

# An Investigation on EFL Teachers' Attitude toward Teaching Profession

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## Abstract

Teaching is described as a demanding job that requires in-depth knowledge of subject content, age-specific pedagogy, and many varied skills such as patience, leadership, and creativity. Teaching a foreign language constitutes another challenge for the teachers who are already attached the primary liability in raising generations for contributing to the development of their country. Considering that foreign language teachers' attitudes toward their job largely influence their professional performance, this study aims to scrutinize whether attitude of EFL teachers toward teaching profession significantly differ across level of educational institutions where they are working. Accordingly, an attitude scale was administered to EFL teachers working at state primary schools, secondary schools, and institutions of higher education in Turkey. The results indicated that the majority of the participants have positive attitudes toward their job despite problems they encounter while performing it. The study reported and discussed research findings in comprehensively, and offered a few pedagogical implications, and suggestions for further directions.

**Keywords:** English as a foreign language, teacher attitude, teaching profession

## 1. Introduction

Teaching profession is based on vocational and personal skills and competencies, involves professional and ethical standards and models, and entails a continuous process of professional development (Bențe & Anghelache, 2012, p. 167). Triverdi (2012, p. 24) portrays teaching profession with the following remarks.

- Teaching is a noble profession and differs from other professions,
- A teacher should be a role model, guide, philosopher and a friend for the students,
- Teachers' beliefs, attitudes and views directly affect their teaching behaviors,
- Job satisfaction and expectations of their profession also influence their work.

It was registered as a profession in Turkey by Act of Schooling, Article 1, in 1924, and redefined by National Education Fundamental Act in Article 43, 1973 as "a profession that requires specialization and taking on educational tasks of the state and other administrative tasks". Recently, it is identified as a profession which requires expertise, academic study, professional formation and a university degree.

Playing the key role in regulating behaviours of individuals in society, teachers are regarded as the fundamental components of an educational system that influence and inspire students by their knowledge, personality, behaviours and excitement. In order to do so, they are expected to be equipped with world, field knowledge and professional knowledge. As noted by Semerci and Semerci (2004), teaching qualifications are regulated by the Ministry of National Education in Turkey which proposes that knowledge of a teacher is supposed to be constituted by world knowledge (15-20%), field knowledge (50-60%), and teaching professional knowledge (25-30%). It is acknowledged in OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) Report on Education (2009, p. 89) that "teachers" beliefs, practices and attitudes are important for understanding and improving educational processes as they are closely linked to their strategies for coping with challenges in their daily professional life and to their well-being, and they shape students' learning environment and influence their motivation and achievement. It is also stated that they could be expected to mediate the effects of job-related

policies—such as changes in curricula for teachers’ initial education or professional development—on student learning. In a similar vein, Issan, Al-Nabhani, Kazem, and Al-Ani (2011) emphasize that teachers’ attitudes towards their profession have an effect on their performance as well as on their commitment to their roles and responsibilities.

There is a consensus among various scholars mainly on the correlation between attitude and teaching profession (Duatepe & Akkuş-Çıkla, 2004; Issan et al., 2011; Al Harthy, Jamaluddin, & Abedalaziz, 2013; Akbaba, 2013; Bhargava & Pathy, 2014). Al Harthy et al. (2013, p. 888) contend that teachers’ attitudes towards their profession affect their teaching practice. Figure 1 illustrates the cycle of relationship between attitudes and teaching practice proposed by Smith (1993) (in Duatepe & Akkuş-Çıkla, 2004, p. 61).

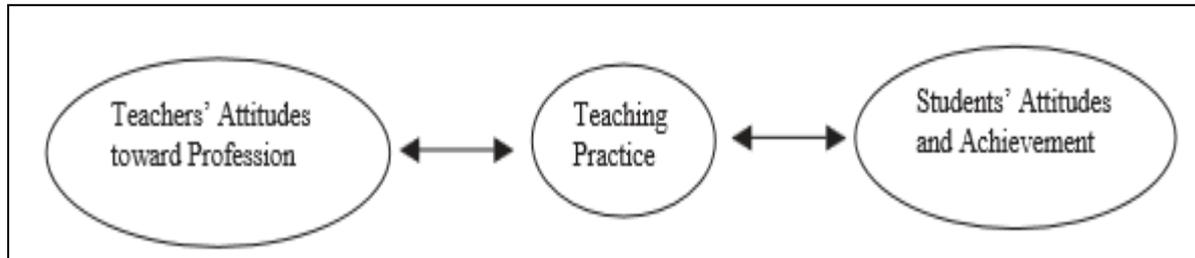


Figure 1. Relationship between attitude and teaching practice

It can be seen that teachers’ attitudes towards their profession directly influence both their teaching practices and their students’ attitudes and achievements. Namely, according to Duatepe and Akkuş-Çıkla (2004), teachers’ negative attitudes towards their profession are likely to negatively influence their teaching practices. Effective teachers are reported to display positive attitudes about teaching through promoting and participating in a collegial, collaborative work environment, holding their students responsible while accepting responsibilities themselves. The scholars in concern conclude that positive attitudes towards teaching depend largely on the personal beliefs of individual teachers, and their personal experience of pre and post education and training.

Bozdoğan, Aydın, and Yıldırım (2007) underline another significant point in respect of choosing teaching as a profession remarking that an individual has an inappropriate job means that it is not appropriate for that individual’s sense of self and that she/he is not likely to endeavour to be successful and happy with his/her job. Thus, being a crucial decision for an individual as well as his/her family, career choice should be realistic not only for the individual citizens but for the economical state of the country she/he lives in. Yılmaz (1993) notifies teaching as a “dynamic” profession of which method is as significant as its content; hence, individuals who choose it as a profession need to be aware of the fact that having an in-depth field knowledge might not enable them to convey it to the students, entailing positive attitudes towards teaching are a prerequisite for overcoming the difficulties of the profession (cited in Bozdoğan et al., 2007).

In Turkey, multi-factors negatively affect teachers and/or prospective teachers’ attitudes towards teaching profession, and cause dissatisfaction such as low financial status and prestige of teaching profession perceived by the society, and heavy workloads. The following are the fundamental duties of teachers working at state primary and secondary schools in Turkey which are identified in the Civil Servants’ Act (No. 657):

- Planning the education process at the beginning of each academic term,
- Working with group teachers,
- Taking attendance,
- Submitting reports on such activities as lab Works, technical trips, and experiments,
- Hall monitoring (at least once a week, mostly twice a week),
- Posting students’ grades to the electronic information system affiliated to the ministry of national education,
- Participating in the meetings organized by the school administrative staff, and/or the district national education directorate, or provincial directorate for national education,
- Assisting the principal and vice principal(s) taking administrative tasks and responsibilities,

- Supervising a class of students throughout the education year,
- Organizing and/or participating in the pageants and memorials,
- Performing other duties assigned by school administration.

These teachers in the full sense of the word endeavour to teach subject matters identified in the related curriculum during the period of time when they are not supposed to fulfil the above-mentioned duties. Nevertheless, they tend to be the first to blame for students' failure in nationwide examinations which are revised almost every couple of years in Turkey. Results of the Test for Transition from Primary to Secondary Education which was held in 2015 indicated that students mostly failed in Mathematics and English as a Foreign Language tests, respectively (OSYM, 2015). Likewise, the results of the Undergraduate Placement Examination in 2015 revealed that the students mostly failed in Geometry, Mathematics, Physics, and English, respectively (OSYM, 2015). However, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, the failure in the English tests attracted more attention than other subject areas stressing that the majority fail to express themselves in English despite its being taught from early grades in primary education to higher education. In fact, within the framework of the regulations made by the Ministry of National Education, English has been offered as an elected course in pre-school institutions in Turkey, since 2014, which is encouraged by the government. Distribution of class hours of English as a foreign language course across state educational institutions in Turkey are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Class hours of EFL course in Turkey (2016)

Level of Education	Type of Institution	Grade	Class hour (C: Compulsory; E: Elective)
Primary	Primary School	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2 (C)
		3 <sup>rd</sup>	2 (C)
		4 <sup>th</sup>	2 (C)
		5 <sup>th</sup>	4 (C); 2 (E)
		6 <sup>th</sup>	4 (C); 2 (E)
		7 <sup>th</sup>	4 (C); 2 (E)
		8 <sup>th</sup>	4 (C); 2 (E)
Secondary	Anatolian High School	9 <sup>th</sup>	6 (C)
		10 <sup>th</sup>	4 (C)
		11 <sup>th</sup>	4 (C); 2 (E)
		12 <sup>th</sup>	4 (C)
	Science School	9 <sup>th</sup>	7 (C)
		10 <sup>th</sup>	3 (C)
		11 <sup>th</sup>	3 (C); 2 (E)
		12 <sup>th</sup>	3 (C)
	Social Sciences High School	Prep	20 (C)
		9 <sup>th</sup>	6 (C)
		10 <sup>th</sup>	3 (C); 2 (E)
		11 <sup>th</sup>	3 (C); 2 (E)
	Vocational High School	12 <sup>th</sup>	3 (C); 2 (E)
		9 <sup>th</sup>	3 (C)
10 <sup>th</sup>		2 (C)	
11 <sup>th</sup>		2 (C)	
Higher	Vocational School*	12 <sup>th</sup>	2 (C)
		1 <sup>st</sup>	2 (C)

	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2 (C)
University*	Prep	24 (C)
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2/3 (C)
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2/3 (C)
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	3 (C)
	4 <sup>th</sup>	3 (C)

\* English is not the medium of instruction in the associate degree and undergraduate programmes.

It is hereby noteworthy that particularly primary and secondary educational systems in Turkey continuously change, and the figures in Table 1 depict class hours of EFL course during the academic year 2015-2016. Most probably due to this particular situation identified as “failure”, the studies conducted on foreign language instruction in Turkey have largely focused on the effectiveness of foreign language education, problems faced by EFL teachers and/or learners during the learning process, and roles and responsibilities teachers take in foreign language classrooms probably. As for the studies investigating teachers’ professional attitudes have mostly been carried out with the participation of prospective teachers rather than their in-service colleagues. For this reason, the present study aims to scrutinize whether professional attitudes of teachers significantly differ across educational level of institutions where they are teaching English as a foreign language. Accordingly, a research question is formulated as follows:

Q1. Do attitudes of EFL teachers toward teaching profession significantly differ across educational levels of institutions they are working at (primary school, secondary school, and institutions of higher education)?

The following section discusses the results of the studies previously conducted on teachers’ attitude toward teaching profession.

### 1.1 Previous Studies

Osune and Izevbigie (2006) conducted a study with the participation of 400 teachers working at 40 post primary schools in Nigeria to obtain empirical evidence for teachers’ attitude toward teaching profession. They found that teachers do not feel financially satisfied and humiliated due to delay in payment of their salaries and allowances, and believe that the status of the profession is undermined in society. Can (2009) investigated leadership behaviours of teachers in classroom and school interviewing with 10 administrative personnel and 20 teachers working at primary school in Turkey. His revealed that teachers are supposed to organize and/or attend such occasions as staff meeting, pageants and memorials, and parent-teacher meetings in addition to achieving the objectives of primary education identified by the ministry of national education. Taking this finding into consideration, he strongly recommends that teacher training programmes be revised to include the approach and conception of teacher leadership. Most of his participants stated that they endeavour to fulfil their roles as class managers, and to attain educational purposes. They went on to report that they frequently fail to enable students to adopt all desired behaviour changes for being overloaded with work. Particularly those assigned at the second stage of primary education also attributed this other reasons such as developmental characteristics of mid-adolescence (14 to 16 years), frequent teacher change, traditional education methods, lack of professional training, and insufficient cooperation between parents and teachers. Oruç (2011) scrutinized attitudes of Turkish trainee teachers toward teaching profession conducting a scale to 80 trainee teachers attending faculty of education at a state university in Turkey, and found that they have clear positive attitude toward their prospective profession. Tarman (2012) investigated beliefs and perceptions of prospective teachers attending teacher education programme at an Eastern US university about teaching as a profession, and indicated that field experiences provide them with the opportunities to modify their self-perceptions about teaching careers, and to reflect on their understanding of teaching as a profession. Trivedi (2012) compared attitudes of teachers working at four levels of education toward teaching profession (primary, secondary, higher secondary and college) using an attitude scale, and found that teachers have high attitude toward their profession regardless of the level of institutions they are working at, and that primary school teachers tend to have more positive attitude toward their profession. Hürsen (2012) examined the attitudes of high school teachers working in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus toward professional development activities. She reported that age, gender, and experience created a significant difference among teachers regarding their attitude toward these activities. Namely, female teachers and less experienced teachers tend to have more positive attitude toward them when compared to male teachers and more experienced teachers, respectively. Ipek and Camadan (2012) compared self-efficacy beliefs

and attitudes of primary teachers and pre-service primary teachers' toward teaching profession in Turkey. They concluded that first grade pre-service primary teachers have significantly more positive attitudes toward their profession than fourth grade pre-service primary teachers and primary teachers, and that female participants' attitudes towards teaching profession were found higher than those of males. Smadi and Al-Ghazo (2013) investigated the factors affecting Jordanian foreign language teachers' attitudes toward foreign language teaching, and the relationship between their attitudes and classroom practices. They delivered a questionnaire to 20 female EFL teachers to identify their professional attitude and observed those teachers in the classroom. Their findings indicated that the teachers have a moderate attitude toward their profession, and that their attitudes were negatively correlated with their actual pedagogical competences.

Sharbain (2013) carried out a study in Palestine to see whether there is a relationship between gender of primary English language teachers and their attitudes toward teaching profession delivering a questionnaire to 50 male and 50 female novice teachers. He found that female language teachers have more positive attitude toward their profession than their male colleagues. Kitjarooncha (2013) surveyed primary and lower secondary school teachers' attitude toward English language learning. He specifically compared novice and expert male and female teachers with respect to their attitudes toward their profession using a 20-item attitude test. His findings revealed that the teachers' attitude was slightly positive, and that there was no significant difference between male and female teachers as well as novice and expert teachers in terms of their professional attitudes. In a recent study, Sireesha and Reddy (2015) investigated the influence of management and qualification on Telugu language teachers' attitude toward teaching profession administering a questionnaire to 240 language teachers working at high schools in Chittoor District. They concluded that the teachers' attitude toward teaching profession is heavily influenced by management and qualification. Salehi, Taghavi, and Yunus (2015) explored the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction and their attitudes toward students' beliefs and motivation in a study with the participation of 340 teachers working in language institutes in Isfahan. They concluded that there is a positive significant relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and their attitudes toward students' motivation and beliefs. They also reported that the teachers' level of satisfaction was high even though they were not satisfied financially.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Sampling

An equal number of EFL teachers working at state primary schools, state secondary schools and state institutions of higher education in Turkey participated in this study (Total 60). Initially, relatively a larger number of participants were targeted to be included in the study with the purpose of eliciting more reliable data, and to come up with more generalisable findings. However, the number had to be fixed to twenty for each group since a limited number of EFL instructors working at institutions of higher education accepted to participate in the study which was designed on a voluntary basis. Table 2 presents the sample size and related information about the participants as well as their affiliations which were selected through snowball sampling method.

Table 2. Sampling

Institution	Institutions (N)	Gender		Mean Age	Mean Experience	Educational Degree		
		Female	Male			BA	MA	PhD
Primary Schools	13	13	7	34	10	17	3	-
Secondary Schools	19	15	5	33	10	18	2	-
Ins. of Higher Education	3	11	9	39	15	10	10	-

It is noteworthy that the state primary schools, secondary schools and institutions of higher education where the participants working are located in four, five and three cities, respectively in Turkey, and that approximately half of those teachers who work at institutions of higher education were pursuing their doctoral studies in such fields as English language teaching, and English Language and Literature at the time of the study. The reasons stated most frequently by them for choosing teaching as a profession were that "*I loved teaching*", "*It was easily available*", and "*It was popular*".

## 2.2 Instrumentation

As for the data collection instrument, a questionnaire consisting of Likert-type items was developed by the researchers. The items in concern were pointed from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). 10 out of 30 items were intended to elicit the teachers' opinions about requirements and responsibilities of the teaching profession, and the remaining 20 to obtain those about their general attitude toward teaching profession.

## 2.3 Data Collection

The questionnaire forms were sent to the participants who accepted to take part in the study via email, and they were requested to fill out and send them back to the researchers within a few days if possible. They were also informed that all the information included in the survey was confidential and their responses would be used only for the scientific purposes of the research.

## 2.4 Data Analysis

The data were analysed in two steps. Initially, the participants' responses to the questionnaire were analysed in terms of frequency. Namely, the items on which they mostly agreed and in which they partly and mostly differed were determined. In a subsequent session, the results were analysed using SPSS (Version 16.0). In order to see whether the three groups of teachers statistically differ in their professional attitude, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. Both results of the frequency analysis, and those obtained from ANOVA are presented in the following section.

## 3. Results

The study has revealed not only expected but surprising findings. Namely, it was no surprise to see that the teachers mostly disagree or strongly disagree, and mostly agree or strongly with the certain statements, which are provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Statements on which teachers reach consensus

Teachers mostly disagree or strongly disagree with...	Teachers mostly agree or strongly agree with...
Teachers' responsibility towards their students ends in school.	Teachers should be equipped with latest educational technologies.
Teachers are responsible only for teaching and explaining the subject matters.	Teachers should be proud of their profession irrespective of other people's opinions about it.
Teachers should not bother about the achievement level of the students.	Teachers' most significant role is to motivate their students to learn.
Teachers have the opportunity to lead their society in Turkey.	Teachers should often read journals/books related to their profession.
Teaching is an all-corners job which requires no special training.	Teaching profession requires self-devotion and patience.
I don't like teaching because I don't find it creative.	Teaching profession requires teachers to act ideally.
Teaching profession has a good status in Turkey.	Teaching is a challenging profession.
	I find it interesting to work with young learners/teenagers/adult learners.
	Working conditions in schools are not satisfactory for teachers in Turkey.
	Teaching is a profession that requires not only theoretical knowledge but also talent and motivation.
	In-service training is essential for effective teaching.
	Teaching profession makes me feel self-confident.

The teachers, on the other hand, tend to remain neutral or agree with the statement that they feel under pressure due to continuously changing regulations and curricula in their country. No consensus was reached among them in all groups as to the statement that "*Nowadays, students do not take their teachers as role models*". Namely, the

teachers working at institutions of higher education mostly remained neutral with the statement, and an equal number of teachers reported they agree and disagree with it. In a similar vein, approximately half of the teachers working at secondary schools did neither agree nor disagree with it, and the teachers who agree or strongly agree with it outnumbered those who strongly disagree with it. Finally, 80% of the teachers working at secondary schools, and an approximate percentage of teachers working at institutions of higher education believe that their profession contributes to their personal development. Primary school teachers differ from these two groups in that half of them either (strongly) disagree with the statement or preferred to remain neutral about it. These three findings might probably stem from that both group of teachers work with relatively older and more experienced students whose personalities have already been established; in other words, they were not expected to change dramatically, or to take a particular person as role model even if she/he is their teacher. Working with these students might probably contribute to personal development of teachers more than working with young learners. Primary school teachers also differ from their colleagues working at secondary schools and institutions of higher education by their responses to the statement “*I like my profession regardless of external circumstances (e.g., stress, parental interference in education/parental indifference to their children’s education, student misbehaviours, etc.)*”. Approximately half of them disagree and strongly disagree with it indicating that they are somehow frustrated while performing their job for various reasons in addition to the above-mentioned ones.

The teachers considerably diverge in their responses to the item investigating whether they like the social environment at school. Overall, those who are working at primary schools seem to like the social environment of their workplace more than their colleagues in other institutions. The difference in concern might be due to the interpersonal relationships among the staff of the schools. Another item was intended to elicit teachers’ opinions about the sufficiency of free time offered by their profession. The responses of the participants are provided in Figure 2.

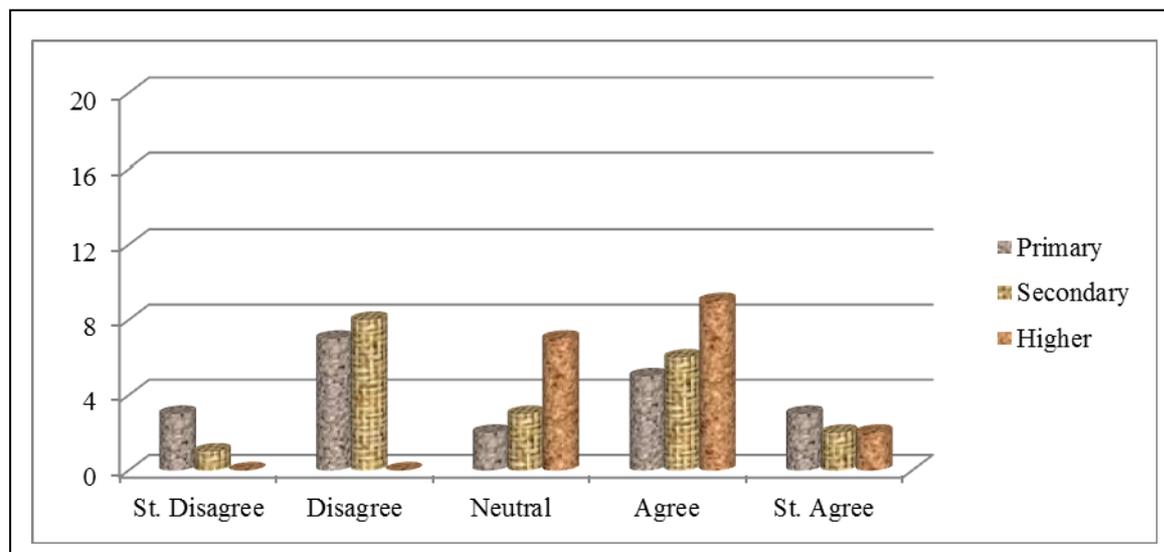


Figure 2. Responses to “Teaching profession offers enough free time for teachers”

As seen in Figure 2, most of those who are working at primary and secondary schools do not think that teaching offers enough free time for them. This might be due to administrative tasks assigned to them within the framework of the Civil Servants’ Act (No. 657) in Turkey, which requires them to perform many other duties other teaching subject matters in the classroom such as hall monitoring (twice a week in some schools). Being not responsible for most of these duties, none of the teachers working in institutions of higher education disagree or strongly disagree with the statement in concern. The difference between the groups might also stem from workload of the teachers. Namely, teachers in state primary and secondary schools in Turkey are supposed to be available at school at least for 15 teaching hours per week while their colleagues in institutions of higher education are expected to teach at least 12 hours per week. This particular information might be misleading as the difference seems to be slight; so, it’s noteworthy that most of the teachers in primary and secondary schools were assigned with an average of 20 class hours a week while the others with 14 hours per week. Besides, those

in the latter group are not so much involved in the evaluation of students' success since it is mostly performed by other instructors who were working at a special unit called testing office. Namely, these instructors are generally not assigned with any course load; instead, they are supposed to prepare tests and projects to be administered to the students in order to evaluate their progress in foreign language education and to check whether the educational objectives of the programme have been achieved. In the former two groups, on the other hand, the teachers are supposed to prepare their own tests and the project tasks to be assigned to the students on their own as there is not such a unit at their schools.

One of the most crucial statements posed to the respondents in the survey was intended to reveal whether they still find their job interesting. Responses of the majority of those who are working at secondary schools and institutions of higher education showed that they still find their job interesting while only 40% of the primary school teachers agreed with their opinion. In order to elicit reasons of possible negative responses to the item in concern, the participants were posed another item asking whether they feel bored as they are supposed to teach almost all the same topics. Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of the answers across groups.

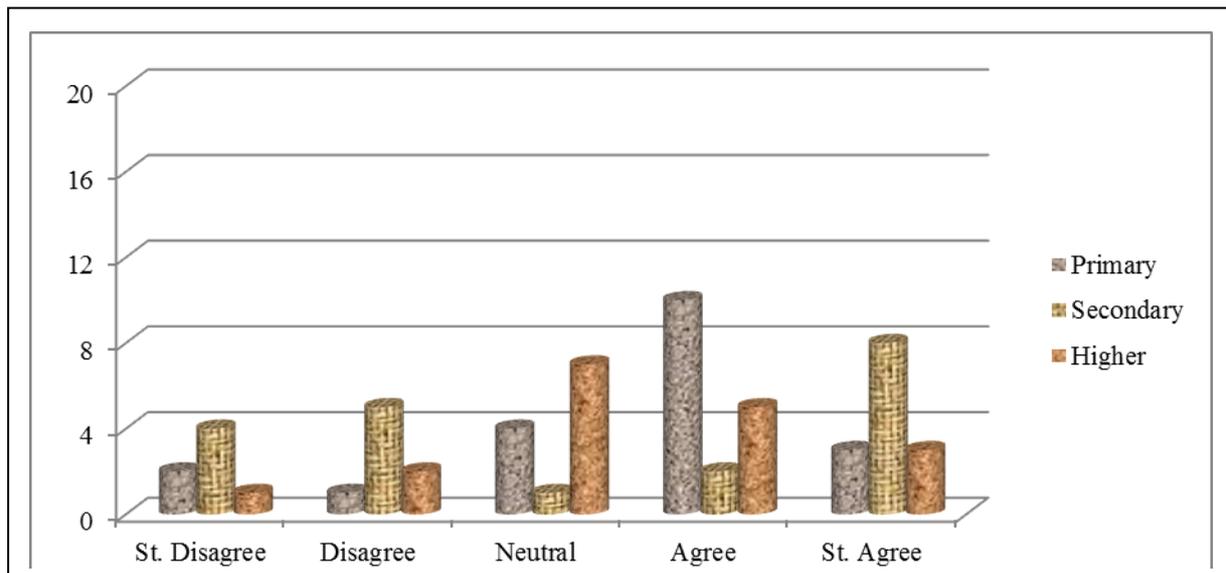


Figure 3. Responses to “I usually get bored as I am supposed to teach almost all the same topics”

Taking the proportion of those who (strongly) agree with the statement to that of those who (strongly) disagree with it into account, it could be suggested that the teachers who feel bored most with teaching almost the same subjects were primary school teachers, followed by those working at institutions of higher education and secondary schools approximately half of whom disagree or strongly disagree with the item. This might be accounted for that primary school teachers are mostly supposed to teach very similar topics especially from 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades, which could easily be confirmed by the annual EFL course plans for the related grades. Namely, expressions of likes and dislikes in the target language are included in the curricula designed for 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. The annual plans prepared for the EFL courses, which are the compulsory part of the curricula in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the undergraduate or associate degree programmes offered in institutions of higher education, contains subject matters similar to those taught in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades in primary schools. In return, the annual plan prepared for 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades, especially in Anatolian high schools, are notably richer in content, objectives and variety of the teaching and learning activities. It should also be noted that English is offered two hours a week as a compulsory part of curricula from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grades, three hours from 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grades, and four hours from 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades in state primary schools in Turkey. In secondary schools, particularly in Anatolian high schools, it is offered six hours in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and four hours from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades.

Teachers in three groups reached no consensus as to the statement “I feel that my efforts are not appreciated and/or rewarded by the administration”. The related results are depicted in Figure 4.

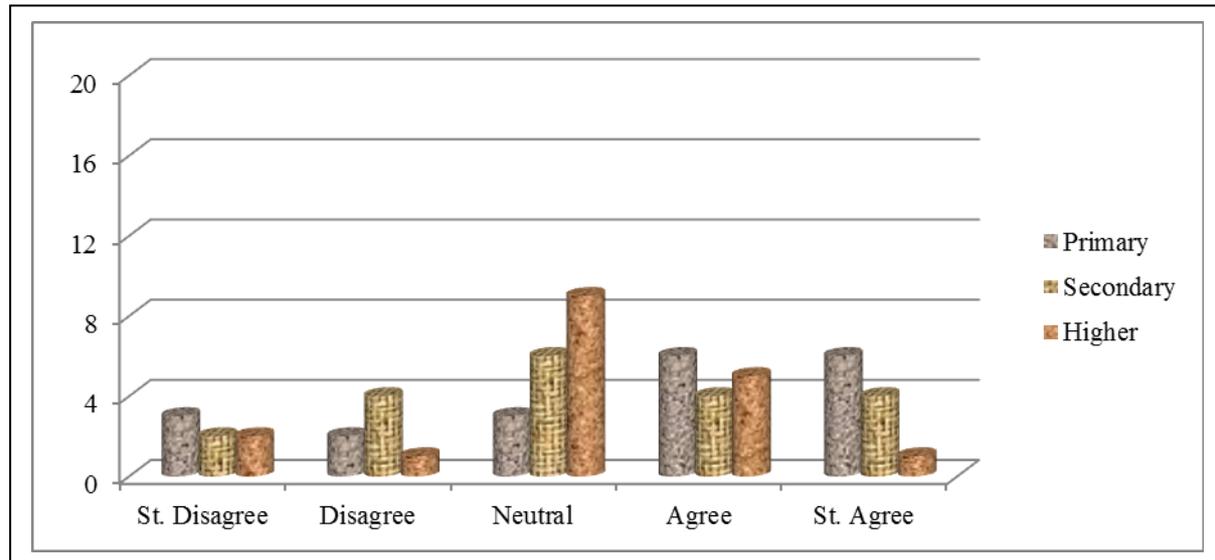


Figure 4. Responses to “I feel that my efforts are not appreciated and/or rewarded by the administration”

It is interesting to see those working at institutions of higher education mostly remained neutral about it, and those who agree or strongly agree with the statement are twice as many their colleagues who disagree and strongly disagree with it. The case in secondary schools is very similar to the one in primary schools. Namely, the number of teachers who agree and strongly agree with it was found slightly higher than the others in both groups. Finally, no consensus was found among the participants in three groups as to their preferences for choosing teaching as a job. However, it might be noteworthy that primary school teachers who disagree and strongly disagree with the item outnumber the total number of their colleagues in secondary schools and institutions of higher education who reported the same responses.

In order to find out whether the groups statistically differ from each other in terms of their professional attitude, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. In accordance with the test results, no statistically significant difference was found among groups ( $p > .05$ ).

The following section encompasses the evaluation of the research questions and implications to the field of teaching English as a foreign/second language on the basis of the findings revealed by the study, and concludes with limitations of the study as well as a couple of suggestions for future directions.

#### 4. Discussion

##### 4.1 Evaluation of the Research Question & Implications to ELT

The study investigated whether attitudes of EFL teachers toward teaching profession significantly differ across educational levels of institutions they are working at (primary school, secondary school, and institutions of higher education). The overall findings have shown that teachers tend to agree or disagree with the statements related to general requirements of teaching profession and the responsibilities of a teacher regardless of the educational level of their institutions. For instance, approximately all of them agree that it is a challenging job requiring self-devotion and patience along with theoretical knowledge and talent, and disagree that it is an all-corners job requiring no special training. Findings also indicated that the majority of the participants like their job despite all problems they are faced with while performing it. Even though the statistical findings indicated no significant difference among the groups with respect to their professional attitude, it is seen that the teachers remarkably differ in their responses to certain items on the form. Namely, primary school teachers were found to agree more with the statement that “*Nowadays, students do not take their teachers as role models*” when compared to their colleagues working at secondary schools and institutions of higher education. This might stem from that they work with relatively younger students who are more inclined to take adults as model. However, these teachers are not as determined as other groups of teachers to choose teaching if they were provided an opportunity to choose a profession once again. Another finding of the study is that the number of teachers who disagree that their efforts are not appreciated or rewarded by the administration is very low in three groups, which might influence their attitude toward their profession as well as performance negatively. As an implication,

the heads and vice heads, who are also teachers, might be recommended to appreciate and reward efforts of the teachers they are working with (e.g., praising or thanking in a staff meeting, or giving a certificate of excellence, or a plaquet).

In accordance with the findings, it is seen that primary and secondary school teachers do not believe that teaching profession offers enough free time for them as much as their colleagues in higher education, which might result from the tasks assigned to them such as hall monitoring, evaluating students' project assignments, and that they need to spend more time and effort with young learners. So, administrative staff of the schools might be recommended to avoid assigning heavy workload to the teachers if possible, or organize some events where teachers get together and have enjoyable time in order to increase their motivation. Likewise those in high schools and institutions of higher education believe that teaching profession contributes to their personal development relatively more than primary school teachers, which might be attributed to the fact that they are working with relatively older learners.

Approximately all teachers in secondary schools and institutions of higher education, and slightly more than half of the teachers working in primary schools stated that they like their profession regardless of external circumstances (e.g., stress, parental interference in education, indifference to the students' education, and student misbehaviours). The case for primary school teachers might be, once again, accounted for that they tend to handle such kind of problems more frequently than other groups of teachers as their target mass is constituted by young learners.

Taking all these into consideration, it is touching to see that the number of the teachers who agree or strongly agree with the statement "I would not hesitate to choose a profession other than teaching providing that it pays a higher salary" remained very low.

#### 4.2 Limitations & Suggestions for Further Research

The study is confined to three groups of EFL teachers (N. 60) working at three levels of education in a limited number of cities in Turkey; so, professional attitudes of a larger number of EFL teachers working at these kinds of education institutions located in various cities might be investigated in a further study. Another limitation of the study is about the data collection; namely, a questionnaire consisting of likert-type items developed by the researchers was administered to the participants in order to elicit their professional attitude. So, more data might be obtained through the use of different kinds of instruments such as structured or semi-structured interviews including both multiple choice and open-ended items. Finally, it is limited to the comparison of three groups of teachers working at state primary schools, state secondary schools, and institutions of higher education in terms of their attitudes toward teaching profession. So, the study might be extended to compare professional attitudes of teachers regarding their age, gender and/or experience. Alternatively, it might be furthered to probe professional attitudes of teachers working at public and private institutions of education.

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