Journal of Theoretical Educational Sciences, 18(3), 439-466, July 2025
Kuramsal Eğitimbilim Dergisi, 18(3), 439-466, Temmuz 2025
[Online]: http://dergipark.org.tr/akukeg
DOI number: http://doi.org/10.30831/akukeg.1491091

Investigating Language Teacher Immunity: Challenges and Opportunities for Professional Development

İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Öğretmen Bağışıklığı Üzerine bir Çalışma: Mesleki Gelişim Önündeki Zorluklar ve Fırsatlar

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Received: 7 June 2024 **Research Article** **Accepted:** 17 May 2025

ABSTRACT: This study seeks to determine the psychological immunity levels of English language teachers and the variables that may affect their psychological immunity Rather similar to biological immunity, teacher immunity manifests itself in two broad forms: productive immunity and maladaptive immunity (Hiver, 2016). The study also aims to shed light on the factors that have effect on EFL teachers' immunity state considering the possibilities and challenges in their teaching career. The data of the study were collected in two subsequent phases in a mixed method research design to accomplish the study's objectives. A 6-point Likert-type scale with 39 items was used in the first phase of the quantitative research to collect data from EFL instructors who were currently employed at foundation and state universities in the southern region of Türkiye. 15 open-ended questions were posed during the qualitative phase. The quantitative data showed that 117 participant teachers are around halfway immunity (M=3.76). The findings of the MANOVA test showed a statistically significant relationship between immunity level and gender, degree, and the kind of university that instructors are affiliated. Additionally, the qualitative data showed that teacher immunity is positively influenced by participation in professional development activities, pursuing lifelong learning endeavour in challenging circumstances, and academic collegiality.

Keywords: Complex dynamic systems theory, coping, English language teacher immunity, professional development resilience, teacher motivation.

ÖZ: Bu çalışma İngilizce öğretim görevlilerinin psikolojik bağışıklık düzeylerini ve onların psikolojik bağışıklıklarını etkileyebilecek adaptif veya maladaptif değişkenleri belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma aynı zamanda İngilizce öğretim görevlilerinin profesyonel gelişimi açısından algılanan öğretmen bağışıklığına ve kariyerlerinde karşılaşabilecekleri olasılıklara ve engellere ışık tutmayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmanın hedeflerine ulaşmak için karma yöntem araştırma tasarımı ile veri toplamanın iki aşaması kullanılmıştır. Nicel araştırmanın ilk aşamasında, Türkiye'nin güney bölgesindeki vakıf ve devlet üniversitelerinde görev yapan üniversite yabancı dil öğretim elemanlarından veri toplamak amacıyla 39 maddeden oluşan 6'lı Likert tipi bir ölçek kullanıldı. Nitel aşamada ise 15 adet açık uçlu soru sorulmuştur. Niceliksel veriler, 3,76 ortalama puanla 117 katılımcı öğretmenin bağışıklığın yarısına yaklaştığını gösterdi. MANOVA testinin bulguları, bağışıklık düzeyi ile cinsiyet, derece ve öğretim elemanlarının ders verdiği üniversite türü arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir ilişki olduğunu gösterdi. Ek olarak, nitel veriler, mesleki gelişim faaliyetlerine katılım, zorlu koşullarda yaşam boyu öğrenmeyi sürdürme ve meslektaş dayanışmasının öğretmen bağışıklığını olumlu etkilendiğini göstermiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Baş etme, dirençlilik, İngilizce dil öğretmeni bağışıklığı, karmaşık dinamik sistemler kuramı, mesleki gelişim, öğretmen motivasyonu.

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Citation Information
Durmaz, Z. & Kahyalar Gürsoy S. (2025). Investigating language teacher immunity: Challenges and opportunities for professional development. *Kuramsal Eğitimbilim Dergisi [Journal of Theoretical Educational Sciences]*, *18*(3), 439-466.

e-ISSN: 1308-1659

Teachers encounter physical and psychological difficulties along the way, such as managing their career cycles, dealing with the emotional demands of the teaching profession, and doing their best to live up to institutional or private life expectations as well as the expectations that are related to the teaching profession as a labor (Gkonou et al., 2020). Additionally, teachers look for employment possibilities that will help them advance their careers. For enthusiastic and motivated English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors with a strong desire to teach, to participate in professional development activities that are offered alongside their careers and also well-motivated to sustain their profession (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009) seem to be significant at any period of their profession. It is anticipated that this motivation would improve teaching methods as well as classroom effectiveness. Enhancing teachers through both internal and externally stimulating practices is crucial to ensuring this.

This study aims to investigate the motivational factors that drive university-level EFL instructors and examine the degree of their psychological immunity in the face of professional challenges. Given the critical role that teacher motivation plays in instructional effectiveness and learner outcomes (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021), understanding what sustains or undermines motivation among EFL teachers is essential. Additionally, psychological immunity—defined as an individual's resilience and adaptive capacity in professional settings (Hiver & Dörnyei, 2017)—is explored as a key factor influencing teacher well-being and persistence in the field. While teacher archetypes and beliefs contribute to professional identity (Farrell, 2011), this study primarily focuses on the interplay between motivation and psychological immunity, shedding light on their implications for teacher development and retention.

Literature Review

Teachers have seen a more challenging evolution in recent decades (Hiver, 2018; MacIntyre et al., 2020), and they are susceptible to a number of challenges (MacIntyre et al., 2020). Most of them find it hard to persevere in the profession due to numerous negative circumstances which might have an effect upon their desire to teach. Some of these teachers tend to have more resilient and robust approach towards those hurdles and they are able to overcome with their own self-motivation and self-organizing strategies whereas some others usually feel inadequate to deal with these problems probably because they are unaware of their own identity and self (Gürsoy, 2018). Moreover, the main concern is to find out whether it is possible to raise teachers' awareness about the issue and bring about the essential transformation on their motivation so that might redevelop more productively. In this regard, the concepts termed as it comes to resilience, motivation, and ultimately classroom performance, teachers' psychological immunity is seen as crucial (Hiver, 2018). Prominent academics have researched motivation for decades, and they have done it from a variety of angles. For instance, Rogers (1962) asserted that motivation results from a desire to meet higher standards and that this desire is a product of outside factors known as stimuli. Similarly, Maslow (1954) proposed that needs act as triggers for stimuli, which is a driving force of individuals' motivational acts, and Skinner (1968) identified those forces as conceptions that influence human conduct.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) proposed two types of motivational frameworks in their ground breaking study: integrative motivation and instrumental motivation.

Aligning with this, Gardner (1985) described motivation in this context as a "combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language" (p. 10). Additionally, Noels (2001) used self-determination theory, which theorizes that motivation is based on individuals' intrinsic interest (doing something for its own sake) in a certain activity and extrinsic desires (doing something for an external purpose) to the activity itself, which is somewhat similar to what they presented.

Recently, MacIntyre et al. (2015) stated that "motivation has adaptive and self-organizing properties, with feedback loops that continuously integrate internal and external contexts and act as reinforcing or counteracting forces, creating nonlinear changes in levels of motivated behavior" (p. 423, p. 423). Contemporary researchers (Hiver, 2017; Hiver & Larsen-Freeman, 2020) have taken these three reasons, which can operate as strong motivators on their own, to a new level by emphasizing the complexities of motivation. They argue that motivation is multifaceted, dynamic, and adaptive.

Overall, in modern psychology, the term "motivation" can refer to both the conscious sensation of desire and the full complex of ideas and emotions. Although it has been agreed upon the argument that motivation plays a major role in shaping human behavior, there does not seem to be a clear consensus regarding how motivation is perceived due to its complexity (Hiver & Larsen-Freeman, 2020).

Teacher Motivation

Motivation is defined as a "driving force in any situation that leads to action" in language learning and teaching (Richards & Schmidt, 2013), while students learn the language and teachers learn how to teach language and feel encouraged to participate in teacher development events, which is similar to the global definition. While research on L2 learner motivation has long gained attention and interest, studies delving into the emotions of English language teachers and their immediate psychology, that is, teachers' drive to continue teaching, have only recently received increased attention. As a result, an increasing number of scientists, such as Dörnyei et al. (2014), have investigated teacher motivation, teacher well-being, and other emotion-related themes.

Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009) distinguished two types of teacher motivation: motivation to teach and motivation to stay in the profession. In general, teaching can be regarded as an emotionally charged process in which each instructor experiences a range of pleasant and negative feelings. These feelings change depending on the situation and the time of day in this emotionally charged career. This intensity is referred to by Gkonou et al. (2020) as "emotional labor," which is defined as "the forced management of one's emotions to conform to the social norms associated with a professional role" (p.1). Gkonou et al. (2020) reinforce this theory by claiming that a psychological rollercoaster may be all that language teachers experience. This metaphorical rollercoaster goes up and down between school and personal life concerns, influencing their personal and professional well-being. Also, a recent study by Örük (2023) proved that the development of participant's emotions is significantly influenced by the type of students' attitudes, the classroom environment, the quality of the relationship between instructor and students, and other factors.

Teacher Identity and Sense of Self

The motivation for learning a second language has been reframed in terms of self and identity (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009). Throughout this process, researchers (Mercer, 2011; Taylor, 2014; Zembylas, 2003) have examined 'self' from a variety of theoretical, philosophical, and analytical perspectives. For example, Mercer (2011), who extensively works in the field of ELT, emphasizes the multidimensional, complex, and dynamic features of self, which is a basic life system of individuals through which teachers can realize a place in life. Similarly, Kumaravadivelu (2012) proposed two categories of beliefs that impact teachers' professional development: core beliefs and peripheral beliefs. In addition, according to Taylor (2014), "the disclosure of a public self in social interaction is called self-presentation" (p.95).

In ELT, a teacher's sense of self is critical in directing their behaviors and methods. Teacher identity may not be easy to define, yet Zembylas (2003) describes it as dynamic, meaning that it changes over time in specific situations due to internal and external influences. According to Van Lier (2008), self is a notion with a future-oriented dimension. As a result, teachers can reframe their understanding of learning and teaching and gain agency in order to shape the future teacher selves, changing them into critical thinkers, devoted, and resilient educators (Dikilitaş & Comoglu, 2020) through feeding the contextual and instructional factors as well as individual teacher characteristics (Bilgi, 2023; Er &Küçükali, 2023, Durmaz, 2023).

Overall, the teacher's position and the prestige of teaching as a field have altered dramatically in recent years (Graham & Phelps, 2003) and the teachers' self-concept has also evolved as a consequence of the changing teaching methods of the age. According to Nias (1996), this shift has positioned teachers on the scene as self-sacrificing characters, the ones who devote their personal selves in their work and give up their personal identities. The endeavors for devotion to the profession, and positioning themselves as committing teachers, who struggle to cope with the challenges of teaching, are connected to their psychological state of immunity as a defense system to ensure the "professional equilibrium and instructional effectiveness" (Hiver, 2017, p. 669).

Language Teacher Immunity (LTI)

Language teacher immunity, conceptualized and used metaphorically by Hiver and Dörnyei (2017), refers to "a robust armouring system that emerges in response to high-intensity threats and allows teachers to maintain professional equilibrium and instructional effectiveness" (Hiver, 2017, p. 669). As a novel concept in ELT, Language Teacher Immunity (LTI) has become increasingly essential in the field of language teaching in recent years. While various researchers have researched related subjects like motivation, resilience, and burnout, no studies on teacher immunity (TI) had been conducted before Hiver (2015) proposed the term "language teacher immunity" to the field. As a novel idea coined by Hiver (2015), this "robust armouring system" addresses risks and improves the teacher's instructional effectiveness. Teacher immunity, according to Hiver and Dörnyei (2017), is built on aspects such as teacher motivation, teacher self-efficacy, coping, hardiness, teacher emotion (positive and negative teacher affectivity), resilience, openness to change, attitudes towards teaching, and burnout.

Hiver (2015) discovered that L2 teacher immunity shows itself favourably as productive immunity and negatively as maladaptive immunity in his study. It evolves through a dynamic process and, in the end, it may have an impact on teachers' professional identity, motivation, self-efficacy, and persistence.

Teacher immunity and emotion regulation are seen as interrelated and dynamically changing structures that impact and trigger a change within the context of Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (Larsen-Freeman, 2017). While emotion regulation (Collie et al., 2018) allows teachers to control their emotional reactions to these expectations, teacher immunity serves as an armouring system that functions like a shield for educators in navigating the demands and stressors of their profession. Emotional regulation functions as a regulator in this dynamic interaction, having effect on the resilience and flexibility of teacher immunity. Effective emotion regulation, for example, can strengthen adaptive immunity, promote resilience and career advancement, whereas poor regulation can strengthen maladaptive immunity, resulting in burnout or stagnation outcomes in teaching profession. Samavarchi and Hosseini (2019) conducted another study on learner immunity on Iranian language students at the university level using a qualitative case study approach. The researchers coined the phrase "language learner immunity" to distinguish it from Gürsoy's (2018) concept of "student immunity."

A small number of studies have looked into teacher immunity, which is the topic of this study. Hiver (2015, 2016, 2017) is clearly the well-known researcher who created the term "language teacher immunity" and conducted studies on it. Following Hiver, a small number of researchers conducted LTI or LTI-related research. Hiver (2015) and his supervisor Dörnyei conducted the first study on teacher immunity. They proposed the novel term "teacher immunity" in the study by contrasting it with more familiar related psychological terminology such as teacher resilience and teacher burnout. Hiver conducted an exploratory study with four committed Korean language teachers who successfully resisted negative teacher emotions such as stress and burnout in his multi-stage research study.

Following that study, Hiver (2017) undertook a second study with roughly 300 language teachers in Korea, feeling that many questions about maladaptive immunity had gone experimentally unaddressed. His main goal was to validate the LTI model and give more empirical evidence using Retrodictive Qualitative Modelling, which included language teachers and teacher educators. He performed in-depth serial interviews with representative respondents to obtain data. The study's findings revealed a link between teacher immunity and emotional, psychological, and cognitive functioning in the language classroom. As a result of the study's findings, Hiver concluded that "teacher immunity has the potential to bridge individual and situative concerns in second language teacher education and the psychology of language teaching and learning." (p.669). These studies which have been done so far function as the foundation stones of the language teacher immunity research field.

All in all, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, only a small number of recent researchers have introduced psychological immunity to the subject within the EFL framework (Gürsoy, 2018; HaseliSonghori et al., 2018; Hiver, 2015; Hiver, 2016, Hiver, 2017; Hiver & Dörnyei, 2017; Ordem, 2017; Rahmati et al., 2019; Rahimpour et al., 2020; Sariçoban & Kirmizi, 2021; Saydam, 2019). The majority of researchers have

concentrated on teacher psychological immunity, with minimal emphasis paid to learner immunity (Attaran et al., 2019; Gürsoy, 2018; Samavarchi & Hosseini., 2019). Gürsoy (2018) wanted to investigate the components that comprise "student immunity" via the perspective of complexity theory in their thorough PhD study. Attaran et al., (2019) did another immunity-related study in the EFL environment to introduce "language learner immunity" as a novel concept in the EFL context. They displayed the language learner immunity (LLI) model and discussed how it works, as well as discussing the deficits in the immune systems of foreign/L2 language learners. In another recent study done by Namaziandost et al. (2024) highlighted the noticeable gap in research regarding the significance of teacher immunity among EFL teachers, along with implications for further research. To contribute more to the literature on language teacher immunity concept, this study also aims to fill a void in that the immunity state of Turkish language teachers at university level is investigated. So, the findings can propose suggestions and may provide affordances for EFL teacher in Turkish universities context.

Research Questions

The study aimed to answer the following research question:

1. What level of immunity do English as a Foreign Languages teachers in Turkish universities have?

2. Is there a relationship between teachers' immunity level and the factors, such as age, gender, degree, department workplace, university type, and teaching experience?

Method

This study used a nonexperimental, descriptive research method based on questionnaire data and actual informant words (Dörnyei 2007). Table 1 displays the study's research strategy.

Table 1

The Research Design Table of the Study

	Quantitative	Qualitative
Data Collection Tools	The Language Teacher Immunity Questionnaire, a 6-point scale with 39 items (Hiver, 2016)	15 Open-ended Questions (Hiver, 2016)
Setting & Participants	117 EFL Instructors at 6 Universities in Türkiye	11 EFL Instructors at 6 Universities in Türkiye
Data Analysis	SPSS	Atlas.ti
Test & Analyses	Box's M & MANOVA (Büyüköztürk, 2020)	Thematic analysis (Creswell, 2014; Elliott, 2018; Gibbs, 2007; Saldaña, 2021)
Research Questions	Question 1: Defining the archetypes	Question 2: Identifying the factors and the relationship with teacher immunity

To achieve the study's objectives and answer the research questions, a mixed method research design was used, and data were collected from multiple sources,

including (1) a 6-point Likert type questionnaire and (2) open-ended questions. The use of the Language Teacher Immunity Questionnaire (LTIQ) was employed in the quantitative phase, and quantitative data were obtained from 117 EFL teachers working at universities in Türkiye. Also, 15 open-ended questions were posed to a group of EFL instructors (n=11), who were conveniently selected from among those who took part in the first phase of the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). The preference of the selection was based on factors such as ease of access, closeness, availability at a specific time, and willingness to participate (Dörnyei, 2007).

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Descriptors	Sub-descriptors	Frequency (N=117)	Percentage
Age	21-30	41	35.0
	31-40	57	48.7
	41-50	13	11.1
	51-60	5	4.3
	+60	1	.9
Gender	Female	85	72.6
	Male	31	26.5
	N/A	1	.9
Degree	BA	22	18.8
	MA(or doing)	66	56.4
	PhD(or doing)	29	24.8
Department Working at	English Language Teaching	31	26.5
	School of Foreign Languages	85	72.6
	Other	1	.9
University Working at	State University	43	36.8
	Foundation University	74	63.2
Teaching Experience	Less than a year	1	.9
	1-3	19	16.2
	4-6	28	23.9
	7-10	21	17.9
	More than 10 years	48	41.0

Participants

The English language instructors at Türkiye's state and foundation universities were the study's target population. The participants constituted teachers working at English Language Preparation Schools and English Language Teaching departments at six universities in the Autumn and Spring terms of the 2021-22 academic year. Variables such as title, gender, age, and all others listed on the questionnaire vary in

terms of demographic traits. The sample size for the quantitative phase was 117 instructors, and the sample size for the qualitative phase was 11 instructors. It featured both native and non-native English language instructors from Türkiye. Nationality was not a variable in the study. The complete demographic information is given in Table 2.

Data Collection Tools

The Language Teacher Immunity Questionnaire (LTIQ)

Hiver (2016) created the questionnaire that was used in this study to measure LTI. It had 39 items on a 6-point scale (strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree=6) and was divided into seven components. Teaching self-efficacy, burnout, resilience, attitudes towards teaching, openness to experience, classroom affectivity, and coping were among the criteria considered. A reliability coefficient of .70 or above for a test is deemed adequate for test score reliability (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated for our study to evaluate the reliability of the scale (LTIQ), and it was.70. As a result, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of.70, the instrument Language Teacher Immunity Questionnaire demonstrated to be reliable (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

Open-ended Questions

This study adopts the 15 open-ended questions originally used in Hiver's study (2017). The open-ended questions in his study were formulated to validate the LTI archetypes through Retrodictive Qualitative Modelling (RQM) and was conducted as a second study on 4 focus groups (roughly 44 teachers) including language teachers and language educators in Korean context. The open-ended questions were also used as the qualitative data collecting instrument to obtain thorough information on the probable elements impacting instructors' psychological immunity level.

Regarding the validity of the data collection instruments, Hiver (2017) thought that many issues, especially those related to maladaptive immunity, had not been empirically addressed, therefore he conducted a second study on roughly 44 language teachers in Korea. His main objectives were to use Retrodictive Qualitative Modeling to validate the LTI model and provide further empirical evidence, involving language teachers and teacher educators. The findings of his study demonstrated a relationship between teachers' psychological, emotional, and cognitive functioning in the language classroom and their immunity. Based on the study's findings, Hiver stated that "Teacher immunity has the potential to bridge individual and situative concerns in second language teacher education and the psychology of language teaching and learning," (page 669). Respecting the validation process of the data collection tools, they were used in this study to collect data.

Data Collection Procedures

To obtain diverse data for the study, the study employed a two-phase data collection approach. In the first phase, quantitative data were gathered through LTIQ. The participants from selected universities and departments took part at this phase. The initial quantitative data were obtained in the first phase using Google Forms, a web-based survey tool. This method was chosen due to the restrictions of proximity and with the aim of facilitating broader reach, cost-effectiveness, and easier data handling for

analysis with SPSS. The survey, which included participant consent, was distributed through email and WhatsApp. Furthermore, in the second phase, qualitative data were collected through open-ended questions to complement and deepen the quantitative findings. Participants were conveniently selected from various universities and departments to ensure better representation. Due to the distance constraints, responses were gathered both in person (where possible) and through digital communication (email and mobile). Responses were then organized and stored for analysis.

Regarding the authors' roles, both authors work as EFL instructors at university context, and with more than ten years of teaching experience as well as administrative roles at the School of Foreign Languages, nested under higher education in Türkiye. Regarding the authors' contributions, the corresponding author completed the data collection, worked on data analysis, and was involved in the writing of the paper. Also, both authors participated in the design of the study, drafted and revised the research paper and participated in the analysis and interpretation of the results. Both authors read and approved the final work.

Data Analysis

The collected quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software (SPSS) to address the first two study objectives. The descriptive measures of the study were highlighted based on the quantifiable data, and the mean scores and standard deviations were calculated to identify the demographic information of the study. The assumptions for doing a MANOVA (Tabachnick, 1989) were tested. In addition, Box's M test was used to determine the equivalence of several covariance matrices. The covariance matrices were equal, according to the Box's M statistic (Box's M = 63.521, F =.955, p=.570.05). As a result, we were able to run the MANOVA test. As a result, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to see if there was a statistical difference between demographic characteristics and EFL teacher immunity (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

The information acquired through the open-ended questions served as the basis for the qualitative portion of the study. Hiver's (2016) study was used to develop a set of open-ended questions. The replies were analyzed using a thematic analysis (Creswell, 2014). For the study's results to be reliable, appropriate coding and categorizing processes were used (Gibbs, 2007). The codes were found and categorized as a total of ten categories as a consequence of the content analysis using a hybrid approach of coding (Saldana, 2021). To provide reliability of the emerged codes and categories, a cross-examination process was followed. The dense data were first coded by the first author until saturation, and a peer debrifing process (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) was utilized by an external expert with PhD in ELT. Finally, the emerged codes and the categories were verified by the second author who checked the overlapping codes.

Results

To present the descriptive statistics, the quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, and the qualitative data were analyzed using Atlas.ti software (Smit, 2021). Finding out the level of immunity that EFL teachers possessed as well as how the participating teachers were distributed among the various global types of teacher immunity and the corroborated teacher sub-types were two objectives of the study.

Hiver's four outcomes (immunocompromised, maladaptively immunized, halfway immunized, and productively immunized outcome) were utilized to demonstrate this, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

The Accepted Points and the Archetypes in Terms of Mean Scores

The accepted points	Archetype/Outcome	Teacher Type
0-0.99	Immunocompromised	Overcompensator teacher
1-1.99	Maladaptively immunized	Sell-out, Fossilized teacher
2-3.99	Halfway immunized	Defeated teacher
4 +	Productively immunized	Spark plug, Visionary teacher

The statistical results show that all 117 participating teachers had a mean score of 3.76 on the 6-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree to 6=Strongly agree). Because of this, 117 participating teachers, with an average score of 3.76, are roughly halfway to immunity. This score of 3,76 on a 6-point Likert scale indicates that the teachers in this study are close to moving into the next phase of productive immunity, but some barriers still hinder their full professional thriving.

Based on Hiver's (2016) framework and the study results, "halfway immunity" refers to a transitional stage in a teacher's psychological and professional development, which indicates the participant teachers have started to develop coping mechanisms and resilience but have not yet fully achieved the adaptive state of productive immunity. Table 4 contains descriptive information about the subscales.

Table 4

The Descriptive Information of LTIQ Subscales

Subscales	N	Rang	Min.	Max.	Sum	Mean	s.d.
Teaching Self-efficacy	117	2.14	3.57	5.71	551.00	4.70	0.43
Coping	117	3.00	2.80	5.80	510.20	4.36	0.56
Classroom Affectivity	117	2.00	2.83	4.83	455.67	3.89	0.39
Openness to Change	117	3.00	1.83	4.83	412.17	3.52	0.59
Attitudes towards Teaching	117	3.00	2.00	5.00	383.80	3.28	0.53
Burnout	117	4.60	1.20	5.80	365.20	3.12	0.89
Resilience	117	3.00	2.00	5.00	361.20	3.08	0.63
Total						3.76	1.06

Teaching self-efficacy is demonstrated in the first subscale (M=4.70). Of all the study's subscales, the teaching self-efficacy subscale had the highest mean score (4.70). Many teachers believe they are effective at managing their students' academic success and having a positive impact on their students' lives, according to the Teaching Self-Efficacy subscale. Second, the findings on burnout (M=3.12) indicate that while a

sizable portion of the participating instructors experience renewal, a far smaller portion experience burnout in their line of work. Furthermore, the results of the Resilience subscale (M=3.08) showed that teachers have the ability to recover from traumatic experiences in the classroom and to continue working productively despite dangers and hazards unique to the teaching profession. To elaborate on these subscales respectively, self-efficacy refers to a teacher's belief in their ability to effectively influence student learning and classroom effectiveness. First, high self-efficacy is an indication of productively immunized teachers (e.g., Visionary or Spark Plug types), as it reflects confidence in their professional competence and adaptability (Hiver, 2016). Secondly, burnout reflects emotional fatigue, displacement, and a reduced sense of accomplishment that teachers may experience due to prolonged occupational stress. Burnout is often associated with maladaptively immunized or halfway immunized outcomes (Hiver, 2016). Finally, resilience is the capacity to bounce back from challenges or setbacks and to continue performing effectively despite adversity. Hiver (2016) suggests resilience as a key feature of the shift toward productive immunity. Therefore, these results indicate that the teachers in our context embody the visionary or spark plug types as they develop stronger, adaptive responses to the demands of the teaching profession.

The following subscale, Attitudes towards Teaching (M=3.28), reveals that teachers are only somewhat in favor of retaining their job as teaching as their primary career. Since the participating instructors' overall mean score on the Openness to Change subscale is M=3.52, it can be said that they are moderately receptive to change. The average scores for classroom affectivity (M=3.89) show that EFL instructors primarily feel fondness for teaching and believe they are rewarded for their dedication. Last but not least, the Coping subscale scores (M=4.36) show that teachers strongly agree that they can cope with challenges and unpleasant conditions at school.

To sum up, Item 3: "I have confidence in my professional ability to help students learn." has the highest mean score (M=5.41, SD=0.80), and Item 30: "While teaching, I regularly feel depressed." has the lowest mean score (M=1.91, SD=0.95), indicating that different instructors have varying levels of language teacher immunity. The language teacher instructors who took part in the study have a medium degree of language teacher immunity, according to Table 4's overall mean LTIQ score (M=3.76).

We utilized one-way MANOVA analysis to investigate the connection between demographic variables (age, gender, degree, department workplace, university type, and teaching experience) and teacher immunity. The statistical significance results revealed that, while their age, department, and teaching experience had no effect on their immunity level, their gender, the degree instructors held, and the institution type they worked for did. Table 5 summarizes the findings of the analysis.

Table 5

MANOVA Results regarding Teachers' Immunity Levels Based on the Independent Variables

Dependent Variables	Independent Variable	F	λ
Teaching Self-efficacy Burnout Resilience Attitudes towards Teaching Openness to Change Classroom Affectivity Coping	Age	.726	.847
	Gender	1.770	.045*
	Degree *(Instructors hold)*	2.479	.003*
	Department (*workplace*)	.685	.684
	University type (*State/Foundation)*	.533	.027*
	Teaching experience	.999	.341

*p=.05

The MANOVA test findings revealed no statistically significant relationship between instructor age and teacher immunity levels (Wilks' Lambda =.847 F=.726, p.05). As a result, we can assume that the instructors' immunity level is unaffected by their age.

Second, as shown in Table 6, the MANOVA test findings based on participant gender revealed that female and male instructors differ in the Teaching Self-Efficacy dimension (Wilks' Lambda =.045 F=1.770, p.05). To put it another way, whether the instructors are male or female has minimal bearing on their immunity.

Table 6

MANOVA Results regarding Teachers' Immunity Levels Based on their Gender

Independent Variable	Dependent Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SS	Wilks' Lambda	F	p	Eta^2
	Teaching Self-efficacy	Female	85	4.75					
		Male	31	4.55	1.117		.098	.051	.051
		N/A	1	5.14					
	Burnout	Female	85	3.01					
		Male	31	3.43	4.246		1.225	.068	.046
		N/A	1	2.60					
	Resilience	Female	85	3.02					
		Male	31	3.27	1.425		.181	.174	.030
		N/A	1	3.00					
	Attitudes towards Teaching	Female	85	3.23					
		Male	31	3.38	1.349		2.802	.095	.041
Gender		N/A	1	3.20		.045			

Openness to Change	Female	85	3.55					
	Male	31	3.43	.371		9.358	.594	.009
	N/A	1	3.33					
Classroom Affectivity	Female	85	3.88					
	Male	31	3.92	.060		1.223	.687	.007
	N/A	1	3.16					
	Female	85	4.43					
Coping	Male	31	4.16	1.678		.545	.072	.045
	N/A	1	4.40					

Secondly, the MANOVA test was used to examine the association between instructors' academic degrees and their teacher immunity levels, and statistical significance was found between degree instructors have and immunity levels (Wilks' Lambda =.003 F=2.479, p.05). Table 7 shows the comprehensive MANOVA results.

Table 7

MANOVA Results Regarding Teachers' Immunity Levels Based on Their Degree

Independent Variable	Dependent Variables	Degree	N	Mean	SS	Wilks' Lambda	F	p	Eta^2
	Teaching Self-efficacy	BA	22	4.74					
		MA (or doing)	66	4.69	381		.098	.907	.002
		PhD(or doing)	19	4.71					
	Burnout	BA	22	3.06					
		MA (or doing)	66	3.22	748		1.225	.298	.021
		PhD(or doing)	19	2.92					
	Resilience	BA	22	3.12					
		MA (or doing)	66	3.10	2.196		.181	.835	.003
		PhD(or doing)	19	3.02					
	Attitudes towards Teaching	BA	22	3.14					
		MA (or doing)	66	3.38	897		2.802	.065	.047
		PhD(or doing)	19	3.15		.003			

Degree	Openness to Change	BA	22	3.81					
		MA (or doing)	66	3.58	581		9.358	.000	.141
		PhD(or doing)	19	3.16					
	Classroom Affectivity	BA	22	3.82					
		MA (or doing)	66	3.87	.522		1.223	.298	.021
		PhD(or doing)	19	3.98					
	Coping	BA	22	4.34					
		MA (or doing)	66	4.32	1.16		.545	.581	.009
		PhD(or doing)	19	4.45					

With over 80% of participants holding an MA or PhD in the subject, it is clear that the instructors' competence in the field strongly influences their teacher immunity level in terms of openness to change. In terms of departments, whether the instructors work in an English Language Teaching department of a Faculty of Education or a School of Foreign Languages has no effect on their teacher immunity level. Finally, data revealed that teachers' language teacher immunity levels change depending on whether teachers work for a state university or a foundation institution, according to the mean scores. Table 8 illustrates the MANOVA test results.

Table 8

MANOVA Results Regarding Teachers' Immunity Levels Based on Their University Type

Independent Variable	Dependent Variables	University Type	N	Mean	SS	Wilks' Lambda	F	p	Eta^2
University Type	Teaching Self-efficacy	State	43	4.55	1.695	.027	9.602	.002	.077
		Foundation	74	4.80					
	Burnout	State	43	3.03	.482		.603	.439	.005
		Foundation	74	3.17					
	Resilience	State	43	3.20	.938		2.331	.130	.020
		Foundation	74	3.01					
	Attitudes towards Teaching	State	43	3.29	.011		.038	.846	.000
		Foundation	74	3.27					
	Openness to Change	State	43	3.63	.866		2.499	.117	.021
		Foundation	74	3.45					
	Classroom Affectivity	State	43	3.82	.324		2.083	.152	.018
		Foundation	74	3.93					
	Coping	State	43	4.33	.063		.196	.659	.002
		Foundation	74	4.37					

Finally, the MANOVA test was conducted to test whether the relationship between teaching experience and instructors' immunity levels was statistically significant. The results have proved no statistical significance (Wilks' Lambda = .341, F = .999, p> .05).

Table 9

Codes of the Qualitative Phase

Theme	Language Teacher Immunity	Size		Size
Code Categories	Classroom Affectivity	15	Community of Practice	8
	Openness to Change	13	Teaching Self-Efficacy	8
	Positive Attitudes towards Teaching	11	Teacher well-being	7
	Professional Development	10	Coping	6
	Personality Trait	9	Profession Choice	6

This part of the study sought to identify potential factors influencing the immunity levels of the participating instructors. Ten elements are regarded as having an impact on instructors' language teacher immunity level as a result of the content analysis of the replies to the open-ended questions. Table 9 shows the number of sub-codes assigned to each category. Classroom affectivity is described as the conscious emotion, attitudes, and values that arise in response to an idea or experience in an educational setting (Garrett & Young, 2009). Some respondents' responses indicated that, while teaching is a tiring activity for teachers, the classroom provides a place to rejuvenate. This stage denotes instructors' positive classroom opinion. P1, for example, sees the classroom as a place where teachers recharge and embrace it as a source of motivation.

> P1: "I enjoy organizational aspects such as the preparation of lesson plans, the preparation of classroom activities…at the end of the day, I enjoy going to my classroom, it's energizing me, I'm mentally and emotionally pretty exhausted, but that's okay with me."

According to Hiver's (2016) study, instructors see themselves as part of the solution, collaborating with their colleagues when problems arise. As a result, several teachers have indicated that they are prepared to face the rigors of their profession.

> P8: "I had some classes because of which I wanted to resign and give up being a teacher. I felt that I could not deal with students who were really problems for me and their friends. They were making everything difficult and preventing me to teach. In time, I learned how to deal with them by applying different strategies to those naughty students."

The qualitative findings in the Classroom Affectivity category demonstrated that the instructors exhibit the Visionary Archetype of teacher immunity through the four stages outlined by Hiver (2016).

Attitudes towards Teaching is a component of LTI that focuses on teachers' sense of purpose and commitment to the profession in terms of organizational attitudes, professional attitudes towards the teaching profession, and dedication to their students (Hiver, 2016). As a result, P1, P2, P4, and P11's passion and interest in teaching demonstrated their favorable attitudes towards teaching, and they expressed their positive attitudes and internal factors for selecting teaching as a profession in very similar lines.

P1: “I love my job and I am happy with the decision I made.”

P2: “I have never regretted studying this department and doing this job. “

P4: “I have always had interest on languages and enjoyed teaching, particularly teaching English.”

P11: “I have always been interested in English and wanted to turn this interest into a profession.”

Additionally, the data related with Personality Trait category indicates that their positive personality traits help them be productively immunised. For instance, P1, P7 and P8 stress that patience is the prominent trait of a teacher.

P1: “I think a teacher should be absolutely, absolutely patient. I can say that since I started this profession, I have definitely felt this.”

P7: “I am patient while waiting for my students to build up a step-by-step understanding of English.”

P8: “I think that the most important characteristic is being patient and know how to deal with something.”

The information derived from the responses to the open-ended questions on Teaching Self-Efficacy factor revealed that the participant instructors are eager to maintain commitment (Day et al., 2007), and when people see passion and advancement throughout their career cycle, they feel genuinely motivated, enjoy what they do, and have a high degree of competence. (Fessler & Christensen, 1992). The Participant P1, for example, asserted that they have the ability and intention to use successful teaching techniques in the following utterance.:

P1: “I want to see myself in classrooms where I feel as efficient and helpful as possible.”

Also, Community of Practice has shown up as another important category in addition to Teacher well-being, Coping, and Profession Choice. According to the research (Fessler & Christensen, 1992; Bardakçı & Yoğun, 2023), when respondents communicated their thoughts on their future job as a teacher, there was a sense of collegiality, interchange of ideas, and willingness to novelty. P3, for example, emphasized the importance of teamwork and saw the transformation as a modern imperative. P3 also appears to be determined to help other instructors around.

P3: “Well, through experience and communication with the stakeholders, we will always change. I hope I will not be afraid of changing for a better future. I believe we will make use of online platforms more than we did in the past… I will also go on investing on teachers’ professional development process.”

Teachers who make an investment in their professional growth experience increased readiness and motivation to engage in professional development activities (Eken & Bosson, 2017). As a result, participation in trainings and reading to improve personal learning as a manner of engaging in PD activities even during difficult times has a beneficial impact on teacher immunity. They want to learn more as lifelong learners, and they want to participate in meaningful PD programs to update and develop. P2 highlights this point as follows:

P2: “In the future, I want to focus a little bit on the research dimension of education…The research dimension is a concept that lies both before and after the education progress. Examining this in detail will gain different perspectives.”

This study's final goal was to identify potential influences on the psychological immunity of the participating instructors. As a result, the elements that are thought to have an impact on language teacher immunity levels have been found as shown in Table 9.

Table 9

The Factors Affecting Language Teacher Immunity Levels

Factors	Results
Classroom Affectivity	Characteristics of *Visionary Archetype*
Openness to Change	Embracing and willingness to change
Positive Attitudes towards Teaching	Positive attitudes indicate high level of teacher immunity
Personality Trait	Contribution of positive teacher characteristics to teacher's productive teacher immunity
Teaching Self-Efficacy	High level of self-efficacy
Teacher Well-being	Mostly positive emotions, and job satisfaction
Coping	Embracing challenges, managing emotions in adversities
Profession Choice	The teachers, language aptitude and the desire to make a positive impact.
Community of Practice	Collaboration and collegiality
Professional Development	Professional development boosts motivation and teacher immunity

In summary, as long as teachers are supported through professional development opportunities, even maladaptively immunized teachers can become productively immunized. As a result, participation in PD activities has an effect on teacher immunity because participating instructors They exhibit a greater feeling of drive, wonder, and excitement to go beyond the parameters of their regular teaching duties (Ordem, 2017). Furthermore, teamwork and belonging to a community among staff members improve classroom practices and instructors' teaching abilities, resulting in classroom effectiveness (Bardakçı & Yoğun, 2023), job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, and collegiality (Fessler & Christensen, 1992). As a result, it is possible to conclude that the concept of community of practice has a favorable impact on instructors' immunity. To summarize, training involvement, the desire to be a lifelong learner, and collegiality in academic life all have a favorable impact on teacher immunity.

Discussion and Conclusions

Finding out Turkish EFL teachers' psychological immunity level and potential contributing elements to either maladaptive or adaptive psychological immunity was the aim of this study. Therefore, the goal of the study was to ascertain how instructors' immunity is related to the influencing factors (age, gender, degree, department workplace, kind of university, and teaching experience).

This study sought to examine the immunity levels of Turkish EFL teachers and the factors influencing these levels, contributing to the emergent literature on language teacher immunity (LTI). While earlier studies (e.g., Hiver, 2015, 2016, 2017; Hiver & Dörnyei, 2017) have conceptualized LTI as a robust psychological shield that supports language teachers to sustain professional equilibrium, this study provides empirical support from a Turkish university context.

To accomplish the stated goals of the study in relation to the research questions, this study was carried out in two phases utilizing a mixed-method research

methodology. The study questions will be addressed in the section that follows, along with details regarding the participants' immunity levels, descriptive statistical results, the connection between teachers' immunity levels and demographic variables, and factors influencing teacher immunity.

The Immunity Level of EFL Teachers

Hiver's (2016) Language Teacher Immunity Questionnaire (LTIQ) was used to determine the level of immunity of EFL teachers. The findings indicate that teachers have a favorable, effective, and active teacher profile. As a result, with a 3.76 average score, we can deduce that the subjects in our study were somewhere near the halfway point of immunity, which means teachers, who embody a "halfway immunity" archetype, may display partial resistance to professional challenges, but they still experience significant struggles or emotional fatigue. They are not entirely vulnerable like immuno-compromised teachers, yet they haven't fully internalized adaptive skills that characterize productively immunized teachers. In comparison to Saydam's (2019) study, which was conducted in a very similar situation but with a different research strategy, we received a lower mean score. Despite this, our findings support Saydam's study, which had an average score of 4.7. In contrast to our findings, Ordem (2017)'s findings from a case study with one instructor revealed that "the teacher displayed maladaptive behaviors with low motivation" (p. 1).

A noteworthy contribution of this study lies in its multidimensional approach to LTI. For instance, the high self-efficacy subscale score (M=4.70) reinforces the literature that asserts teaching self-efficacy as a cornerstone of productive immunity (Hiver, 2017; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). However, despite high efficacy, moderate scores in openness to change (M=3.52) and resilience (M=3.08) raise questions about the consistency of teachers' adaptive profiles. This suggests that while teachers feel capable, they may lack institutional or emotional scaffolding to support meaningful pedagogical change. This insight is consistent with Haseli Songhori et al.'s (2018) findings in the Iranian context, where receptivity to change was similarly limited.

Additionally, according to the results of Teaching Self-efficacy, the more the teaching performance turns into accomplishment, the greater the sense of effectiveness teachers have. Second, in terms of the Burnout subscale, the data revealed that teachers' working environments are surrounded by collegiality and professional development events, which is thought to prevent burnout. Furthermore, a significant proportion of instructors responded that they trust their experience to recover from tough times and that they are resilient to adversity on the Resilience subscale. This could be due to the unpleasant nature of teaching, as teachers appear to have faced numerous challenges over the last few decades. Additionally, we concluded from the findings on Attitudes towards Teaching that instructors marginally agree with the idea of loving the teaching profession and keeping it as their life's work. Furthermore, the data from the Openness to Change subscale revealed that, while some instructors are tempted to continue teaching with their previous implementations in order to avoid facing uncertain or unpredictable incidents, the majority of them reported that they were highly open to changes in their profession. The data also demonstrated that Classroom Affectivity

instructors are highly effective in the classroom, and they boldly seek a solution to overcome even the most difficult situations due to their coping skills.

The total mean score of LTIQ, taking into account all subscales, showed that the participating EFL instructors had a medium level of language teacher immunity. This may suggest that, even though the immunity level of EFL instructors is not demonstrated at a low level, it can still be raised through institutional improvements and psychological or professional reinforcement, which is thought to increase the immunity level of instructors. Through this assistance, instructors may feel more efficacious, exhibit more positive attitudes towards teaching, be more receptive to possible rapid changes in the profession, feel more affective, and build more effective coping methods in adversity.

Finally, Hiver (2016) and Larsen-Freeman (2020) treat motivation and immunity as relational systems shaped by both individual agency and environmental affordances. In this light, our findings expand the conceptual framework of LTI by evidencing how institutional type (e.g., foundation vs. state universities) can moderate immunity outcomes. Teachers in foundation universities reported significantly higher immunity, echoing Kızıltepe's (2008) observation that work conditions, such as workload, and professional autonomy, can affect well-being and immunity.

The Factors Affecting Immunity State and the Relationship with Teacher Immunity

Through statistical analysis, it was discovered that the immunity level of language teachers appears to be influenced by factors such as gender, degree, and university type, but not by factors such as age, department an instructor works in, or their overall amount of teaching experience. In accordance with this, MANOVA results on teachers' immunity levels based on gender suggest that female EFL instructors feel more efficacious in instructing, more refreshed, and have better developed coping skills than male EFL instructors. When the academic degree of the teachers was considered, the results revealed a statistically significant difference between the degree of the instructors and their immunity levels. The findings contrast the conclusions of Saydam's (2019) study, which found no overall impact of degree on teacher immunity. Given that certain circumstances produce certain results, this link may prompt scholars to investigate the intricacies and causes, as well as institutions to take the initiative to provide PD facilities and career development chances for their instructors.

In terms of the final point, our study's MANOVA test findings demonstrated that the difference between the means is statistically significant. As seen in Table 7, lecturers at foundation universities appear to be more effective. Similarly, research conducted by Kızıltepe (2008) and Mercer et al., (2020) demonstrated a disparity in the well-being of professors working in foundation institutions against those working in public universities. This disparity may also be related to the student profile, the university's physical conditions and opportunities, employment conditions, financial issues, or collegiality.

In the final phase of the study, data analysis revealed that teachers had generally good views towards instructing. They stated that they enjoyed and wanted to teach English. They also displayed positive attitudes by being effective in their classroom practices, motivated, and satisfied with their jobs as teachers. Furthermore, for

instructors, obstacles represented an opportunity to positively adapt, and they created strategies for dealing with stressful situations in their career.

In terms of openness to change, the qualitative findings contradict the quantitative findings. Because they do not want to face uncertainty, instructors are tempted to continue instructing in the same way they have in the past.

All in all, individual instructors and all other professional development service providers must enhance and refresh the varied, complicated, dynamic, and transitive aspects of teacher motivation and teacher immunity throughout time.

The qualitative phase of the study adds a more agentic and emotionally textured layer to these interpretations. Teachers' narratives reflect an evolving professional identity marked by classroom affectivity, self-reflection, and a desire for growth. The theme of "Community of Practice," for instance, illustrates Wenger's (1999) argument that belonging to a collegial network is vital for sustaining professional motivation and resilience. This aligns with Day and Sachs (2004), who stress the role of collaborative spaces in maintaining teacher well-being and emotional stamina—both of which are crucial for adaptive immunity.The quantitative data also revealed that instructors are resistant to novelty in their profession, preferring to stick to traditional practices while adhering to clearly specified standards. In summary, they displayed a lack of adaptability. Similarly, in an Iranian context research conducted by HaseliSonghori et al. (2018), all participants indicated limited receptivity to change. In our EFL teaching context, a number of variables, including the centralized, exam-focused educational system that places more emphasis on curriculum coverage than novelty, may contribute to resistance to novelty. Teachers may be discouraged to try novel approaches because of institutional pressures and strict adherence to standardized practices. Teachers may also be less open to change if they have limited access to professional development opportunities. Similar to studies in the Iranian context, these variables, along with a limited sense of agency, may contribute to a lack of flexibility.

Interestingly, the divergence between quantitative and qualitative data on openness to change deserves attention. While the scale scores suggest cautious attitudes, qualitative accounts reveal a more refined picture of conditional receptivity. Teachers reported a willingness to change, but only within supportive environments. This distinction highlights a possible limitation of Likert-type items in capturing the contingent nature of change readiness, which is better illuminated through open-ended narrative responses. As such, it supports recent calls in applied linguistics (e.g., Mercer & Kostoulas, 2018) for methodological pluralism to unearth complex teacher psychology constructs.

Another important insight from this study concerns professional development (PD). Our findings reinforce the strong correlation between PD participation and enhanced immunity, confirming arguments by Dikilitaş and Yaylı (2018) and Bardakçı and Yoğun (2023) that sustained PD nurtures adaptive teacher qualities. However, this study adds that it is not just access to PD but its meaningfulness and contextual relevance that matters. Teachers expressed a desire for PD aligned with their instructional realities, suggesting that generic training may fall short of fostering true professional transformation or strengthening psychological immunity. In line with this, we looked into participants' perceptions of professional development and the potential

impact of PD on language teacher immunity. According to the literature (Dikilitaş & Yaylı, 2018; Goktepe & Kunt, 2020), the examination of the responses to the associated open-ended questions yielded two categories: Community of Practice and Professional Development. As a result of the participants' overall favorable reactions, it is possible to conclude that the concepts of Community of Practice and Professional Development have a beneficial impact on teachers' immunity. One possible reason for the positive effect of Community of Practice on teacher immunity is that it offers a sense of belonging and collegial support, which helps teachers share experiences, reflect on challenges, and build resilience collectively (Wenger, 1999). Additionally, engaging in ongoing Professional Development allows teachers to enhance their skills and confidence, which can boost self-efficacy and reduce feelings of stagnation or burnout (Day & Sachs, 2004). Together, these factors contribute to a stronger, more adaptive form of teacher immunity by fostering growth and professional fulfilment.

Furthermore, every school is a learning institution that supports professional development programs for teachers through external assistance or in-service activities. A good learning organization requires motivated teachers to produce professional knowledge. These kinds of schools need teachers who are given opportunities so that teachers can actively participate in novelty, and develop institutional skills. Providing teachers with the mechanisms validating innovation, and implementing change is the responsibility of all other parties involved. Parents, teachers, and the school environment as a whole can all take the lead in bringing about, fostering, and improving change. All of these stakeholders have a substantial impact on teachers' willingness to change.

In summary, the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study complement each other in illustrating the multifaceted nature of language teacher immunity. Quantitatively, teachers demonstrated a medium level of immunity (M=3,76), with particularly high scores in teaching self-efficacy (M=4.70) and coping (M=4,36), indicating emerging resilience and professional certainty. These results are echoed in the qualitative data, where themes such as “Teaching Self-Efficacy”, “Classroom Affectivity”, and “Coping” reflect teachers’ personal accounts of professional fulfillment, emotional resilience, and classroom motivation. Furthermore, while the “Openness to Change” subscale showed only moderate receptivity (M=3,52), qualitative insights suggest a more nuanced willingness to adapt through collegial collaboration and professional development. Thus, the qualitative narratives enrich the quantitative data by revealing the underlying attitudes and values that contribute to the development of productive teacher immunity. In brief, involvement in training, striving to be a lifelong learner even during difficult times, and collegiality in academic life all have a beneficial impact on teacher immunity.

Implications

According to Hiver (2015), in order to empower teacher immunity as an armoring system, it is necessary to reinforce language teachers during pre-service education of prospective teachers (Boran, 2020), and through school-embedded professional development opportunities such as mentor-mentee or peer-coaching (Bardakçı & Yoğun, 2023) initiatives within a CPD framework throughout the in-service process. These PD initiatives and a strong feeling of community (Şahinkarakaş,

& Tokoz-Göktepe, F., 2018) would complement each other. In line with the literature, findings of the study suggest that professional development initiatives should be promoted among language teachers to boost teachers' motivation and teacher immunity.

Furthermore, teacher well-being comprises both positive and negative emotions (Seligman, 2011; Kızıltepe, 2008). Physical, emotional, mental or intellectual, and spiritual well-being of teachers should be prioritized. As a result, professional and emotional support from administration, colleagues, and all other stakeholders is critical in equipping instructors with effective teaching abilities (Namaziandost et al., 2024). Depending on the findings, enhancing collaboration and collegiality for the sake of positive emotions towards the profession and of the job satisfaction should be valued by the decision makers.

Finally, language teaching is clearly a complex and dynamic system (Larsen-Freeman, 2012, 2015; McDonough, 2007). As a result, we should emphasize that teachers' academic, psychological, and emotional requirements are intertwined and evolve over time. As the findings of the study suggest, to meet these complex and dynamic needs, as well as raise awareness of 21st century learning and innovation skills (Caena, 2011), teachers' professional development or training opportunities must be expanded, and teachers' psychological, emotional, academic, and societal needs must be considered during pre-service (Arslan & Almacıoğlu, 2023) and in-service practices.

Limitations

It should be noted that a few constraints may have influenced the findings of this mixed-method study. To begin, one of our study's major weaknesses is the sampling of respondents. We included only a number of universities in two regions of Türkiye. For a broader picture, additional EFL instructors from different universities across the country can be included. The second limitation is the time frame for data collecting. The data collecting period for both the quantitative and qualitative stages of the study corresponded with the post Covid-19 pandemic period, which was a more difficult period with fluctuating emotions (Akour et al., 2020). During data collection period, the participants were asked to verbalize their overall emotions, but not the instant ones. Despite this, rather than concentrating on their overall ideas of the topics under investigation, they may have been influenced by the period's intensity while responding the questionnaire and the interview questions. The last limitation of the study could be about the data collection tools because both quantitative and qualitative tools had been used in only a few studies since they were developed by Hiver (2015). Although a reliability coefficient was calculated and deemed adequate for this study, use of the tools could give more reliable results in a different context, such as primary, secondary, and high schools. In this study, we investigated the factors impacting language teachers' immunity through a questionnaire and some open-ended interview questions, but we did not utilize any intervention. Future research on language teacher immunity may include an intervention that follows a well-established systematic approach of research. This kind of research may adopt process tracing method so that the fluctuations and the causal mechanisms impacting those fluctuations can be traced in their context.

Acknowledgements

No funding or financial support of any kind was received by the authors for the study. This study was approved by the University Research Ethics Committee (approval no. 12345678-000-E.2000004677). All participants provided written informed consent prior to enrollment and data collection in the study. The questionnaire and the openended questions included the consent part for the participants.

Statement of Responsibility

Zekeriya DURMAZ completed the data collection, worked on data analysis, and was involved in the writing of the manuscript. Semiha KAHYALAR-GÜRSOY and Zekeriya DURMAZ participated in the design of the study, drafted the manuscript and participated in the interpretation of the results. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

We have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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