

EFL TEACHERS' AGENCY IN MoNE CONTEXT

Merve Tuncer
Gazi University, Turkey
mervetncr01@gmail.com

Burçak Yılmaz Yakışık
Gazi University, Turkey
burcak@gazi.edu.tr

ABSTRACT

Teacher agency is a fundamental concept in the literature that explains teachers' pedagogical decision-making processes, professional autonomy, and adaptability to changing contextual conditions (Biesta & Tedder, 2007; Priestly et al., 2015). Although the concept has received increasing scholarly attention worldwide, research on English Language Teaching (ELT) teacher agency in Turkey remains limited and fragmented. Previous studies have often addressed the issue indirectly through related constructs such as motivation, self-efficacy, professional well-being, and social justice, while comprehensive investigations focusing directly on teacher agency are scarce (Mutlu, 2017; Gülmez, 2019; Ersöz, 2021; Öztürk, 2022; Otlu, 2024). Against this backdrop, the present study is among the few attempts to directly investigate EFL teachers' perceptions of agency in the Turkish MoNE context and to examine the contextual and personal factors influencing its enactment.

Preliminary findings from an initial sample of 32 teachers of a larger study suggest that overall agency levels are moderate to high. Teachers reported stronger enactment of agency in classroom practices and professional development, particularly in reflective practice, technology integration, and promoting student self-assessment. In contrast, institutional–community engagement, such as collaboration with parents, involvement in community-based projects, and participation in academic events, appeared relatively weaker and more variable. Moreover, very weak differences were observed across gender, teaching level, teaching experience, or workload, though a slight tendency toward higher agency was noted among teachers aged 36–40. These initial findings highlight the need for greater structural and organizational support to strengthen institutional and community dimensions of agency. The study contributes to the limited body of ELT teacher agency research in Turkey and provides practical insights for policymakers and school leaders on fostering teacher agency more effectively.