For example, instructors noted that completing required tasks, such as covering syllabus materials, made them feel good, despite a lack of overall job satisfaction or motivation. In contrast to previous studies where "ought to" and "ideal" teacher selves align more positively, this study reveals a sense of discomfort among instructors, possibly due to misalignment with administrative goals or lack of communication about their responsibilities. Participants expressed feelings of neutrality, stress, and restriction regarding their teaching experiences. Many reported a lack of interaction in lessons, leading to feelings of ineffectiveness and pressure. Statements included feelings of being inexperienced and a sense of obligation rather than enthusiasm for their work. Instructors highlighted that focusing on curriculum requirements contributed to their stress and restricted feelings, underlining a disconnect between their responsibilities and personal engagement.

**Table 22.** The feelings of the instructors concerning their closeness to their ought to language teacher selves according to the video stimulated recall results

Opinions	Participants	Number
Good	T2,T3,T4,T5,T7,T8,T9,10	8
Happy	T6,T7,T8	3
Enlightened	T1	1
Safe and Peaceful	T7	1
Satisfied	T8	1

The data examines participants' feelings about their alignment with their "ought to" language teacher selves. The majority reported positive emotions, with many stating they felt happy, fulfilled, and peaceful. Specific quotes from participants highlight these sentiments, including feelings of enlightenment and security. The analysis of video-stimulated recall indicated that instructors experienced greater fulfillment and happiness when envisioning themselves as effective teachers. Additionally, the literature suggests that motivation is a significant factor influencing the connection to one's ideal teacher self, with relevant studies noting various student-related factors that impact teachers' motivation. Yuan's (2016) study highlights the connection between language teachers' self-perception and their focus on exams, suggesting that an exam-centric approach leads to more traditional teaching methods. This aligns with findings from the present study where an instructor emphasized vocabulary practice due to exam requirements, moving closer to her "ought to" teacher self. However, such an exam focus does not enhance teachers' satisfaction with their teaching, as noted in previous research. Additionally, when teachers align with their "ought to" selves and fulfill expectations, they feel more motivated; conversely, failing to do so can lead to demotivation, as supported by various studies.

### What can be done in order to close the gap between the Ought to Language Teacher self and the Actual Teaching Experience?

Two distinct data collection techniques were employed to get a response to this subquestion: video-stimulated recollections and reflective journals. The following are the findings from the reflective journals about what the instructors claim they are capable of;

**Table 23.** The solutions the instructors think they can do to get closer to their ought to language teacher selves according to the reflective journal results

Opinions	Participants	N
Nothing needs to be done (I can continue like this)	T1,T2,T6	3
Can be prepared for the lessons	T3,T5,T7	3
Syllabus can be followed	T4,T9	2
I can convey my concerns to the authorities	T1	1
More exercises	T2	1
Personal problems should not be reflected to the students	T3	1
I can be a more authoritative teacher	T3	1
Be motivated to the lesson	T3	1
Time can be managed more effectively	T4	1
Lessons can be more enjoyable	T8	1
Students should be let to have grammar exercises	T8	1
Colleagues can interact with each other	T5	1
Seating arrangement can be changed	T8	1
I can prioritize the demands of the administration and the students	T7	1
I can use the materials selected by the administration	T9	1

The data discusses sub-themes identified by instructors regarding their alignment with the expectations of language teaching. Key sub-themes include the beliefs that “nothing needs to be done,” the importance of lesson preparation, and adherence to the syllabus. Participants expressed confidence in their current practices, emphasizing that preparation and following the syllabus can enhance their teaching roles. One

instructor highlighted the value of open communication with university administration to share concerns and facilitate improvements, suggesting that such dialogue could bridge the gap between their ideal and expected teacher selves, leading to greater satisfaction in their teaching. Participants emphasized the importance of incorporating more exercises and grammar activities to align with their ideal teaching selves. T2 and T8 noted that students prefer additional grammar exercises, believing this would enhance student satisfaction and teacher effectiveness. Another participant highlighted the need for teachers to avoid projecting personal issues onto students and to adopt a more authoritative approach. Notably, self-reflection emerged as a theme, with participants acknowledging areas for improvement. Additional sub-themes included effective time management, creating a fun classroom atmosphere, collaborating with colleagues, changing seating arrangements to boost participation, prioritizing student and management demands, and adhering to provided materials. Participants voiced the necessity of using time wisely (T4), fostering a positive environment (T8), and maintaining communication with peers (T5). Effective use of class time, creating engaging lessons, and altering seating arrangements can help teachers align with their ideal language teacher selves. These strategies contribute to a positive classroom atmosphere. However, some suggestions focus more on meeting external expectations rather than personal ideals. Video analysis has prompted instructors to reflect on their potential actions.

**Table 24.** The solutions the instructors think they can do to get closer to their ought to language teacher selves according to the results of video stimulated recall results

Opinions	Participants	Number
Having a student-centered practice	T1,T7,T9,T10	4
Using different materials	T4, T5	2
Preparing a lesson plan (be organized)	T5,T7	2
Speaking English in classes	T3	1
Getting to know the students closely	T5	1
Not being authoritarian and strict	T6	1
Getting feedback from students	T7	1
Following the textbook	T8	1
I did my best	T3	1

The data discusses strategies for instructors to improve their approach to teaching languages by aligning their practices with their ideal and “ought to” teacher selves. Key sub-themes include adopting a student-centered practice, preparing lesson plans, and using diverse materials. Participants emphasized the importance of being active, checking syllabi, and speaking English in class to engage students. They also highlighted the need for understanding students better, avoiding authoritarianism, and obtaining feedback to enhance their teaching. Overall, attention to these strategies helps instructors’ distance themselves from their feared teaching selves.

The data discusses the interplay between language teachers’ self-perceptions and their teaching practices. Key points include the importance of using the target language, being flexible, and knowing students well. Gathering student feedback is emphasized as a means to align instructors with their ideal teaching selves. Additionally, instructors feel pressured to adhere to textbooks, despite conflicting views from their ideal and feared selves. This concern necessitates discussions with institution administrators. The instructors’ reflective journals also highlight potential institutional actions to address these issues.

**Table 25.** The solutions the instructors suggest doing to help them get closer to their ought to language teacher selves according to the reflective journal results

Opinions	Participants	N
Nothing needs to be done	T2,T6	2
Material support can be provided	T4,T7	2
I do not know	T8,T10	2
Motivate	T3	1
Unity of attitude should be encouraged	T3	1
Technological support can be provided	T3	1
Students' and instructors opinions should be asked	T1	1
Syllabus can be revised	T4	1
The administration should let the teachers more free	T5	1
Students should participate more into the classes	T5	1
Positive feedback on my classes	T7	1
Communication with colleagues can be encouraged	T7	1
Some activities that will include all students can be organized	T8	1
I can use the materials chosen by the administration	T9	1
I should follow the syllabus	T9	1

The data discusses various sub-themes regarding how language instructors can align closer to their ideal teaching selves. Key points include instructors expressing satisfaction with their current situations, alongside suggestions for improvements such as providing material support, enhancing motivation, and achieving consensus on rules among instructors. One participant emphasized the need for uniformity in classroom management, as discrepancies can affect students' perceptions of their instructors. Another participant highlighted the importance of considering both students' and instructors' opinions in decision-making processes, suggesting that doing so will foster motivation and lead to better educational outcomes. Overall, collaboration and support are seen as crucial for improvement in teaching practices. Two participants suggested revisions to the curriculum to enhance learning experiences. One, T4, emphasized the need for more practice activities, while

the other, T5, advocated for increased instructor flexibility and greater student participation, particularly in speaking sessions. Both highlighted the importance of revising the syllabus to allow for individual lesson planning. Additionally, T7 noted that positive feedback from colleagues helped him align more closely with his ideal teaching self, calling for clearer outcomes and improved communication among teachers of the same subject. Participants expressed a desire for recognition and appreciation from both administration and students, similar to findings in Kubanyiova's (2009) study, which could enhance instructor motivation. Effective communication among colleagues was highlighted as vital for exchanging teaching ideas and solving problems. One participant emphasized the importance of organizing inclusive activities that cater to diverse student interests, suggesting that teaching should adapt to varying student needs for better outcomes. Additionally, another participant stressed the necessity of adhering to administrative materials and strict syllabus guidelines to align with the ideal language teacher self. The participants believe that proximity to their ideal teaching self can be achieved by strictly following the curriculum and using prescribed materials. This indicates that the administration is quite rigid in these areas. It is suggested that institutions should involve instructors in syllabus design and material selection, while also allowing additional classroom time. The video results prompted reflections on how institutions can better support instructors.

**Table 26.** The solutions the instructors suggest doing to help them get closer to their ought to language teacher selves according to the video stimulated recall results.

Opinions	Participants	Number
Involving the students in the course	T5,T9,T10	3
Editing the syllabus	T3, T5	2
Supporting the development of the instructors	T7,T8	2
More students online	T4	1
Changing materials	T4	1
Letting teachers to be able to reward and punish	T5	1
Devices should be checked by technical personnel	T5	1
Students' feelings should be touched before their minds	T6	1
Receiving feedback from managers or colleagues	T7	1
Student evaluation at the end of the semester	T7	1
Using textbooks and workbooks in the classroom	T8	1
Students should learn different skills	T8	1

The data discusses sub-themes identified for enhancing instructor engagement in language teaching, emphasizing the importance of student involvement, instructor development, and support for teachers. Participants highlighted the need for an active learning environment, effective curriculum, and opportunities for professional growth. Additionally, instructors expressed the desire for greater autonomy in rewarding and punishing students and suggested that receiving feedback from peers and administration is crucial for motivation and improvement. Overall, the data underscores the need for institutions to provide support mechanisms that encourage instructors to approach their ideal teaching selves. In the present study, instructors emphasized the need for increased interaction, feedback, and developmental support through training. Previous research by Beishuizen et al. (2001) also highlighted the importance of training. Additionally, Sallı and Osam (2017) found that blogging facilitated peer interaction, constructive feedback, and professional discourse among participants. Ölmez Çağlar's (2019) study revealed that teachers sought appreciation and positive feedback, linking it



to motivation. However, it noted that teachers aligning with their ideal selves occurs when student enthusiasm increases, contrasting with the current study's findings that suggest a need for changes in an exam-oriented system.

### **Results and Discussion for Research Question 7. 'How close the teachers perceive themselves to their Feared Language Teacher Selves? How? Why?'**

Two distinct data gathering techniques were employed in order to arrive at comprehensive findings for this study subject. Reflective diaries were the first of these, and video-stimulated recalls were the second.

According to the data, presents sub-themes reflecting participants' perceptions of their distance from their feared language teacher selves, categorized as "far," "close," and "not close not far." Most participants felt "far" from their feared selves, citing reasons like motivating students, conducting interactive lessons, and having good lessons. Examples of participant comments illustrate this distance; they emphasize student engagement, enjoyment, and a supportive classroom environment. The consistent themes of motivation and care for students highlight the instructors' belief that they embody positive teaching attributes, placing them far from their fearful teacher personas.

The data discusses the experiences of language instructors regarding their teaching methods and perceptions of their teaching selves. Key points include the importance of using the target language rather than the grammar translation method, which instructors were taught to avoid. Several participants expressed that their effective use of the target language and their motivation in the classroom distanced them from their "feared language teacher self." Positive behaviors, such as being respectful and friendly towards students, also contribute to this feeling. A participant noted that having a smaller class size facilitated better classroom management and allowed for

more effective communication. Overall, instructor motivation and effective teaching practices enhance their confidence and satisfaction in their teaching roles. The data discusses subthemes related to teaching experiences that help instructors move away from their “feared language teacher” selves. Key points include the importance of time management, interactivity, teaching beyond just rules, and using technology effectively. Participants shared positive experiences when lessons were planned and purposeful, which facilitated student engagement. Conversely, feelings of falling into traditional teaching methods arose when lessons deviated from the plan or when instructors focused solely on providing feedback. This highlights that even with preparation, challenges may arise, emphasizing the need for alternative plans and adaptability in teaching. The data discusses various subthemes related to participants’ experiences in teaching, including language barriers, reliance on provided materials, and lack of student-centered activities. Participants expressed feelings of being unprepared and described lessons as unenjoyable, indicating a struggle with their teaching identities. While some issues stemmed from personal shortcomings, others, like technical problems and uncreative teaching materials, were beyond the instructors’ control. The data suggests that improving educational environments through better resources and flexibility could help instructors align more closely with their ideal teaching selves.

Based on answers, discusses instructors’ perceptions of their distance from their “feared teacher selves.” Nearly all participants expressed feeling far from this feared identity, attributing their success to creating enjoyable classroom environments and using the target language effectively. For instance, participants highlighted their motivation, student respect, and effective teaching methods as factors that distanced them from their feared selves. Conversely, a few participants reported feeling closer to their feared selves due to challenges such as lesson unpreparedness or time constraints

that led to anxiety and disorganization in their teaching. Overall, a majority felt positive about their teaching identities, while a minority struggled with certain difficulties. Participants expressed challenges in adequately preparing for lessons, handling a crowded syllabus, and engaging students, leading them to feel closer to their “feared language teacher selves.” These issues align with their “ought to language teacher selves,” reflecting pressures they feel to meet expectations. One participant noted a balance, feeling neither entirely distant nor close to their ideal self, as they used Turkish explanations while noticing that students engaged more in English, resulting in a sense of distance from their feared self.

### **What are the effects of being close to or distant from the Feared Language Teacher Self for the instructors?**

Two distinct data collection techniques—reflective journals and video-stimulated recalls—were employed to get a response to this subquestion. The following are the findings from the reflective answers:

**Table 27.** The perceptions of the instructors concerning their closeness to their feared language teacher selves according to the reflective journal results

Opinions	Participants	N
Good	T2,T3,T4,T6,T8,T9,T10	7
Satisfied	T2,T5,T9,T10	4
Bad	T2,T3,T5	3
Worried	T2	1
Anxious	T7	1
Terrible	T3	1
Safe	T7	1
Stressed and embarrassed	T7	1
Dissatisfied	T9	1

The data discusses instructors’ feelings about their performance in the classroom, categorized into three main sub-themes: “I felt good,” “I felt satisfied,” and “I felt bad.” Many participants expressed positive feelings, with comments

like “I felt good” and “I felt satisfied.” For instance, T8 and T2 described feeling “very good” and “great,” respectively, while others appreciated engaging with students. Conversely, negative sentiments under the “I felt bad” sub-theme highlighted a lack of control in lessons and inadequate preparation, with comments from T3 noting they felt like students’ time was wasted. Additional feelings included anxiety, stress, and dissatisfaction, as expressed by participants like T2 and T9. Overall, instructors’ reflections revealed a spectrum of emotions regarding their teaching experiences. Instructors experience positive feelings about their teaching when they distance themselves from their feared language teacher personas. Conversely, when they identify closely with this image, they experience negative emotions. Video results prompted reflections on this dynamic.

**Table 28.** The feelings of the instructors concerning their closeness to their feared language teacher selves according to the video stimulated recall results

Opinions	Participants	Number
Good	T2,T3,T4,T5,T6,T7,T8,T9,T10	9
Bad	T2,T3,T4,T5	4
Not so bad or perfect	T4,T5	2
Anxious	T4,T6	2
Angry	T4	1
Peaceful	T7	1
Satisfied	T8	1

The table presents sub-themes related to teachers’ feelings about their distance from their “feared language teacher self.” Most participants reported feeling good about being far from this feared self, with some expressing joy in their self-awareness and purpose. However, others described negative emotions such as anxiety, dissatisfaction, and anger. For instance, while some felt “terrible” or “not so well,” others expressed feelings of comfort and satisfaction when acknowledging their distance from their feared self. Those closely identifying with their feared selves reported negative feelings, consistent with findings from Sallı

and Osam (2017), which highlighted a sense of inadequacy in pre-service teachers related to content knowledge. Overall, emotional states varied significantly based on participants' perceptions of their teaching selves. Salli and Osam (2007) found that participants reported feeling shy, a sentiment not expressed by instructors in the current study. This shyness may stem from pre-service teachers' inexperience with students. Similarly, Ölmez Çağlar (2019) noted that teachers feel demotivated when they perceive themselves as incompetent, a point not raised by the current study's participants.

### **What can be done in order to increase the divergence between the Feared Language Teacher self and the Actual Teaching Experience?**

Two distinct data collection techniques were employed to answer this subquestion: video-stimulated recollections and reflective journals. The following are the findings from the reflective journals about what the instructors claim they are capable of:

**Table 29.** The solutions the instructors think they can do to get farther from their feared language teacher selves according to the reflective journal results.

Opinions	Participants	N
I can get prepared well before the classes	T2,T5,T7,T8,T10	5
Communicative activities can be done	T1,T2,T9	3
I can start the lessons in an energetic and motivated way	T3,T4	2
I do not know	T5,T6	2
Being in communication with the colleagues	T7,T10	2
Material support can be provided	T8,T9	2
Activities can be prepared	T2	1
I should improve myself in technology	T3	1
The students' feelings should be cared	T4	1
Visual materials can be used	T5	1
The learning levels of the students can be checked	T7	1
Pronunciation can be focused	T8	1
Participation can be supported	T9	1
Students should be motivated	T9	1
The students' creativity should be supported	T9	1
We can get to know the students better	T10	1
Homework can be checked faster	T10	1

The data discusses strategies to overcome the anxiety associated with being a language teacher, emphasizing the importance of thorough preparation before classes. Key sub-themes identified include the necessity of lesson preparation, which participants agree enhances lesson quality. Instructors believe being organized and planned is crucial in moving beyond their feared selves. Additional sub-themes include engaging in communicative activities, starting lessons energetically, maintaining communication with colleagues, and ensuring effective material selection. Participants provide various suggestions, such as dedicating time to prep, motivating themselves and students, and collaborating with peers for teaching ideas. Participants believe that engaging in communicative activities and teaching with energy can help them avoid their feared selves as language teachers. Collaboration with colleagues and material support are also seen as vital in helping them become closer to their ideal teaching personas. Strategies suggested including preparing activities and enhancing technological skills. Additionally, participants emphasize the importance of addressing students' feelings, understanding their learning levels through assessments, and focusing on pronunciation. They advocate for student-centered classes that promote participation and respect for student creativity to further distance themselves from the feared language teacher identity.

The participant underscored the importance of student-centered lessons to overcome the challenges of traditional language teaching. Key sub-themes included getting to know students better, faster homework checks, and the use of visual materials. Participants expressed a willingness to improve their understanding of students (T10) and aimed to incorporate more engaging, colorful tools in lessons (T10). Moreover, they highlighted the effectiveness of visual aids (T5) in planning lessons that capture student interest. The discussion also addressed strategies for effectively checking homework to enhance future learning experiences.

**Table 30.** The solutions the instructors think they can do to get farther from their feared language teacher selves according to the video stimulated recall results.

Opinions	Participants	Number
Being prepared for the lessons	T2,T3,T5,T6,T7,T10	6
Planning activities	T9,T10	2
Not being very dependent on the system	T4	1
Controlling own feelings	T4	1
Being patient	T4	1
Rewarding the students that participate in the lessons	T5	1
Asking students to prepare for the lesson	T5	1
Being prepared for changes	T5	1
Planning the duration of the lesson well	T6	1
Using visual materials	T7	1
Improving myself	T7	1
Meeting the administration's expectations	T7	1
Getting constructive feedback	T7	1
Using the target language	T8	1
Increasing my students' use of the target language in class	T8	1

The data discusses strategies for language teachers to distance themselves from their feared teacher selves, identifying lesson preparedness as a key focus. Participants emphasize the importance of being prepared for lessons and planning engaging activities, such as game-based learning. One participant suggests rewarding student participation to enhance motivation and encourages students to prepare in advance by watching videos. Additionally, the importance of being adaptable to unexpected changes during lessons is highlighted, reinforcing the idea that both teacher and student preparedness can improve classroom dynamics and outcomes. Participants emphasized the importance of careful lesson planning, the use of visual materials, self-improvement, and constructive feedback to meet administrative expectations. Notably, one participant highlighted the significance of using the target language in class, advocating against translating every unknown word to enhance

learning effectiveness. The overall view suggests that teachers' mastery of lessons improves with their self-development, and effective communication with administration is crucial for distancing themselves from perceived inadequacies. These reflections indicate a collective focus on enhancing teaching practices to support student learning.

**Table 31.** The solutions the instructors suggest doing to help them get farther from their feared language teacher selves according to the reflective journal results

Opinions	Participants	N
Students' involvement in the lesson	T8,T9	2
Instructors should be motivated	T3,T5	2
Technological support can be provided	T3,T7	2
Communicative activities can be done	T6,T8	2
Communicative books and materials can be chosen	T9	1
Distance education can be optional	T1	1
More activities and games can be provided	T2	1
Managers can communicate constructively	T3	1
There shouldn't be pressure on teachers	T4	1
Students can have a sense of responsibility	T5	1
A teacher's book can be used as a guide for the writing lesson	T7	1
Syllabus should be given to the teachers earlier	T7	1
The course outcomes should be more explanatory	T7	1
Students should be motivated	T8	1
The target language should be used on the classes	T9	1
The skills should be integrated	T9	1
I can get to know the students better	T10	1
Class size may be less	T10	1
Colleagues can exchange ideas	T10	1

The data discusses sub-themes derived from responses to how teachers can distance themselves from their feared language teacher selves. Key sub-themes include student involvement, instructor motivation, technological support, and communicative activities. Participants emphasize the importance of engaging students in lessons and adopting a student-centered approach, with suggestions for integrating



games and effective materials to boost participation. The data also highlights that administrators should foster a supportive environment without exerting pressure on instructors. Overall, fostering interaction, utilizing technology, and adapting the curriculum are seen as tangible solutions to improve teaching experiences. The data discusses the impact of administrators' behavior on instructors' comfort and performance, noting that aggressive management is unacceptable. Participants express the need for improvements in teaching resources and planning, such as having a teacher's guide for writing lessons, receiving syllabi earlier, and clearly outlining course outcomes. Additionally, participants suggest that smaller class sizes would enhance understanding of students and facilitate idea exchange among colleagues. These insights underline the necessity for better support and communication in educational settings. The participant believes that smaller class sizes and better student-teacher relationships can help them overcome their fear of being perceived as a strict language teacher. They emphasize that when classes are small, teachers can dedicate more time to individual students. Additionally, collaboration with colleagues can further alleviate this fear. Furthermore, the participant highlights several important educational strategies: students need more motivation, the target language should be emphasized in classroom communication, and various language skills (listening, speaking, writing, reading) should be integrated into the curriculum. Institutions could promote the use of the target language through competitions and events. Lastly, they express that distance education might be beneficial, allowing students to take greater responsibility for their learning, which can help teachers distance themselves from the intimidating teacher role.

The following are the outcomes of the video-stimulated recalls of what the teachers claim their schools are capable of:

**Table 32.** The solutions the instructors suggest doing to help them get farther from their feared language teacher selves according to the video stimulated recall results

Opinions	Participants	Number
Editing the syllabus	T3,T4,T6,T9,T10	4
Changing materials	T4,T5	2
Finding out methods to motivate students	T4,T8	2
Increasing the students' participation in the lesson	T5	1
Standardizing the speaking sessions	T5	1
Keeping up with the technology	T7	1
Exchanging information among colleagues	T7	1
Identifying the target clearly	T7	1
Having a positive communication within the institution	T3	1

The data discusses strategies institutions can implement to help instructors move away from their anxiety surrounding language teaching. Key points include the need for a proper curriculum team, the organization of syllabi, and the use of diverse materials to enhance student motivation. Participants suggested reducing the number of topics covered to lessen stress and emphasized the importance of encouraging student participation in speaking activities. Additionally, standardizing speaking session questions was proposed to facilitate more interaction. The data discusses a shift in perspectives regarding instructor support, highlighting a new statement that restricts flexibility in teaching practices. A participant emphasizes the importance of keeping up with technology, sharing ideas with colleagues, and establishing clear goals to overcome insecurities as a language teacher. The participant references the benefits of technology in education and the potential for professional development through collaboration. Previous research by Salli and Osam (2017) supports these views, indicating that video recording lessons and blogging foster feedback and idea exchange, ultimately helping instructors feel more confident and less isolated in their teaching challenges.

The study by Salli and Osam (2017) indicated that pre-service teachers fear being boring and recommended avoiding repetitive materials and methodologies. Participants in the current study echoed this, suggesting more activities and games to engage students and enhance motivation. Furthermore, they emphasized the importance of teachers varying their tone and displaying enthusiasm to connect better with students. Feldman (1988) reviewed that motivating student is crucial for teachers to align with their ideal selves rather than their feared personas. Additional suggestions for achieving this include being available, helpful, and promoting lifelong learning, which is more feasible in smaller class sizes as noted by current participants.

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