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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

**PERCEPTIONS REGARDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
TEACHING PROFESSION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF IN-  
SERVICE AND PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS AND PARENTS**

**M.A. THESIS**

**Leyla DENİZ ERTAŞOĞLU**

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**İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLİĞİ ALGISI: ÖĞRETMENLER,  
ÖĞRETMEN ADAYLARI VE VELİ GÖRÜŞLERİ ÜZERİNE  
KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ÇALIŞMA**

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**Leyla DENİZ ERTAŞOĞLU**

**Danışman**

**Doç. Dr. Esim GÜRSOY**

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**Adı Soyadı:** Leyla DENİZ ERTAŞOĞLU  
**Öğrenci No:** 801510003  
**Anabilim Dalı:** Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı  
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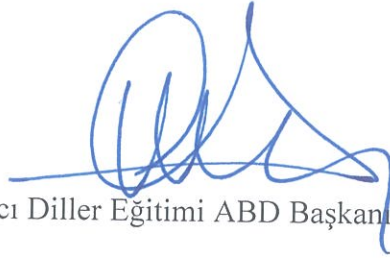
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Leyla DENİZ ERTAŞOĞLU



Danışman

Doç. Dr. Esim GÜRSOY



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Prof. Dr. Ayla GÖKMEN

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Tez Danışmanı ve Sınav Komisyonu Başkanı

Doç. Dr. Esim GÜRSOY

Uludağ Üniversitesi



Üye

Prof. Dr. Belgin AYDIN

Ankara TED Üniversitesi



Üye

Öğr. Gör. Dr. Pınar SALI

Uludağ Üniversitesi



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## Özet

Yazar: Leyla DENİZ ERTAŞOĞLU

Üniversite: Uludağ Üniversitesi

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Danışmanı: Doç. Dr. Esim GÜRSOY

### **İngilizce Öğretmenliği Algısı: Öğretmenler, Öğretmen Adayları ve Veli Görüşleri Üzerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma**

İngilizce öğretmenleri, öğrencilerin dil öğrenme sürecinde şüphesiz çok önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Bu noktada öğretmenlerin kendilerini mesleki anlamda nasıl algıladıkları ve veliler tarafından nasıl algılandığı eğitimin verimliliği açısından önem teşkil etmektedir. Çünkü bu algılar dil eğitimini kolaylaştırıcı veya engelleyici araçlar olabilir. Toplumun İngilizce öğretmenliğini nasıl algıladığı öğretmenlerin motivasyonları, kendilerini işe adanmaları, mesleklerini nasıl yaptıkları, öğrenci kazanımları gibi birçok açıdan öğretmenler üzerinde etkilidir. Bu anlamda ulusal ve uluslararası alanda algılara dair çalışmalar bulunmakla birlikte karşılaştırmalı bir analize rastlanmamıştır. Tüm bunları göz önüne alarak mevcut çalışmayla Bursa'daki 123 İngilizce öğretmeni, 71 İngilizce öğretmen adayı ve 129 veliyle karşılaştırmalı bir çalışma yürütmek adına algılarını ölçmek üzere geliştirilen Likert-

tipli ve açık uçlu sorular içeren 1 ölçek ve 2 anket üzerinden dijital ortamda kartopu örnekleme uygulanıp nitel ve nicel verilere ulaşarak karma yöntem araştırma yöntemi dahilinde analizler yapılmıştır. Gönüllü katılıma dayalı çalışma verileri Temmuz-Ekim 2018 tarihleri arasında toplanmış olup, veriler SPSS ve içerik analizleri ile çözümlenmiştir. Analizler göstermektedir ki İngilizce öğretmenleri ve öğretmen adayları mesleki statüleri anlamında olumlu algılara sahip olmalarına rağmen çalışma şartları büyük bir çoğunluğunu mutsuz etmektedir. Neredeyse öğretmenlerin yarısı İngilizce öğretmeni olmayı toplumsal fayda sağlama amacıyla seçmiş olup kariyer tercihlerinden memnun görünmektedirler. Ancak mesleklerinin değerinin azalması neticesiyle hak ettikleri değeri görmediklerini düşünmektedirler.

*Anahtar sözcükler:* İngilizce öğretmenliğine yönelik algılar, öğretmenlik mesleği, öğretmen motivasyonları, öğretmenlerin statüsü, veli algıları

## **Abstract**

Author: Leyla DENİZ ERTAŞOĞLU

University: Uludağ University

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Thesis: Perceptions Regarding English Language Teaching Profession: A

Comparative Study of In-service and Pre-service Teachers and Parents

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Esim GÜRSOY

### **Perceptions Regarding English Language Teaching Profession: A**

### **Comparative Study of In-service and Pre-service Teachers and Parents**

Without doubt, English teachers play an ineluctable role in the learning processes of students. Therefore, how teachers perceive themselves and how they are perceived by parents professionally bear great significance for the efficiency of education systems because these perceptions may enable or hinder language teaching. How the society perceive English teachers closely affect teachers in terms of shaping their motivations, their devotion to the profession, how they perform in the classroom, and student achievements. In this respect, there are various national or international studies on perceptions; yet to the researcher's knowledge there is no comprehensive and comparative study of perceptions of the three groups. Considering all, the current study aims to present a comparative analysis with 123 in-service English teachers, 71 pre-service English teachers, and 129 parents. Accordingly, in order to investigate the perceptions of participants on relevant issues, 1 scale and 2

questionnaires with open-ended questions were developed by the researcher. The scale and the questionnaires are prepared as Likert-type instruments. As a part of mixed-methods research model, the qualitative and quantitative data were collected online first via convenience sampling and then via snowball sampling. Based on voluntary participation, the data were collected from July to October, 2018 and were analyzed via SPSS and content analysis. In the light of the results, in-service and pre-service teachers hold positive perceptions about their professional status despite the fact that working conditions make the majority unhappy. Almost half of the participants chose to be a teacher owing to social utility values with contentment of their career choice. However, teachers seem to suffer from a status deficit due to undervaluing of their profession by society.

*Key words:* parental perceptions, perceptions on teaching English, teacher motivations, teaching profession, teacher status

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## **List of Abbreviations**

CVR: Content Validity Ratio

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FIT: Factors Influencing Teaching Choice

KMO: Kaiser- Meyer Olkin Value

KPSS: Central Exam For Teacher Recruitment

LTI: Language Teacher Identity

PISA: The Program for International Assessment

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TALIS: The Teaching and Learning International Survey

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Without a shadow of a doubt, the impacts of teaching and teachers on the society are crucial. According to the American historian and writer Henry Adams (1907), “ ... education was a serious thing. A parent gives life, but as parent, gives no more. A murderer takes life, but his deed stops there. A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops” (p.241). In other words, the effects of teachers go beyond the boundaries of teaching and penetrate into the social fabric of the society. In consideration of this profound effect, in many societies teachers are considered to play great roles in the success of education and in the future of societies.

The reasons behind choosing a profession are highly related to how one performs a profession, especially if this profession is teaching. As teaching is not a profession detached from feelings, assumptions, and beliefs, what/how a teacher thinks of himself/herself is likely to be reflected in the way s/he teaches in the classroom and influences the students (in)directly. Since teachers bring their feelings along to the classroom, the beliefs and attitudes teachers hold about their profession and themselves as teachers cannot be ignored.

For the construction of self, Taylor (1992) notes that every individual has some definite ideas about what kind of a person they desire to become or how they project their selves. There are myriads of things composing the self, including the status of individuals in society and the prestige of their occupations. At this point, it is highly important to have ideal selves consistent with the demands of social contexts and what is valued in society. In case of inconsistency between the ‘ideal self’ and the ‘self’ created by society, individuals choose either adjustment or resistance during the construction of their selves.

### **1.1. Statement of the Problem**

Considering all, teacher identity is not only significant for teachers but also for students, parents, schools, authorities, which are the fundamental contributors to external perceptions to understand who teachers actually are (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston & Johnston, 2005). The research studies on identity tend to take the construct of identity from various perspectives (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Alspup, 2004; Jenkins, 2008; Varghese et al., 2005). Even though there is no specific theory regarding identity, the lens used in this study derives from socioculturalism and poststructuralism with a discussion of identity as a contextual, multiple, transformative, continuing, and dynamic concept.

In order to analyze the construction of teacher selves, which are multifaceted and complex transformations, personal and social perceptions of status need to be studied, as it is a matter of image composing of external and internal perception. The self is not a passive entity, but an incorporation of bidirectional influences, exerted both by society and the self (Guzman, 2010).

How teachers view themselves professionally seems to be affected by several factors which are mainly regarded as internal and external factors. While internal factors are related to internal motives such as reasons behind choosing the profession, dis(satisfaction)s about the job, and so on, the external ones show the societal perceptions including the social status of the teaching profession.

Based on the general premise that teachers are the backbones of the society (Oruç, 2011), the study of English language teachers' selves and status in the society has been gradually considered to be significant since the 20<sup>th</sup> century as these factors are acknowledged to have considerable effects on the quality of teaching and teachers' professional

development. The earlier research focused on the perceptions of in-service and pre-service teachers about the profession (e.g. Agcam & Babanoglu, 2016; Bahreini & Zamanian, 2017; Beijgaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000; Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006; Dhull & Jain, 2017; Egwu, 2015; Güneyli & Aslan, 2009; Kiralp & Bolkan, 2016; Oruç, 2011; Parvez & Shakir, 2013; Sener, 2015; Tajeddin & Adeh, 2016; Ustuner, Demirtas, & Comert, 2009) and some studied the perceptions of parents about teachers (Dozza & Cavrini, 2012; Guerra & Luciano, 2010; Kalin & Steh, 2010).

## **1.2. Research Questions**

This study aims to answer the research questions listed below:

1. What are the perceptions of
  - a) in-service English teachers
  - b) pre-service English teachers
  - c) parentsabout English language teaching as a profession in terms of its status in the society?
2. What are the motivations of in-service and pre-service English teachers for choosing teaching as a career?
3. What makes in-service and pre-service English teachers happy and unhappy with teaching?
4. Are in-service and pre-service English teachers satisfied/content with their choice of career as teachers?
5. Is English considered among the most important top-three school subjects according to in-service and pre-service English teachers and parents?
6. Is there a discrepancy between in-service teachers' perceived self-value and teachers' perceived valuing by others?

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

This study seeks to explore and compare the perceptions of English language teaching and English teachers in terms of three different groups by reaching answers for aforementioned research questions.

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

It is seen that the status of English teachers and the prestige of English language teaching profession in Turkish EFL teaching context have not received much attention from researchers. Considering that, the insufficiency of studies on language teachers' identities results in an incomplete comprehension of major concerns like teacher motivation, (dis)satisfaction, or job commitment (Day, et al., 2006). Therefore, the quality of language teaching should not be simply reduced to the number of students being taught the language without taking into consideration that an understanding of language teachers' selves and identities is a central factor in the design and development of teaching standards.

This study, by taking the previous studies a step further, aims to investigate the attitudes towards 'teaching English' and 'English language teachers' from a triangle of different groups- in-service English teachers, pre-service English teachers, and parents- besides the analysis of how personal and social perceptions of status interact with each other along with the construction of teacher selves.

### **1.5. Assumptions**

This study assumes that the participants of the research study answered the questions honestly and sincerely. The participants all volunteered to participate with no other motives but to contribute to the field through a research study.

### **1.6. Limitations**

The number of the participants can be increased to draw adequate conclusions. It

should be taken into consideration that this is an exploratory study and it lacks the thorough comparative perspective of the three groups of participants. It may be elaborated with more relevant issues address with a larger group of participants.



## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### 2.1. The Profession of Teaching

Teachers, with their pivotal role in the development of countries, have vitally important effects on the lives and learning processes of their students. Likewise, the feelings and attitudes of teachers to their own professions, learners, the educational context, parents, and the society cannot be ignored in order to promote the quality of education. Teaching profession

...lies at the heart of both the learning of children and young people and their social, cultural and economic development. It is crucial to transmitting and implanting social values, such as democracy, equality, tolerance, cultural understanding and respect for each person's fundamental freedoms (Education International, 2011, Article 29).

The complex nature of teaching necessitates the consideration of a range of factors such as beliefs and attitudes, values related to the profession, expectations and demands, social relationships with students, parents, and the whole society besides pedagogical knowledge and teaching skills and abilities. The complexity of teaching brings the status of teachers to the fore while the prestige of language teaching in the society is examined (Richardson & Wyatt, 2018).

Attitudes, beliefs, values, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and motivation are among the significant elements to be examined for the construction of the prestige of English language teachers (Richardson & Wyatt, 2018). These elements (based on theoretical frameworks) stem from the interaction among person (English teacher), profession (English language teaching), and context (parents, society, etc.).



In order to arrive at the understanding of teaching and learning processes, Varghese et al (2005) argue that it is essential to know teachers and how they feel as teachers first since teachers' practice is deeply affected by their feelings about the profession (Radai, Bernaus, Matei, Sassen, & Heyworth, 2003). In order to highlight the significant contribution of the teacher factor to education, there have been a number of research studies on the attitudes of both in-service and pre-service teachers to their profession (Güneyli & Aslan, 2009; Oruç, 2011; Özsoy, Özsoy, Özkara, & Memiş, 2010; Yeşil, 2011).

Oruç (2011) investigated the perceptions of trainee teachers to teaching as a profession and concluded that the participants (80 trainee teachers at a state university in Turkey) had positive attitudes to their future career as a teacher. Supporting the results of Oruç's (2011) research study by stating that pre-service teachers in Northern Cyprus held positive attitudes towards teaching profession, Yeşil (2011) further noted that their attitudes differentiate significantly in relation to their genders, their levels of satisfaction with their department, and their parents' attitudes to them.

Another study with pre-service teachers by Güneyli and Aslan (2009) tried to explore their attitudes towards the profession considering their genders, classes, socio-economic levels, and reasons for their choice of career. Whereas there was no significant difference among their attitude scores regarding their socio-economic level and classes, a significant difference was observed favoring female participants in relation to gender factor. Besides, it was seen that the majority of participants chose teaching as a career because of loving the profession. Similarly, Özsoy et al. (2010) investigated the reasons why pre-service teachers chose teaching profession and found out that nearly half of the participants chose it because of the sacredness of teaching and the fulfillment of their dreams.

Teachers' practice is indeed based on a belief system, which not only includes theories, technical information, and assumptions, but also attitudes, values, and expectations (Radai et al., 2003). Richards (1998) further groups teachers' beliefs under three main categories: beliefs about learners, teaching, and themselves. In other words, how teachers teach reflects their view of themselves, which is closely related to their relations with students.

## **2.2. Defining Identity and Self**

Identity is a concept emerged out of the explanation of human behaviors and "it is the basic cognitive mechanism that humans use to sort out themselves and their fellows, individually and collectively" (Jenkins, 2008, p.13). Depending on the discipline it is studied in, it has been interpreted as an external or internal construct. Whilst psychologists claim that identity is concerned with internal potentials, sociologists argue that it is "the result of external, social, political, and economic forces" (Cote & Levine, 2002, p.9).

Progressing from the principal assumption of considering the self as a unified and stable construct independent from context, Cooley (1902) coined the term the "looking glass self" which refers to the construction of the self as a reflexive process interacting with social roles, values, and attitudes (cited in Day, et al., 2006, p.602). Mead (1934) furthered the argument with this claim of 'generalized other' created by individuals themselves. The 'generalized other' not only refers to the accumulation of attitudes and values but also several various attitudes towards an individual which impact the attitudes of the individual to her/himself.

The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a

whole and to other individuals within that process (Mead, 1934, p.135).

This early concept of identity for the first time suggested a self, which is stable but employs different roles in social interactions depending on the position of the individual (Day, et al., 2006).

In spite of the major progress taken in early studies, they tended to ignore that individuals have multifaceted lives. Even though it lacks the dimension of continuous change for selves, Goffman (1959) suggested that each individual has a number of 'selves' which functions for particular roles at any given situation. Ball (1972) challenged the concept of identity as a fixed and stable construct by proposing 'situated' and 'substantive' identities. Whereas, situated identity refers to the self that changes in accordance with specific situations, substantial identity is suggested as a more stable presentation of an individual including how an individual sees her/himself.

It is worth noting that self and identity are differentiated but integrated entities and they are generally studied interchangeably in the studies on teacher identities. Stets and Burke (2003) argue that every position a self fills in society forms an identity. Various aspects of the self have been studied by research in a range of disciplines. One of the major differentiations is the two "actual" selves- one is about what an individual believes who s/he actually is and the latter is about "the kind of person an individual believes that others think he or she actually is" (Higgins, 1987, p.320).

It is a widely held view that identity is constructed as a consequence of being a member of a community as "there is a profound connection between identity and practice" (Wenger, 1998, p.149). Identity as a rather multidimensional construct is shaped from a variety of frameworks depending on the discipline it is studied in (e.g. philosophy, anthropology, sociology, neuroscience). Based on the burgeoning studies on identity, it is

seen that identity is not constructed by a single unit, but by various identity domains. Along with the several constructs of identity, some researchers study identity under two main units: personal and social identities.

**2.2.1. Personal and social identities.** Whereas personal identities refer to personal traits, self-perceptions, and goals, those aspects of the self, which differentiates an individual from the other individuals, social identities are related to roles and cognition in social relations, related to the aspects of the self which distinguishes between in-group and out-group members (Tice & Baumeister, 2001). These engagements can be “self-chosen or ascribed” (Vignoles, Schwartz, & Luyckx, 2011, p.4) which brings out ascribed identities and achieved identities (Linton, 1936).

Whereas, assigned qualities of individuals refer to ascribed identities, achieved identities stem from individuals’ own choices and stances. As Richardson and Watt (2018) note, however divergent they seem, both identities are to be taken into consideration in the course of studying teacher identity since the choice of a career as a teacher is not only about personal traits and inner perceptions, but also about social roles and outer reflections.

Through the formation of belonging, social identities have a great influence on teachers’ connections with the members of their social circle. Through those ties they “define who they are both for themselves and for the people with whom they interact” (Eccles, 2009, p.79). Identity for teachers cannot be taken as a concept isolated from its social aspect since teacher identity is built on “how teachers define themselves to themselves and to others” (Lasky, 2005, p.901). All in all, personal and social identities are not independent from contextual factors and “influence what teachers are motivated to do, the action they will take to achieve their goals, how well they will ‘fit’ within the work culture of the school, their

work satisfaction and whether the resources available to them support or undermine their commitment, persistence and identity as a teacher” (Richardson & Watt, 2018, p.42).

**2.2.2. Domains of the self: Actual, ideal and ought self.** In the framework of the self-discrepancy theory, which discusses the relationship between aspects of the self and affect, three essential domains of the self are proposed: the actual self, the ideal self, and the ought self.

...(a) the *actual* self, which is your representation of the attributes that someone (yourself or another) believes you actually possess; (b) the *ideal* self, which is your representation of the attributes that someone (yourself or another) would like you, ideally, to possess (i.e., a representation of someone’s hopes, aspirations, or wishes for you); and (c) the *ought* self, which is your representation of the attributes that someone (yourself or another) believes you should or ought to possess (i.e., a representation of someone’s sense of your duty, obligations, or responsibilities) (Higgins, 1987, pp.320-321).

In his theory, Higgins (1987) argues that individuals have different kinds of internalized standards called “self-guides” which they compare their current states with and self-discrepancy is the gap between these representations. These comparisons are fruitful to provide information about how close or distant the individuals are to their self-guides. The closer they are to their self-guides, the more positive their affects are. In the same vein, the discrepancy between the two selves determines how happy and depressed the individuals feel. The self-guide used in these comparisons may show variance depending on individuals. While some compare themselves to the ought-self, representing what is expected from them, others compare themselves to the ideal-self, attributed to their aspirations and hopes.

### **2.3. Teacher Professional Identity**

There has been plenty of research on professional identity; yet it has a wide range of definitions (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). With shifts in the nature of professions, the way individuals construct their identities has become more complicated and multifaceted (Caza & Creary, 2016). They further assert that professional identities function as bridges enabling people to assign meaning to themselves and define their roles; thus providing a broader context of meaning through which they claim an identity they act in. Similarly, teachers experience more challenges and complexities all around the world owing to educational reforms and sociocultural transformations, which cause some changes of expectations. In Thomas and Beauchamp's (2011) words

In a rapidly transforming global society, teachers, regardless of the country in which they work, are experimenting with their roles and recreating their professional identities in relation to the contexts that surround them, contexts that are shifting, sometimes in unexpected ways. This reality can make the development of a strong professional identity even more complex for new teachers (p.762).

In the same vein, professionalism in teaching has adopted a new perspective and teachers are supposed to be professionals and behave professionally (Day, 1999). In the scope of this study, professional identity is considered to be an embodiment of qualities which are introduced not only by external forces (e.g. authorities, schools, parents) but also the personal feelings of teachers with respect to their profession (Vahasantanen, Hökka, Etelapelto, Rasku-Puttonen, & Littleton, 2008). Even though teachers start to construct their identities at their pre-service education period, they continue to develop their identities throughout their career and face continuous negotiation (Beijaard et al., 2004; Vahasantanen et al., 2008).

Pioneering the sociocultural approach to learning, Vygotsky (1978) argues that learning, with its basis in interaction with others, is shaped by the context and cognitive development is not independent of individuals' surrounding culture. The same perspective applies to the emergence of identity as well. Likewise, it is acknowledged that identity is shaped by the interplay between individual and social mechanisms (Davey, 2013). In the same vein, teachers construct their identities in relation to their social interactions with their surrounding culture. Highlighting the significance of social perspective of teacher identity, Lave and Wenger (1991) developed the notion of situated learning arguing that learning is a way of creating meaning not in isolation but in engagement "through a process of becoming a member of a sustained community of practice" (Lave, 1991, p.65).

Based on the sociocultural premise that identity is a dynamic and shifting concept, teacher identity is multifaceted and requires the consideration of teachers' motivations behind their choice of profession as teachers, the perceptions of their own status in the society, and their commitment to teaching career. Teacher identity is shaped by the motivations of career choice "reflecting the degree to which a person categorizes her/himself personally and occupationally as someone who enacts the roles required of a teacher, engages with the social ties of the profession..." (Richardson & Watt, 2018, p.39).

Teacher identity is not merely shaped by the technical aspects of teaching, but "can be conceptualized as the result of an interaction between the personal experiences of teachers and the social, cultural and institutional environment in which they function on a daily basis" (Van Den Berg, 2002, p.579). Being crucial to the success of teachers, teacher identity development entails the interplay between teachers' perceptions and "professional and cultural expectations of what it means to be a teacher" (Alspup, 2004, p.35). In the same vein, the professional identity of teachers tend to be considered "as an ongoing process of

integration of the ‘personal’ and the ‘professional’ sides of becoming and being a teacher” (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p.113). Additionally, rather than a static construct, teacher identity reflects the sociocultural associations with the teaching profession since the “expectations of the ‘teacher’ schema are embedded in social and cultural practices enacted in multiple macro-level interactions” where personal motivations also play a role (Richardson & Watt, 2018, p.39).

The social and professional roles assigned to teachers by society reflect what “teacher” means in a society. In other words, the meaning of teacher and teaching in India may not be the same as the one in Norway. It might even show variance depending on the subject they teach. How the teaching profession is recognized and valued by the member of society impacts self-conceptions as the teacher schema and occupational identity are interwoven. In other words, considering the huge amount of time taken by the work people do, occupational identity is closely related to how people perceive themselves and the construction of self (Guichard, 2009).

The construction of self, invoking a poststructuralist perspective, is subjective, rather than a construct defined in binary terms. As in Norton’s (2000) own words,

While humanist conceptions of the individual- and many definitions of the individual in SLA research- presuppose that every person has an essential, unique, fixed, and coherent core (introvert/extrovert; motivated/unmotivated), poststructuralism depicts the individual- the subject- as diverse, contradictory, dynamic and changing over historical time and social space (p.125).

From the framework of post-structuralism, identity along with its subjectivity, which “is conceived of a multiple rather than unitary, decentered rather than centered” (Norton, 2000,



p.125), “is a dynamic process of intersubjective discourses, experiences, and emotions” (Zembylas, 2003, p.221).

Myriads of researchers with sociocultural and poststructuralist perspectives address the multiplicity of teacher identity through a variety of I-positions they undertake (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Varghese et. al., 2005). With a harmony of contrasts out of the multiplicity of identities, language teacher identities (LTIs) are

cognitive, social, emotional, ideological, and historical- they are both inside and outside in the social, material and technological world. LTIs are being, doing, feeling, imagining, and storying. They are struggle and harmony: they are contested and resisted, by self and others, and they are also accepted, acknowledged and valued, by self and others. They are core, peripheral, personal and professional... dynamic, multiple, and hybrid... And LTIs change... discursively in social interaction with teacher educators, learners, teachers, administrators, and the wider community (Barkhuizen, 2017, p.4).

The multiple selves of teachers require them to construct and reconstruct their teacher identities in accordance with the ongoing influences shaping the meaning of being a teacher. In other words, teacher identities are “mediated and developed through social and cultural interactions, and within the particular contexts of their current social practice” (Davey, 2013, p.27). This non-linear model provides teachers with a deeper comprehension of teacher identity that evolves over time through (re)interpretation of experiences as “they are creating their world while also being shaped by it” (Cooper and Olson, 1996, p.83).

It is evident that there is an inevitable interrelation between personal and professional identities of teachers. In the same vein, Kelchtermans (1993) argues that like the personal self, the professional self is subject to evolution in time and incorporates interrelated elements such

as self-image, self-esteem, job-motivation, teacher cognition, task perception, and future perspective.

**2.3.1. Teacher cognition.** With a concern of understanding the unobservable aspect of teaching, teacher cognition studies are concerned with identifying and explaining “what teachers know, believe, and think” (Borg, 2003, p.81) related to numerous aspects of their profession. The research studies in the last decades have focused on the pivotal role of teacher cognition in teachers’ professional lives (Borg, 2003) as exploring teachers’ knowledge and their belief system bears significance to make sense of teacher identity and paves the way for explaining the essence of becoming a teacher. In other words, teachers have been acknowledged to employ their belief system for the decisions they make before and while teaching. Borg (2003) further notes that teacher practices are also shaped by contextual factors including parents, authorities, principals, the society, the school environment, school policies, the curriculum, and standardized tests. Likewise, contextual realities, including external perceptions and the social status of the profession, are likely to constrain how teachers perform their professions as “cognition not only shapes what teachers do but is in turn shaped by the experiences teachers accumulate” (Borg, 2003, p.95).

**2.3.2. Motivation.** Concerned with all facets of activation and intention, motivation “is highly valued because of its consequences: Motivation procedures. It is therefore of preeminent concern to those in roles such as manager, teacher, religious leader, coach, health care provider, and parent that involve mobilizing others to act” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p.69).

Theories of motivations enable researchers to understand what excites individuals to perform and pursue several tasks to achieve their goals. Richardson and Watt (2018) suggest that there is an obvious relationship between motivations, identity, and self, hence the identity

and self hint “what people are motivated to do, how they think, and make sense of themselves and others, the actions they take, and their feelings and ability to control and regulate themselves” (Oyserman, Elmore, & Smith, 2012, p.70). However, teachers’ motivations are rather different than the general understanding of motivation in the sense of being more complex and interactive with contextual factors with several dimensions (Watt & Richardson, 2007).

Emphasizing the interaction among person, context, and task, the principle motivation theories regarding teaching and teachers have tried to explain teachers’ confidence (self-efficacy theory-Bandura, 1997); what bolster or erode teachers’ commitment (self-determination theory- Ryan & Deci, 2000); what teachers intend to achieve (achievement goal theory-Ames, 1992; Nicholls, 1989); and why teachers choose the teaching career (expectancy-value theory-Eccles (Parsons) et al., 1983; Eccles, 2009).

The widespread studies on teacher motivation displays that it is an issue of concern for the teacher identity and the quality of teaching. The review of literature on teachers’ motivations for choosing the teaching profession displays intrinsic, altruistic, and extrinsic motivations among the most referred groups of reasons to impact the career choice of teachers (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992). In order to compare the findings more precisely, a multidimensional instrument was developed in the light of the expectancy-value theory of motivation and enabled the measurement and comparison of the motivations of teachers from various countries in the framework of the FIT-Choice research program (Factors Influencing Teaching Choice).

Aiming to investigate the leading motivations of teachers for their career choice, the FIT-Choice model proposes a categorization of motivations tapping the ‘altruistic’ kind of

motivations as well as motivations with personal utility value, intrinsic motivations, and self-perceptions (Watt & Richardson, 2012).

With the motivations of shaping the future of children, reinforcing social justice, contributing to the society, and working with children, social utility values resemble altruistic motivations. Whilst the reasons related to the quality of life including job security, job transferability, and having time for family have been categorized as extrinsic motivations, it is assessed as personal utility value factors in this model. In addition to self-perceptions (perceived teaching abilities), social influences (former inspiring teachers and positive previous learning experiences) are also among the measured motivation factors. Measured perceptions regarding the profession also include perceived task demand (difficulty and expertise) and return (social status of profession and salary). In contrast to abovementioned positive motivations, teachers may have negative motivations of choosing teaching as a 'fallback' career (Watt & Richardson, 2012).

What keeps teachers in the teaching profession provides myriads of answers related to the motivations of teachers. It is acknowledged that the motivations of teachers, including what makes teachers choose this job, what makes them motivated or demotivated, have a non-ignorable effect on how they perform their jobs. No matter how varied the motivations may be, the studies on teacher recruitment continually touch upon salaries, occupational prestige and status as the major elements of attractions to the profession (Burns & Darling-Hammond, 2014).

However, another study with 55 teachers from 18 European and 3 Latin-American countries on teachers' status and their motivations reveals that reasons related to the interaction with learners besides those related to the significance of learning a new language are among the main reasons why teachers stay in their profession (Radai et al., 2003).

What teachers are not happy about in the teaching profession also points at the significant issue emerging as teachers' discontentment about their professional status. Working conditions (low salary, scarce opportunities for professional development), external perception (downgrading view of teaching), authorities' attitudes (not involving teachers into decision-making processes), and students' motivations (students' unawareness of learning languages) are some of the sources of dissatisfaction noted by teachers themselves (Radai et al., 2003).

While a majority of teachers decide to be a teacher with a sense of profession and a passion to do their best to help students learn, some tend to lose their motivation in time because of several internal and external factors and working conditions. In this case, they lose their sense of belonging to the profession which is highly related to their positive sense of teacher identity and which is essential to employ in teaching in the classroom. Thus, it is significant not to cause optimism, commitment, and hope for teachers erode for teachers' professional wellbeing and the future of efficient teaching. It should be noted that teachers' wellbeing is not only a psychological but also a social construct in a dynamic state broadly contributing to the community (Day, 2012). In other words, "...At this moment in time, as we research teachers' lives there may be no more important task before us than championing the cause of teachers and making clear the ineluctable connection between their well-being and the well-being of children" (Bullough, 2008, p.23).

**2.3.3. Job satisfaction.** Hargreaves and Flutter (2013) consider job satisfaction as an ineluctable effect on teachers' own perceptions and self-esteem. Whereas job satisfaction is basically related to internal factors such as social, emotional and creative aspects of teaching, job dissatisfaction is based on external factors forming the key elements of high or low status including external perceptions, working conditions and professional

development. At this point, perceptions of status bear great significance considering the fact that job satisfaction is closely related to how an individual sees himself/herself and how s/he is perceived by others along with what is expected from him/her. In other words, the sense of teacher identity and positive external perceptions play an ineluctable role in the commitment and performance of teachers.

**2.3.4. Perceptions of status.** Hoyle (2001) describes status as the position someone has in the social stratification of a society. In the context of the teaching profession, he explored professional status “as comprising of; prestige (its ranking in comparison to other occupations); status (the knowledge required by the profession in comparison to others); and esteem (the regard held for the profession by society)” (McGunnigle, et al., 2015, p.2). The word “status” that is derived from “standing” in Latin means one’s standing in the hierarchy of a society with two major dimensions. Whilst the objective dimension of status refers to the socio-legal positioning of individuals, the subjective dimension is about people’s own perceptions of their prestige in society (Hargreaves & Flutter, 2013).

The social stratification in society has been studied from various approaches in literature. Broom, Selznick and Broom Darroch (1981) identify three approaches to the social stratification: the objective, the subjective, and the reputational. According to the objective approach, individuals are placed in strata depending on their occupations, income, and educational background. The subjective approach requires people to place themselves in the social strata which they believe they belong to. The ranking of the last approach is based on the reputation of people and their occupations.

From a functionalist perspective, social stratification is natural and necessary as all social structures serve for the maintenance of the social order. In consideration of the needs and how important they are to the society, the positions are placed in the social hierarchy

depending on their contribution to the society. Accordingly, no society is unstratified and “social inequality is thus an unconsciously evolved device by which societies insure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons” (Davis & Moore, 1944, p.243).

Throughout history, teachers have been regarded as the reflections of culture and society in which they work. Teachers reflect not only the needs of a society but also the wider value system in society and its collective consciousness. It is broadly accepted that “Education was and is inseparable from culture and its historic period, is deeply buried in the technology of that period, and is radically transformed when that culture changes” (Houston, 2009, p.15).

Teachers’ beliefs about themselves and their identity construction have a connection with their perceptions of status, which is a complex matter of internal and external image (Radai et al., 2003). Radai et al. (2003) note that whereas internal image is related to how teachers portray themselves in their own eyes, external image is about how teachers are viewed by society including parents, other teachers, etc. and how their reputations are portrayed in the public eye. Symeonidis (2015) notes that it is also significant to distinguish between the social status applying to teachers and the occupational status applying to teaching. Whilst the latter may be measured objectively, the former has a more influential role for teachers’ wellbeing and contentment.

Are teachers accorded the status they believe they deserve? The answer to this question is crucial in the construction of teacher identity. A measure of discrepancy between perceived self-value and perceived valuing by others illustrates if teachers suffer from a status deficit in the society (Radai et al., 2003).

Teachers all around the world decide to be a teacher for a variety of reasons, yet they all need appreciation, respect, and autonomy. MacBeath (2012) argues that research displays that wherever teachers are asked about what their priorities are and what satisfies them in their profession, they focus on the significance of respect and recognition. It makes these points crucial in determining the quality of education and shaping the status of teachers.

The value placed on teaching profession is positively linked with the quality of education including students' achievement on the Program for International Assessment (PISA) according to the salient findings of the Teaching and Learning International Survey of 2013 (TALIS) aiming to represent the opinions of teachers in different countries around the world in order to see the working conditions of teachers and the quality of teaching (Burns & Darling-Hammond, 2014).

Depending on the findings of a global survey on the status of teachers collected in 55 countries, Symeonidis (2015) argues that teacher status is connected with “socio-cultural and economic contexts, job security, salaries and working conditions, teachers' professional development, representation of the teaching profession, professional autonomy, social dialogue, and involvement in decision-making”(p.10); yet “is experienced as a psycho-social phenomenon that can be perceived only by its reflections from various surfaces or interfaces” (Hargreaves & Flutter, 2013, p.36).

**2.3.4.1. External perceptions.** Teaching is a multifaceted profession that is not independent of feelings. The emotional investment of teachers causes them to experience a vast array of emotions including negative ones when they are not trusted and respected by parents, students, and the public. In other words, emotions cannot be ignored while the identities are constructed. They are the crucial link between the sociocultural contexts in which teachers work and how they act (Day, et al., 2006). Once emotions are not taken into



account in the construction of identities, the studies would be incomplete and disconnected. Similarly, some studies (Hargreaves, 1994; Nias, 1996; Sumsion, 2002) have displayed that the construction of teacher identity is not only related to technical aspects of teaching and personal lives of teachers but also to the interaction between teachers and their sociocultural and institutional environment (Day, et al., 2006). Likewise, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) argue that teachers construct and shift their identities in line with their interactions with their teaching environment, parents, and broader contexts.

Another major effect of external perceptions regarding teaching is that parents' attitudes form a basis for their children's learning experiences (Fullan, 2001). Thus, parents' favorable or unfavorable perceptions about the target subject may have serious influences on students' learning. In the same vein, Çetin's (1990) study shows that parents who have difficulty learning a foreign language may affect their children negatively by being a poor role model. Furthermore, in the sense of language teaching some tend to have a downgrading view of the profession by not considering it as a profession. It is thought that if one speaks a foreign language, s/he can teach it easily.

Noting the significance of external perceptions, Harmer (2001) adds that students are highly influenced by the people around them, making parents the most influencing factor for the learning process of their children. As the first and most influential teachers of their children, parents transferring their perceptions, prejudices, experiences, and attitudes to their children bear a pivotal role in children's learning period. Gardner (1985) argues that "parents are the major determiners of children's attitudes, at least initially" (p.108). He focuses on the two potentially influential roles of parents in children's language learning process: "active" and "passive" roles of parents. The first one refers to parents' direct involvement in their children's learning process by encouraging and monitoring them with a reinforcement of their

success at school. The passive role, which is more difficult to detect since the parents may not be aware of it, refers to parents' attitudes to the target language community. Depending on the attitudes, parents may support or inhibit the language learning process of their children. Therefore, as Cassity and Harris (2000) argue parental involvement cannot be ignored in the children's education life.

Not only the parents but also authorities, colleagues, school administration, the media- those involved in the social context of education in a broader sense- impact on teachers' actual impressions of their status and professional identities. Likewise, Kelchtermans' (1996) study with 10 primary school teachers from Belgium displays vulnerability as one of most recurring themes in their career stories. The more vulnerable the teachers are, the more passive and conservative they are while teaching. Therefore, the sense of identity and positive external perceptions bear great importance for teaching in terms of the maintenance of job satisfaction, commitment, and self-esteem.

**2.3.4.2. Internal perceptions.** In order for educational researchers and educators to interpret the teaching and learning processes, understanding teachers and knowing who they actually are bear significance. In other words, they need to know about "...the different roles they play in life, the people who are important to them, the concept they have about students and about themselves as persons and professionals, what values they believe are important for teaching and learning, critical moments throughout their lives, etc.; that's to say their self and their identities" (Guzman, 2010, p.30).

Considering the development of professional identities, perceptions are not merely imposed by external units (schools, authorities, parents, society) and accepted passively by teachers; but they are rather filtered through the personal perceptions of teachers with regard to their sense of professionalism. In spite of the construction of teacher identities starting from

the pre-service education period, it continues throughout their career with a necessity of an ongoing negotiation (Beijaard et al., 2004). In a nutshell, teacher identity is not only “open to the influence of policy and social trends as to what constitutes a good teacher” but also requires “social and policy expectations of what a good teacher is and the educational ideals of the teacher” (Chong, Low, & Goh, 2011, p.51).

Internal perceptions are, as Day et al. (2006) argue, about self-image which refers to the self-description of teachers in their careers. This description encompasses teachers’ own beliefs concerning their professions which closely interacts with teachers’ classroom practice. Their practice is based on a belief system built up in time and brought to the class with the teacher. It not only includes assumptions regarding teaching and learning and theoretical background of teachers but also their attitudes, values, and expectations. Noting that teachers’ beliefs affect the relationship between teachers and students, Richards (1998) classifies teachers’ beliefs as beliefs about learners, about teaching, and about themselves.

**2.3.5. Self-worth/ Self-esteem.** The social value of teaching profession is investigated from two fundamental aspects: perceived valuing of teaching by others –the social esteem- and the status of teaching in society. The two concepts “may not be understood as being entirely separate and distinct from each other nor would it be correct to consider them synonyms (Verhoeven, Aelterman, Rots, & Buvens, 2006, p.485).

**2.3.5.1. Perceived self-value.** Teachers’ beliefs and values about their professions are highly influential in teachers’ practices in the classroom. As Radai et al. (2003) suggest perceived self-value as one of the components of teachers’ belief system which they build up in time and bring to the classroom is directly related to students’ achievements. Teachers’ beliefs about themselves may also affect the status of the profession (Richards, 1998). In a broader sense, self-perceptions constitutes the backbone of teaching as “teachers’ views of

teaching mirror their view of themselves, and their teaching behavior reflects their essence as a person, which may affect the social relationship with their students” (Radai et al., 2003, p.46).

**2.3.5.2. Perceived valuing by others.** The findings of the Teaching and Learning International Survey of 2013 (TALIS) display that merely almost one third of the teachers from various countries believe that the teaching profession is valued in their society. The highest rate is in Malaysia (83.8% of teachers) followed by Singapore (67.6%), Abu Dhabi (66.5%), and Korea (66.5%). On the contrary to these high figures, the Slovak Republic (4%), France (5%) and Sweden (5%) seem not to value the teaching profession according to teachers (Burns & Darling-Hammond, 2014).

Involvement in decision-making mechanisms of education illustrates how the teaching profession is valued in the society as it promotes teachers’ feeling of professional respect (Burns & Darling-Hammond, 2014). In order to take teachers’ views into account as experts in their working environments, “teachers need a voice that will be listened and taken seriously if they are to make the public aware of their responsibilities and expertise” (Hargreaves & Flutter, 2013, p.51).

In addition to the contribution of involvement in decision-making to teaching’s value in society, Burns and Darling-Hammond (2014) argue that teachers are more likely to consider their profession valued in society if they are paid satisfactorily.

How the teaching profession is valued has also an effect on student achievement. In the countries where teachers perceive their profession as valued, students are more likely to have higher achievements (Burns & Darling-Hammond, 2014).

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

#### 3.1. The Research Design of the Study

This study implemented a mixed method research design with a synthesis of qualitative and quantitative data analysis. A mixed methods study was carried out with an aim of addressing the research questions with a clear and profound understanding (Creswell, 2014). In order to reach a larger group of participants, collect more data, and compare the results with statistical analyses, quantitative research was conducted through Likert-type questions enabling a broader picture of some issues or concepts. Besides quantitative data, open-ended questions were employed to collect qualitative data and support the study with a deeper analysis.

#### 3.2. Setting and Participants

Three separate questionnaires were designed and answered by three distinct groups: in-service English teachers, pre-service English teachers, and parents (whose child/children learn(s) English at school) in order to investigate their perceptions of English language teachers and English language teaching.

The participants of the study for the first questionnaire were 123 (94 female and 29 male) in-service English teachers who are currently working at state or private schools in Bursa, Turkey. Whereas the majority of the group (87%) works for the state schools, only 13% are teachers working for private schools. While over the half of teachers (58.5%) teach in primary-secondary schools, 41.5% of them teach at high school level. Further details such as the age groups of participants and their working experience are displayed in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1

*The age groups of in-service teachers*

The age group of participants					
<u>Age groups</u>	<u>22-27 aged</u>	<u>28-33 aged</u>	<u>34-39 aged</u>	<u>40-45 aged</u>	<u>46+</u>
Percent	7.3%	21.1%	35.8%	21.1%	14.6%

Table 2

*Working experience of in-service teachers*

Working experience of participants			
<u>Years of experience</u>	<u>1-5 years</u>	<u>6-10 years</u>	<u>11+ years</u>
Percent	12.2%	17.1%	70.7%

The second group was 48 female (67.6%) and 23 male (32.4%) pre-service English teachers who are university students in Bursa at present (N=71). Their ages were grouped under three categories as follows: 18-19 aged (1.4%), 20-21 aged (50.7%), and 22 and above (47.9%). When the participants were asked to note their teaching experience, it was seen that 21.1% has 1-2 years of experience and 4.2% of them has 2 years of more experience while those with no teaching experience constitute the majority (74.6%).

The final questionnaire was targeted to the parents whose child/children learn(s) English at school at any level except higher education. Out of 129 parents as participants, 75.2% of them are female while the rest (24.8%) is male. The parents seem to have diverse educational backgrounds (graduates of primary school-14.7%, of high school- 23.3%, of master/PhD- 14%) with a dominance of university graduates (48.1%). Around half of the participants (50.4%) have 2 children [1 child (34.1%), 3 children (14%), and 4 children

(1.6%)]. Considering the type of schools, 45.7% of parents send their children to private schools and 36.4% of them send their children to state schools while 17.8% of parents have children both at private and state schools.

### **3.3. Data Collection Instruments**

In order to evaluate the perceptions of the participants, one scale and two separate questionnaires were developed and used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Some items in the scale for in-service teachers (items 1, 2, 3, 17, 18) and in the questionnaire for pre-service teachers (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 85) were adapted from Radai's (2003) questionnaire on the status of language educators which was also adapted from the one designed by Kassabgy, Boraie and Schmidt (in Dörnyei & Schmidt, 2001). The other items of questionnaires were prepared by the researcher in accordance with the relevant issues aimed to be addressed. The questionnaire items were aimed to explore the perceptions of relevant groups about English language teachers and teaching English in Turkish socio-educational context.

While the scale was for in-service English teachers with 18 Likert-type and 3 open-ended questions, one questionnaire was for pre-service English teachers with 15 Likert-type and 3 open-ended questions. The last questionnaire was designed for parents with 11 Likert-type and 1 open-ended questions. The scale and two questionnaires were prepared in Turkish because it was thought that in-service and pre-service teachers would be more comfortable if they answered the questionnaires in their own mother tongue no matter how proficient they could be in English.

For the evaluation of the items, a content evaluation panel was formed with five experts about the domain in accordance with Lawshe (1975) technique. Each expert was provided with the list of items and asked to rate each as "essential", "useful but not essential", or "not necessary". Upon collecting all their feedback, CVR (content validity ratio) was

calculated for each item and those that failed to meet the CVR threshold of 0.99 were omitted. As a result of the assessment of content validity for the three questionnaires, 19 items were omitted in total (7 from the scale for in-service teachers, 5 from the questionnaire for pre-service teachers, and 7 from the one for parents).

The instruments encompass two main parts. Whilst the first part is about the demographic information of participants along with open-ended questions, the second part aims to explore the perceptions of participants on English language teachers and English language teaching by using a 5-point Likert scale with items ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

The questionnaire for in-service English teachers was factor analyzed via principle component analysis and direct oblimin rotation. Shaped depending on the factor analysis and the items were clustered around four factors as follows: status of English language teachers (items 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12), perceived self-value (items 16, 17, 18), happiness and contentment (items 2, 3, 5, 10, 11), and external perceptions/ social support (items 9, 13, 14, 15).

According to the results of the factor analysis, Kaiser- Meyer Olkin (KMO) value was found to be 0.81 and the reliability coefficients of the four factors of the survey were calculated to be .82, 0.73, .79, and .76 respectively.

Likewise, the questionnaire for pre-service English teachers was factor analyzed via principle component analysis and direct oblimin rotation. However, the components formed through the factor analyses were seen to be meaningless and not interpretable. Thus, the instrument was taken not as a scale, but as a questionnaire.

### **3.4. Data Collection and Analysis**

Convenience sampling method was employed when choosing the participants of the study. Later, snowball sampling was utilized by asking the participants to share the instrument



with others. The participants were asked to fill in an online questionnaire. The data was collected from July to October, 2018 online via Google documents. Participation in the research study was voluntary.

As Brace (2008) argues piloting, as “an essential precaution” to evade any misunderstanding for participants, was done with 39 (pre-service English teachers), 35 (in-service English teachers), and 28 (parents) randomly selected participants. (p.163). Upon the collection of data, it was analyzed via SPSS and the Alpha value for reliability was calculated to be .73, .75, and .70 consecutively. With more participants, the Alpha values for the three questionnaires of the research study were .72, .88, and .70 in the main study. The overall reliability of the three questionnaires were considered to be acceptable in accordance with the criterion of Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) stating that reliability is supposed to be at least ‘.70’.

Whereas SPSS was employed in order to analyze the quantitative data gathered via web-based questionnaires, the content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. Defined as a method to enable valid reasoning based on a set of principles (Weber, 1990), content analysis is a way to “transform data into findings” (Patton, 2002, p.432) with five major steps including identifying, coding, categorizing, classifying, and labeling the qualitative data in the analysis process.

## Chapter 4

### Results

#### **4.1. Analysis of the Perceptions of In-service and Pre-service English Teachers and Parents About English Language Teaching as a Profession in terms of its Status in the Society**

The first research question aims to investigate the perceptions of in-service and pre-service English teachers and parents about English language teaching as a profession in terms of its status in the society. While there was a relevant sub-group (status of English language teachers) of the scale for in-service teachers to explore the perceptions, those for pre-service teachers and parents were tried to be investigated through item-based analyses.

Displaying the perceptions of in-service teachers, the item-total mean of this sub-group was found as 3.95 (SD = 0.69) which shows that the participants seem to have positive feelings about their status as an English teacher in society. In order to see if teaching experience has an effect on the perceptions about status, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results indicate that there is no significant effect of experience on the perceptions of status [ $F(2, 120) = 2.41, p = .094$ ]. As for the type of school the participants work in, there is no significant difference in the scores for those working for state schools ( $M = 3.91, SD = 0.70$ ) and those working for private schools ( $M = 4.21, SD = 0.56$ ) in terms of their perceptions about status [ $t(121) = -1.67, p = .097$ ]. Likewise, the age group of participants has no significant effect on their perceptions of status [ $F(4, 118) = 0.88, p = .47$ ]. To see the details item by item, the mean scores of the items grouped under this factor are presented below in Table 3.

Table 3

*Items related to the perceptions of status for in-service teachers*

The perceptions of status			
<u>Items</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
1. Teaching English is a prestigious profession.	123	3.90	1.06
4. I see the pity on people's faces when I say "I'm an English teacher".*	123	4.21	0.91
6. I think English teachers are respected in the society.	123	3.67	0.94
7. When I say "I'm an English teacher", people give very positive reactions.	123	4.10	0.79
8. Teaching English is critically important for students and the society.	123	3.95	0.91
12. Compared to other teachers of various subjects, I, as an English teacher, am less respected by parents.*	123	3.86	1.00

(Items marked with "\*" are reverse items.)

In parallel with the sub-group (status of English language teachers) of the scale for in-service teachers, the same items of the questionnaire for pre-service teachers (except only item 12 considering the fact that pre-service teachers may not officially be working) were investigated through item-based analyses as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

*Items related to the perceptions of status for pre-service teachers*

The perceptions of status			
<u>Items</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
2. Teaching English is a prestigious profession.	71	4.46	0.82
6. I see the pity on people's faces when I say "I'm an English teacher".*	71	4.43	0.78
8. I think English teachers are respected in the society.	71	3.85	0.94
9. When I say "I'm an English teacher", people give very positive reactions.	71	4.26	0.79
10. Teaching English is critically important for students and the society.	71	4.40	0.78

(Items marked with "\*" are reverse items.)

When item means are compared for the two groups, it is obvious that pre-service teachers have a bit more positive perceptions about the status of the profession in the society. The lowest mean for both groups refers to the item stating if English teachers are respected in the society. While both in-service and pre-service teachers consider teaching English as a prestigious profession, it seems like they are not respected as they think they deserve.

It is important to see the perceptions of parents regarding the status of English language teaching in the society in order to present a comparative study. Accordingly, the related items were explored through item-based analyses as displayed in Table 5 below.

Table 5

*Items related to the perceptions of status for parents*

The perception of status			
<u>Items</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
1. English teachers are paid well.	129	2.96	0.93
2. Teaching English is a prestigious profession.	129	3.97	0.81
3. English teacher is a pleasing job title.	129	3.92	0.85
8. Math and science teachers should earn more than English teachers do.*	129	3.73	1.05
9. English teachers broaden students' horizons to experience different cultures and perspectives.	129	4.15	0.90
10. English teachers also teach student to live together with other cultures at peace.	129	3.79	0.94
11. Teaching English is as important as teaching other school subjects.	129	4.42	0.77

(Items marked with "\*" are reverse items.)

Although parents may be considered to bear positive perceptions about the status of English teachers in Turkish society, they believe that they are not paid well in spite of the considerable status of English teachers. In addition to the items listed above, parents were asked how proficient English teachers working for state schools are (Q5- English teachers working for state schools are not proficient enough.). The results suggest that parents do not find them qualified enough ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ).

#### 4.2. Analysis of the Motivations of In-service and Pre-service English Teachers for Choosing Teaching as a Career

The second research question aims to discover the motivations of in-service and pre-service teachers behind their choice of English language teaching as a career. In order to “transform data into findings” (Patton, 2002, p.432), content analysis was done following the major steps. The answers collected via an open-ended question asking the participants’ motivations for being a teacher were grouped and analyzed according to FIT-Choice factors (Watt & Richardson, 2007).

Table 6

*Descriptive statistics for in-service teachers’ motivations*

In-service teachers’ motivations according to FIT-Choice factors			
<u>Motivations</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Social utility values	123	57	46
Self-perceptions	123	27	22
Social influences	123	12	10
Task return	123	12	10
No motivation	123	10	8.2
Personal utility values	123	4	3
Fallback career	123	1	0.8

Table 7

*Descriptive statistics for pre-service teachers' motivations*

Pre-service teachers' motivations according to FIT-Choice factors			
<u>Motivations</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Social utility values	71	38	53.5
Self-perceptions	71	22	31
Personal utility values	71	4	5.5
Social influences	71	3	4.3
No motivation	71	3	4.3
Task return	71	1	1.4

In the light of the content analysis, highest rated motivations for both in-service and pre-service teachers for teaching English in the sample of this research study were found to be social utility values (working with children, shaping the future of children/adolescents, reinforcing social justice, contributing to the society) followed by self-perceptions (perceived teaching abilities). Though small in number, it was seen that some participants had no motivations to teach and 1 in-service teacher chose teaching as a fallback career. In addition, some chose teaching as a career because of task return including salary and the social status of English language teaching. The reasons related to the quality of life (personal utility values) were stated to be job transferability, job opportunities, having a lot of free time, and working hours.

#### **4.3. Analysis of What Makes In-service and Pre-service English Teachers Happy and Unhappy with Teaching**

The third research question tries to investigate what makes in-service and pre-service English teachers happy and unhappy with their teaching profession. The answers collected via

open-ended questions in the scale and questionnaire were content-analyzed for both groups separately and comparatively. The factors making in-service and pre-service teachers happy were analyzed under 5 main groups: those related to English language teaching profession, personal utilities, students, teaching, and working conditions.

228 statements were collected when in-service teachers (N = 123) were asked to list what makes them happy with English language teaching. The groupings for the happiness factors are shown in Table 8.

Table 8

*The groupings for the factors that make in-service teachers happy*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (in-service)		
<u>Factors</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
Students	228	65
Teaching	228	59
Personal utilities	228	48
Language teaching profession	228	44
Working conditions	228	8
There is nothing that makes me happy with my profession	228	4

While there are 5 main groupings for happiness factors, the largest group is seen to be the student-centered factors and only 8 participants stated that they feel happy because of working conditions. Each grouping of happiness factors is displayed in Tables 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 with detailed sub-group factors and figures.



Table 9

*The happiness factors related to students*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (in-service)		
<u>Students</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
Children and their interests	65	19
Working with children	65	13
Students speaking English	65	10
The happiness and love of children	65	9
Communicating with children	65	9
Motivated children	65	5

Table 10

*The happiness factors related to teaching*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (in-service)		
<u>Teaching</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
Teaching a new language and culture	59	18
Teaching something to children	59	14
The quality and variety of teaching materials and techniques	59	12
Raising an awareness of language	59	6
Seeing that students remember what you teach	59	5
Teaching a useful lesson to students	59	4

Table 11

*The happiness factors related to personal utilities*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (in-service)		
<u>Personal utilities</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
A new culture	48	13
A new language	48	12
Using English proficiently	48	10
Innovation	48	8
Having a broadened world vision	48	3
Creativity	48	2

Table 12

*The happiness factors related to language teaching profession*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (in-service)		
<u>Language teaching profession</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
It's fun	44	15
Feeling privileged	44	10
It's the profession I love	44	6
Positive societal attitudes towards the profession	44	3
Dynamism	44	3
The status of the profession	44	3
Its internationalism	44	2

Table 13

*The happiness factors related to working conditions*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (in-service)		
<u>Working conditions</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
Having holidays	8	3
Working environment	8	3
Salary	8	1
Job opportunities	8	1

When pre-service teachers (N = 71) were asked the same question, 120 statements were listed as what makes pre-service teachers happy with English language teaching profession. The figures for the groupings of happiness factors are displayed in Table 14.

Table 14

*The groupings for the factors that make pre-service teachers happy*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (pre-service)		
<u>Factors</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
Teaching	120	43
Language teaching profession	120	26
Students	120	22
Personal utilities	120	21
Working conditions	120	5
There is nothing that makes me happy with my profession	120	3

Out of 5 main groupings for happiness factors while the largest group for in-service teachers was student-centered factors, it was seen to be teaching-centered factors for pre-service teachers and only 3 participants stated that they feel happy because of working conditions. Each grouping of happiness factors is displayed in Tables 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 with detailed sub-group factors and figures.

Table 15

*The happiness factors related to teaching*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (pre-service)		
<u>Teaching</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
Teaching a new language and culture	43	24
Teaching something to children	43	9
The quality and variety of teaching materials and techniques	43	8
Seeing that students remember what you teach	43	2

Table 16

*The happiness factors related to language teaching profession*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (pre-service)		
<u>Language teaching profession</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
It's fun	26	9
The status of the profession	26	6
It's the profession I love	26	5
Feeling privileged	26	5
Dynamism	26	1

Table 17

*The happiness factors related to students*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (pre-service)		
<u>Students</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
Children and their interests	22	13
The happiness and love of children	22	3
Communicating with children	22	3
Students speaking English	22	2
Students saying “my teacher”	22	1

Table 18

*The happiness factors related to personal utilities*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (pre-service)		
<u>Personal utilities</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
Using English proficiently	21	10
A new language	21	5
Having a broadened world vision	21	3
A new culture	21	2
Creativity	21	1

Table 19

*The happiness factors related to working conditions*

What makes you happy with English language teaching profession? (pre-service)		
<u>Working conditions</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
Job opportunities	5	3
Salary	5	1
Working environment	5	1

In addition to happiness factors, the third research question also tries to investigate unhappiness factors for in-service and pre-service teachers. In order to arrive an understanding of this question, the two groups were asked to list what makes them unhappy with their teaching profession. In parallel with the happiness factors mentioned above, the unhappiness factors were also content-analyzed and 4 main groups were detected: factors related to English as a school subject, the profession, working conditions, and students.

When 123 in-service teachers were asked to list what makes them unhappy with their profession, 197 statements were listed in total. While only 7 in-service teachers have nothing to be unhappy with, the other factors were grouped under 4 categories as shown in Table 20. Each grouping of unhappiness factors is displayed in Tables 21, 22, 23, and 24 with detailed sub-group factors and figures.

Table 20

*The groupings for the factors that make in-service teachers unhappy*

What makes you unhappy with English language teaching profession? (in-service)		
<u>Factors</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
Working conditions	197	76
English as a school subject	197	53
Students	197	46
The profession	197	15
There is nothing that makes me unhappy with my profession	197	7

Table 21

*The unhappiness factors related to working conditions*

What makes you unhappy with English language teaching profession? (in-service)		
<u>Working conditions</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>
The curriculum	76	22
Weekly course hours	76	20
Overcrowd of classes	76	14
Lack of technical equipment in classrooms	76	12
Salary	76	6

Table 22

*The unhappiness factors related to English as a school subject*

What makes you unhappy with English language teaching profession? (in-service)		
<u>English as a school subject</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>
Education policies	53	16
The societal value attached to English	53	15
Lack of language awareness	53	15
Exam-oriented English education system	53	7

Table 23

*The unhappiness factors related to students*

What makes you unhappy with English language teaching profession? (in-service)		
<u>Students</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>
Unwilling students	46	32
Prejudiced students	46	11
Students who can't speak English	46	3

Table 24

*The unhappiness factors related to the profession*

What makes you unhappy with English language teaching profession? (in-service)		
<u>The profession</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>
Parents	15	6
Too much paperwork	15	6
Loss of credit	15	1
Neglect of our ideas	15	1
Teaching as an exhausting profession	15	1



Besides in-service teachers, 71 pre-service teachers were also asked to list what makes them unhappy with their profession and 97 statements were listed in total. While only 6 pre-service teachers have nothing to be unhappy with, the other factors were grouped under 4 categories as shown in Table 25. Each grouping of unhappiness factors is displayed in Tables 26, 27, 28 and 29 with detailed sub-group factors and figures.

Table 25

*The groupings for the factors that make pre-service teachers unhappy*

What makes you unhappy with English language teaching profession? (pre-service)		
<u>Factors</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>
English as a school subject	97	35
Working conditions	97	22
The profession	97	18
Students	97	16
There is nothing that makes me unhappy with my profession	97	6

Table 26

*The unhappiness factors related to English as a school subject*

What makes you unhappy with English language teaching profession? (pre-service)		
<u>English as a school subject</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>
The societal value attached to English	35	19
Education policies	35	8
Exam-oriented English education system	35	3
KPSS –Central exam for teacher recruitment	35	3
Lack of language awareness	35	2

Table 27

*The unhappiness factors related to working conditions*

What makes you unhappy with English language teaching profession? (pre-service)		
<u>Working conditions</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>
The curriculum	22	8
Overcrowd of classes	22	5
Lack of technical equipment in classrooms	22	5
Salary	22	4

Table 28

*The unhappiness factors related to the profession*

What makes you unhappy with English language teaching profession? (pre-service)		
<u>The profession</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>
Teaching as an exhausting profession	18	8
Loss of credit	18	4
Parents	18	3
Unqualified authorities	18	3

Table 29

*The unhappiness factors related to students*

What makes you unhappy with English language teaching profession? (pre-service)		
<u>Students</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>
Prejudiced students	16	9
Unwilling students	16	7

#### 4.4. Analysis of the Contentment of In-service and Pre-service English Teachers with Their Choice of Career as Teachers

The fourth research question tries to investigate if in-service and pre-service teachers are happy/content with their choice of career as teachers. Because the instrument used to collect data from in-service teachers is a scale, the mean of the relevant sub-group was calculated and it was found to be 4.10 (SD = 0.70) showing a relatively positive perception of contentment. In order to illustrate each item in the aforementioned sub-group, Table 30 is given with item-based calculations.

Table 30

*Items related to the perceptions of contentment for in-service teachers*

The perceptions of contentment				
<u>Items</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	
2. I think English language teaching profession is fun.	123	4.30	0.83	
3. I am truly satisfied with my choice of profession as an English teacher.	123	4.18	0.99	
5. English teachers help students open their minds to live all together in tolerance.	123	4.22	0.73	
10. I think English teachers are dignified individuals.	123	4.12	0.75	
11. If I had a second chance, I'd be an English teacher.	123	3.70	1.29	

The same items were also calculated for pre-service teachers via item-based analyses. The figures of the relevant items in the questionnaire for pre-service teachers are displayed in Table 31.

Table 31

*Items related to the perceptions of contentment for pre-service teachers*

The perceptions of contentment			
<u>Items</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
4. I think English language teaching profession is fun.	71	4.46	0.99
5. I am truly satisfied with my choice of profession as an English teacher.	71	4.25	1.13
7. English teachers help students open their minds to live all together in tolerance.	71	4.66	0.63
12. I think English teachers are dignified individuals.	71	4.14	0.89
13. If I had a second chance, I'd be an English teacher.	71	3.67	1.22

When the item means are compared for both groups, it is seen that they seem content with their profession in general, yet it seems like the two groups both question their choice of career as an English teacher considering the moderately high means for that mere item in the group.

#### **4.5. Analysis of English as a School Subject in terms of its Significance according to In-service and Pre-service Teachers and Parents**

The fifth research question aims to explore if English is among the three most important school subjects according to in-service and pre-service teachers along with parents. When in-service teachers were asked to rank English from 1 (the most important) to 5 (the least important) according to its importance, the mean value was calculated to be 3.12 (SD = 1.32) while 71.5% of participants considered English among the top-three subjects. In terms of pre-service teachers, the mean value for the same question was found to be 2.81 (SD = 1.56) and for almost (49.3%) half of them, English is among the three most important

subjects. In order to explore what subjects parents think to be important for their children, they were asked to write down the most important school subjects. The results showed that following Mathematics (95.4%) and Turkish and Literature (88.7%), English (67.9%) was considered among the three most important school subjects for their children.

In addition to this open-ended question for parents, they were also asked some questions related to the importance of English as a school subject. The high mean scores as shown in Table 32 also suggest that parents consider English as an important school subject.

Table 32

*The importance of English classes for parents*

The importance of English classes			
<u>Items</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
4. English classes are a total waste of time.*	129	4.72	0.64
6. English classes are as important as other school subjects.	129	4.33	0.87
7. Weekly English hours at schools are enough.	129	2.48	1.09

(Items marked with “\*” are reverse items.)

#### **4.6. Analysis of the Discrepancy between Teachers’ Perceived Self-value and Teachers’ Perceived Valuing by Others**

The sixth research question aims to explore if there is a discrepancy between in-service teachers’ perceived self-value and teachers’ perceived valuing by others. In this respect, the mean scores of the relevant factor groups were calculated. Whereas mean score of the factor group called “perceived self value” was found to be 4.51 (SD = 0.50), the mean score of the factor group called “perceived valuing by others” was calculated to be 3.28 (SD = 0.75). It suggests that English teachers may be suffering from status deficit. Teachers appear

to feel that they are not accorded the prestige they believe they deserve. Table 33 and Table 34 show the item-based analysis of the factor groups.

Table 33

*Perceived-self value*

Perceived-self value			
<u>Items</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
16. Parents are satisfied with my performance as an English teacher.	123	4.17	0.66
17. My students evaluate me positively as an English teacher.	123	4.33	0.59
18. I am really helping my students to learn English.	123	4.42	0.60

Table 34

*Perceived valuing by others*

Perceived valuing by others			
<u>Items</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
9. I think there is public support for learning English.	123	3.14	1.06
13. I think parents give support for learning English.	123	3.15	0.98
14. I feel that my profession is considered to be important by the teachers of other subjects.	123	3.60	0.90
15. I can see that my students care about English lessons.	123	3.24	0.99

## Chapter 5

### Discussion

This research study aims to investigate the perceptions of in-service and pre-service teachers and parents regarding English language teaching profession along with the motivations and (dis)contentment of both in-service and pre-service English teachers in addition to the reasons why they chose teaching as a career. In this respect, the results of the study are given in both qualitative and quantitative form via numerous SPSS analyses and content analyses.

Notwithstanding their age, teaching experience, and the type of schools they work in, English teachers seem to bear positive perceptions regarding their professional status in Turkish society. However, the mean scores for perceptions of pre-service English teachers about occupational status are a bit higher than those for in-service teachers. The lowest mean scores for both groups refer to the item stating if English teachers are respected in the society. No matter how prestigious English teachers think their job is, both groups believe that they are respected as they think they deserve.

Although teachers all around the world decide to be a teacher for a variety of reasons, they all seem to expect appreciation, respect, and autonomy along with a high professional status in the society. MacBeath (2012) notes that research illustrates the importance of respect and recognition for teachers once they are asked about their priorities and what makes them fulfilled as teachers. Thus, holding a positive sense of teacher status in the society is crucially important for teachers as it determines the quality of education systems to a great extent.

Whilst in-service and pre-service teachers do not feel to be respected, parents seem to bear relatively positive perceptions about the status of English teachers in Turkish society.

However, when parents were asked if English teachers working for state schools are qualified enough, the item mean was calculated to be noticeably low.

Teacher status, in Symeonidis' (2015) own words, is interwoven with "socio-cultural and economic contexts, job security, salaries and working conditions, teachers' professional development, representation of the teaching profession, professional autonomy, social dialogue, and involvement in decision-making" (p.10); yet "is experienced as psycho-social phenomenon that can be perceived only by its reflections from various surfaces and interfaces" (Hargreaves & Flutter, 2013, p.36). In this respect, the factors that make teachers happy or unhappy with teaching may reveal more about the perceptions of teachers about their status in the society.

In the context of this research study, it is seen that while student-based factors make in-service teachers happy most, they do not seem happy with their working conditions including the curriculum, weekly course hours, overcrowd of classes, lack of technical equipment in classrooms, and salary. The curriculum along with the pacing is the major unhappiness factor for both in-service and pre-service teachers. They believe that they are expected to catch up with a pacing that is primarily based on grammar subjects. Teachers do not seem to be happy with teaching what they are supposed to as they believe the curriculum should be based on four skills separately considering that it does not enable students to improve their productive skills. Both groups argue that the curriculum changes very often and they, as its practitioners in classrooms, are not involved in decision-making processes. Once they plan to have some extra activities to encourage students to be active participants of the classes instead of merely covering the course book, they face some problems like limited time allocated to English classes and lack of technical equipment at schools.



In addition to curriculum-based problems, both in-service and pre-service teachers state that they are unhappy with overcrowded classes. They note that overcrowded classes triggers failure as they are rather noisy and it is challenging to manage those classes. They strongly argue that English cannot be taught in such crowded classes as teacher need to spend more time with each student by letting them use the language in that setting.

On the other hand, motivated children showing interest in English lessons, working and communicating with children, and children's joy make in-service teachers happy with their job to a great extent. However, working conditions come last in the happiness factors and first in the unhappiness factors. Those who are happy with working conditions, which is less than 4% of participants, gave having holidays, working environment, salary, and job opportunities as reasons of their happiness.

Whilst student-based factors come first in the happiness list of in-service teachers, teaching itself is the factor that makes pre-service teachers happy most. Nearly a third of pre-service teachers are happy with teaching a new language and culture. However, referring to the same reasons given by in-service teachers, pre-service teachers do not seem content with their working conditions, as well. Similarly, Radai et al. (2003) argues that the most common discontentment factors are working conditions, external perception, authorities' attitudes, and students' motivations noted by teachers themselves.

In the context of this study, the reasons why in-service and pre-service teachers feel unhappy with their profession are working conditions (the curriculum, weekly course hours, overcrowded classes, lack of technical equipment in classrooms, salary), English as a school subject (education policies, the societal value attached to English, lack of language awareness, exam-oriented English education system, KPSS-Central exam for teacher recruitment), students (unwilling and prejudiced student, and those who can't speak English), and the

profession itself (parents, too much paperwork, loss of credit, neglect of teachers' ideas, teaching as an exhausting profession, unqualified authorities).

Nonetheless, in parallel with the research results of Agcam and Babanoglu (2016), regardless of what makes teacher dissatisfied with their profession, in-service and pre-service English teachers seem pleased with their choice of career without a gender-based and school-based significance considering the fact that only a few participants gave no reason to be happy with their profession. Furthermore, the mean scores for the perception of contentment for both groups are relatively high. However, compared to other items, one item (If I had a second chance, I'd be an English teacher) deserves a closer look. While the means of other items in the group are well above 4.00, the item-mean scores are 3.70 for in-service teachers and 3.67 for pre-service teachers. Despite their positive perceptions regarding their profession, they seem to question their choice of career as teachers. This issue requires a further analysis through more studies.

In addition to myriads of answers to what keeps teachers in the teaching profession, the motivations of teachers behind choosing teaching as a career "is highly valued because of its consequences" including having a non-ignorable impact on how they perform their jobs (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p.69). Based on the widely-held premise that there is a clear interrelation between motivations and identity (Richardson & Watt, 2018), the motivations of teachers, which are more complicated and interactive with various factors (Watt & Richardson, 2007), are analyzed according to FIT-Choice Factors (Watt & Richardson, 2007) in this study.

Social utility values, resembling altruistic motivations, are the main motivations of both in-service (46%) and pre-service (53.5%) teachers. Teachers are motivated by working with children, promoting social justice, and shaping the future of young generations. Similar to Özsoy et al.'s (2010) study which concluded that almost half of the pre-service teachers

chose teaching owing to the sacredness of teaching and the fulfillment of their dreams, both groups of this study are motivated by their devotion to teaching.

Following social utility values, self-perceptions come second in the list of teachers' motivations. Around one fifth of in-service teachers and nearly one third of pre-service teachers chose teaching as a career because they believe that they are good at teaching. It is acknowledged that teaching is an occupation highly involved with feelings and social influences (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Davey, 2013; Lasky, 2005; Richards, 2008). Likewise, former influential teachers motivated some of the participants of this study to be an English teacher, which also indicates the immense influence of teachers on the future and choices of students.

A small group of participants reported to be motivated by personal utility values, referring to the quality of life including having a lot of leisure time, working hours, job opportunities, and job transferability. Though small in number, some participants are motivated by task return such as the social status of teaching English and salary. Whilst only 1 in-service teacher chose teaching as a fallback career, only a few teachers reported to have no motivation to choose teaching.

Attitudes to English as a school subject may also reveal the perceptions related to English language teaching and teachers. In this respect, in order to present a comprehensive look at English language teaching, all participants were asked if English is among the top three most important school subjects. The results display that parents consider English (67.9%) as one of the most important school subjects following Mathematics and Turkish and Literature. Interestingly, the mean value for the question was found to be 3.12 (SD = 1.32) for in-service teachers and 2.81 (SD = 1.56) for pre-service teachers.

It is vitally important to measure the discrepancy between self-value and perceived valuing by others in terms of the construction of teacher identity (Radai et al., 2003). In case a teacher endures a status deficit, it not only affects the construction of teacher self, but also their performance in the classroom and students' success in parallel considering the fact that teachers' practice is not independent from their beliefs (Richards, 1998).

In this respect, the results display that in-service English teachers of this study seem to have a high perceived self-value whilst they think that they lack prestige they are supposed to have. They think that the society including students, parents, colleagues, and authorities do not take English as an important subject.

### **5.1. Conclusion**

The aim of the present research study was to explore the attitudes towards 'teaching English' and 'English language teachers' from a triangle of different groups- in-service English teachers, pre-service English teachers, and parents- besides the analysis of how personal and social perceptions of status interact with each other along with the construction of teacher selves in Turkish society. In order to conduct this study, a mixed methods research design was employed to collect data from the participants in Bursa, Turkey.

In the light of the synthesis of qualitative and quantitative data, it is seen that English teachers and parents seem to hold positive feelings about the professional status of English language teaching. While in-service pre-service teachers are mostly happy with their students and teaching itself, they are dissatisfied with their working conditions. In terms of the reasons behind their choice of becoming an English teacher, they are dominantly motivated by social utility values with selfless devotion to contributing to the society.

The results show that English as a school subject is considered to be among the most important school subjects by all participants. Parents seem to attach importance to the

teaching of English whereas in-service English teachers appear to be suffering from a status deficit considering the discrepancy between perceived self-value and external perceptions.

## **5.2. Implications**

The current study has presented some implications to be considered in terms of the construction of English teacher identity in Turkish setting. Considering the fact that identity theories on language teachers are fragmented and unfocused (Varghese et al., 2005), this study could contribute to the field of language teacher identity. In this respect, teacher identities need to be studied because they provide a better understanding of teacher practices in the classroom. In this regard, policy makers can make use of the perceptions of teachers on several issues concerning the formation of their professional self once they aim to increase the quality of English language education.

This is an exploratory study and it has merely brushed the surface of understanding perceptions about English language teachers and teaching; yet it has established some basic findings for a limited sample of participants. Although the findings of this study cannot be generalized considering the limited number of participants, they may guide the authorities and policy makers in reconsidering the importance of teacher factor to promote student achievement when they shape education policies or teaching conditions.

Considering the biggest unhappiness factor for teachers, which is the curriculum along with the pacing, teachers do not feel autonomous and creative enough. They repeatedly state that they are supposed to follow the pacing they are given at the beginning of each year with no teacher involvement in decision-making processes, which causes them to practice what they do not believe indeed with an eventual dissatisfaction with teaching English.

It is important for authorities to take teachers' feelings into consideration when they handle the education system and it should not be ignored that first teachers are to be happy for

a quality teaching system. In other words, "...At this moment in time, as we research teachers' lives there may be no more important task before us than championing the cause of teachers and making clear the ineluctable connection between their well-being and the well-being of children" (Bullough, 2008, p.23). Considering all, it is necessary to investigate and handle the reasons causing teachers dissatisfaction and unhappiness immediately with a promotion of more positive and supportive attitudes towards the profession.

It should also be ensured that pre-service teachers are informed about the working environment and conditions of teaching before they start teaching. It is highly important to have motivated pre-service teachers who will dedicate themselves to teaching and contributing to the society with positive attitudes towards teaching. Therefore, the reasons why they choose to be teachers bear great significance in terms of foreshadowing their job satisfaction. The profession should be more valued and respected to have more qualified pre-service teachers choosing to be a teacher not because of personal interests but social utility values.

Above all, because teacher identity is not independent from external factors, the interaction between teachers and the society bears great significance. Considering the results of the study suggesting that English teachers are not respected as they expect to in the society, granting teachers the social status they deserve may enable a more productive teaching environment.

Teachers face higher work-related stress and burnout compared to other professionals (Travers & Cooper, 1993). In the light of the studies, intense workload, weak professional relations with colleagues, students with low motivation and behavioral problems, inadequate salary, demanding parents, teachers' absence of autonomy in the classroom, imperious school authorities, and loss of respect for the profession are among the causes of strain for teachers.

They may drain their energies, reduce their work motivation, and lead to low job satisfaction. Therefore, the educational alliance between teachers and external forces including parents and authorities has great importance, seeing that “teachers’ professional lives are intertwined with their school and community contexts and larger policy frameworks that impinge on their practice” (Richardson & Watt, 2018, p.45).

### **5.3. Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research**

Bearing the limitations of the present study in mind, some recommendations can be made for further research. It should be noted that this is an exploratory study and the scope of this research study is limited in size of the participants. Thus, the issues addressed will be grappled with more thoroughly if further studies are carried out with larger group of participants. Furthermore, this study was only conducted in Bursa, Turkey. In order to have a broader picture with a collection of abundant data, it will reveal greater certainty with an immense contribution to the field.

One methodological limitation of the current study may derive from the fact that the conclusions were made depending on a mixed-method research. However, studies about professional identity require ethnographic study by enabling the researcher to immerse herself/himself in the situations of participants. Quite a more detailed picture may emerge from a study focusing on the relevant groups with further research with an opportunity to get ‘under the skin’ of the issues in question.

Moreover, a further research study may be conducted to investigate the perceptions of parents towards the profession of English language teaching in a broader context. Therefore, the study may develop a comprehensive scale for thorough analyses. It may also explore the influence of parental perceptions on their children in the context of parental contribution in learning processes.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Scale for in-service English teachers

#### English teachers' perceptions regarding English language teaching profession

Dear participant,

You are invited to take part in a research that focuses on English teachers' perceptions regarding English language teaching profession. You are asked to complete this survey that has two parts. The first part is about your personal details and the second part is about your perceptions.

Your participation is voluntary. There is no right or wrong answer; all that is important is that you indicate your personal feelings sincerely.

Any information that is obtained through this study will remain confidential.

Thank you very much for your support for my research study.

Assoc. Prof. Esim Gürsoy  
M.A. Thesis advisor  
Uludag University

Leyla Deniz Ertaşoğlu  
M.A., Uludag University  
[leyladenizz@gmail.com](mailto:leyladenizz@gmail.com)

#### **PART I**

*Please complete this part with your personal details.*

**1. Age:** 22-27  28-33  34-39  40-45  46+

**2. Your teaching experience as an English teacher:** 1-5  6-10  11+

**3. Male**  **Female**

**4. The type of school you work in:** State school  Private school

**5. What level you are teaching in:**

Pre-school  Primary-Secondary  High school  Higher education

**6. What is your motivation to be an English teacher? Explain briefly please.**

**7. Please list what you are happy with in the language teaching profession.**

**8. Please list what you aren't happy with in the language teaching profession.**

**9. If you had to rank the school subjects according to their importance, which rank would English be?** 1  2  3  4  5

**PART II**

*Please read the following statements and think about each in relation to your current job.*

No		Totally agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Totally disagree
1	Teaching English is a prestigious profession.					
2	English language teaching profession is enjoyable.					
3	I am truly satisfied with my profession as an English teacher.					
4	I think people pity when I say "I'm an English teacher".					
5	English teachers help students open their minds to living all together in tolerance.					
6	I think English teachers are respected in the society.					
7	When I say "I'm an English teacher", people give very positive reactions.					
8	As an English teacher, I think what I am doing is critically important for my students and the society.					
9	I think that there is public support for learning English.					
10	As an English teacher, I see myself as a dignified person/individual.					
11	If I had a second chance, I'd be an English teacher again.					
12	Compared to other teachers of various subjects, I, as an English teacher, am less respected by parents.					
13	I think that parents give support for learning English.					
14	I feel that my profession is considered to be important by the teachers of other subjects.					
15	I can see that my students care a lot about English lessons.					
16	I think parents are satisfied with my performance.					
17	My students evaluate me positively as an English teacher.					
18	I really help my students to learn English.					

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire for in-service English teachers

### The Perceptions of Prospective Teachers of English Regarding English Language Teaching Profession

Dear participant,

You are invited to take part in a research that focuses on the perceptions of prospective teachers of English regarding English language teaching profession. You are asked to complete this survey that has two parts. The first part is about your personal details and the second part is about your perceptions.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. There is no right or wrong answer; all that is important is that you indicate your personal feelings sincerely.

Any information that is obtained through this study will remain confidential.

Thank you very much for your support for my research study.

Assoc. Prof. Esim Gürsoy  
M.A. Thesis advisor  
Uludag University

Leyla Deniz Ertaşoğlu  
M.A., Uludag University  
[leyladenizz@gmail.com](mailto:leyladenizz@gmail.com)

#### **PART I**

*Please complete this part with your personal details.*

1. Age: 18-19  20-21  22 +

2. Male  Female

3. Your teaching experience as an English teacher:

None  1-2 years  more than 2 years

4. What is your motivation to be an English teacher? Explain briefly please.

5. Please list what you are happy with in the language teaching profession.

6. Please list what you aren't happy with in the language teaching profession.

7. If you had to rank the school subjects according to their importance, which rank would English be? 1  2  3  4  5

**PART II**

*Please read the following statements and think about each in relation to your current status.*

<b>No</b>		<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Uncertain</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Totally disagree</b>
1	I think English teachers have a good salary.					
2	Teaching English is a prestigious profession.					
3	English language teaching profession is challenging.					
4	I think English language teaching profession is enjoyable.					
5	I am truly satisfied with my choice of career as an English teacher.					
6	I think people pity when I say "I will be an English teacher".					
7	English teachers help students open their minds to living all together in tolerance.					
8	I think English teachers are respected in the society.					
9	When I say "I'll be an English teacher", people give very positive reactions.					
10	I think what English teachers are doing is critically important for students and the society.					
11	I think that there is public support for learning English.					
12	I believe English teachers are dignified people/individuals.					
13	If I had a second chance, I'd choose to be an English teacher.					
14	English language teaching is as important as teaching other subjects.					
15	So little time is given to English lessons each week that they have almost become optional.					

### Appendix 3: Questionnaire for parents

#### İngilizce Öğretmenliğine Yönelik Veli Algıları

*Saygıdeğer katılımcı,*

*İngilizce öğretmenliği algılarını saptamayı amaçlayan bir ankete katılmaktasınız. Anket kapsamında cevaplandırılması gereken iki kısım vardır. Birinci kısım kişisel bilgileriniz ile ikinci kısım ise algılarınız ile ilgilidir. Araştırmaya katılımda kesinlikle gönüllülük esastır. Ankette doğru veya yanlış cevap olmayıp asıl mühim olan sizin kişisel görüşlerinizi içtenlikle belirtmenizdir. Araştırmadan elde edilen tüm bilgiler gizli kalacaktır.*

*Bu akademik araştırmama katkınızdan dolayı çok teşekkür ederim.*

*Y.Lisans tez danışmanı  
Doç. Dr. Esim Gürsoy  
Uludağ Üniversitesi*

*Leyla Deniz Ertasoğlu  
Uludağ Üniversitesi Y.Lisans öğrencisi  
leyladenizz@gmail.com*

#### **BÖLÜM I**

***Lütfen boşlukları doldurunuz.***

**1. Cinsiyetiniz:** Kadın  Erkek

**2. Eğitim seviyeniz:** İlköğretim  Lise  Üniversite  Y.lisans /doktora

**3. Çocuk sayınız:** 1  2  3  4  5+

#### **4. Okul türü:**

1. çocuk: Özel okul  Devlet okulu

2. çocuk: Özel okul  Devlet okulu

3. çocuk: Özel okul  Devlet okulu

4. çocuk: Özel okul  Devlet okulu

#### **7. Size göre en önemli 3 okul dersini yazınız.**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**BÖLÜM II**

*Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeleri dikkatle okuyunuz ve her birini dikkatle ve eksiksiz cevaplandırınız.*

No		Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
1	İngilizce öğretmenlerinin maaşları iyidir.					
2	İngilizce öğretmenliği prestijli bir meslektir.					
3	İngilizce öğretmenliği bir iş unvanı olarak hoşnut edicidir.					
4	İngilizce dersi tam bir zaman kaybıdır.					
5	Devlet okullarındaki İngilizce öğretmenlerinin İngilizce bilgileri yeterli değildir.					
6	İngilizce dersi diğer okul dersleri kadar önemlidir.					
7	Okullardaki haftalık İngilizce dersi sayısı yeterlidir.					
8	Matematik ve fen bilimleri öğretmenleri İngilizce öğretmenlerinden daha fazla kazanmalıdır.					
9	İngilizce öğretmeni öğrencinin dünyasını farklı kültürlere ve bakış açlarına açar.					
10	İngilizce öğretmenleri çocuklara hoşgörü içinde hep beraber yaşama fikrini kazandırmaktadır.					
11	İngilizce öğretmek diğer dersleri öğretmek kadar önemlidir.					

## ÖZ GEÇMİŞ

**Doğum Yeri ve Yılı:** Gemlik-1988

<b>Öğr. Gördüğü Kurumlar:</b>	<b>Başlama Yılı</b>	<b>Bitirme Yılı</b>	<b>Kurum Adı</b>
<b>Lise</b>	2002	2006	Bursa Anadolu Kız Lisesi
<b>Lisans</b>	2006	2010	Hacettepe Üniversitesi
<b>Yüksek Lisans</b>	2016	2019	Uludağ Üniversitesi

**Bildiği Yabancı Diller ve**

**Düzeyi** : İngilizce- İleri, Fransızca- Orta

<b>Çalıştığı Kurumlar</b>	<b>Başlama ve Ayrılma</b>	<b>Kurum Adı</b>
	2010-2012	Smartlingua Dil Okulu
	2012-2016	İstanbul Kültür Üniversitesi
	2016-2017	IMPR-BM Mülteciler Derneği
	2017-2018	Bursa Eğitim Kalesi Anadolu Lisesi
	2018-	Bursa Teknik Üniversitesi

**Katıldığı Yurt İçi ve Yurt**

**Dışı Bilimsel Toplantılar:**

Gürsoy, E. & Ertaşoğlu, L. D. (2017). “Uyum Sürecindeki Suriyeli Mülteciler: Olmak ya da olmamak!” (Konferans Bildirisi), UYTOP 2017, Bursa/Türkiye.

**Yayımlanan Çalışmalar:**

Gürsoy, E. & Ertaşoğlu, L. D. (2018). Syrian refugees’ perception of barriers and bridges towards integration into Turkish society. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 31, 1-14.



Gürsoy, E. & Ertaşođlu, L. D. (2019). Acculturation of Syrian refugees in Turkey as a condition for successful SLA. In Romanowski, P. & Bandura, E. (Eds.) *Intercultural Foreign Language Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Contexts* (pp.26-44). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

**Diđer Profesyonel Etkinlikler:**

CELTA- 2016, ITI- İstanbul

31.05.2019

Leyla DENİZ ERTAŞOĐLU

## ULUDAĞ ÜNİVERSİTESİ

## TEZ ÇOĞALTMA VE ELEKTRONİK YAYIMLAMA İZİN FORMU

Yazar Adı Soyadı	Leyla DENİZ ERTAŞOĞLU
Tez Adı	İngilizce Öğretmenliği Algısı: Öğretmenler, Öğretmen Adayları ve Veli Görüşleri Üzerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma
Enstitü	Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü
Anabilim Dalı	Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı
Bilim Dalı	İngiliz Dili Eğitimi
Tez Türü	Yüksek Lisans
Tez Danışman(lar)ı	Doç. Dr. Esim GÜRSOY
Çoğaltma (Fotokopi Çekim) İzni	<input type="checkbox"/> Tezimden fotokopi çekilmesine izin veriyorum <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tezimin sadece içindekiler, özet, kaynakça ve içeriğinin % 10 bölümünün fotokopi çekilmesine izin veriyorum <input type="checkbox"/> Tezimden fotokopi çekilmesine izin vermiyorum
Yayımlama İzni	<input type="checkbox"/> Tezimin elektronik ortamda yayımlanmasına izin veriyorum <input type="checkbox"/> Tezimin elektronik ortamda yayımlanmasının ertelenmesini istiyorum 1 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 2 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 3 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tezimin elektronik ortamda yayımlanmasına izin vermiyorum

Hazırlamış olduğum tezimin yukarıda belirttiğim hususlar dikkate alınarak, fikri mülkiyet haklarım saklı kalmak üzere Uludağ Üniversitesi Kütüphane ve Dokümantasyon Daire Başkanlığı tarafından hizmete sunulmasına izin verdiğimi beyan ederim.

Tarih: 31.05.2019

İmza: 