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TEACHER WELLBEING AS THE PREDICTOR OF TEACHER-
STUDENT INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN EFL
CLASSROOMS

A MASTER'S THESIS

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GÜLEYSE KANSU

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Güleyse Kansu

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May 2018

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ABSTRACT

TEACHER WELLBEING AS THE PREDICTOR OF TEACHER-STUDENT
INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN EFL CLASSROOMS

Güleyse Kansu

M.A. in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Deniz Ortaçtepe

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This study aimed to explore the impacts of teacher wellbeing on teacher-student relationships. In this respect, the study investigated how the wellbeing of Turkish teachers is reflected in their verbal immediacy behavior while interacting with learners and the classroom climate in relation to the verbal immediacy in tertiary level language classrooms in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting. Five themes were focused on in terms teacher verbal immediacy behavior: sharing personal examples and experiences, asking questions, use of humor, praise, and criticism. The researcher collected data through a questionnaire, classroom observation, interviews, and an inventory. Teacher Wellbeing Questionnaire adapted from Collie, Shapka, Perry & Martin (2015) was conducted with 43 teachers and the researcher selected four teachers who scored highest and four teachers who scored lowest to observe their lessons. A Verbal Immediacy Framework was developed based on Gorham's (1988) Verbal Immediacy Items to be used during observation. After the observations, the students of eight participant teachers were asked to complete a Classroom Climate Inventory (CCI) adapted from Fraser, Treagust, and

Dennis (1986) and Mcber (2000). Finally, follow-up interviews were conducted with the eight participant teachers in order to supplement the data gathered from the classroom observations and CCI. Data obtained through three instruments were triangulated. The qualitative data collected from classroom observations and interviews were analyzed according to Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis whereas the data coming from CCI were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS.

The findings revealed differences between two groups of teachers in three of the pre-determined aspects of verbal immediacy and classroom climate. The data analysis indicated that teachers who are at a more positive wellbeing level tend to use more personal examples and experiences, use more humor, and praise their students more frequently while interacting with their students in the classroom compared to those with negative wellbeing. However, there was no significant difference between the numbers and types of the open questions asked by the two groups of teachers and the criticism used by participants.

These findings helped draw the conclusion that teacher wellbeing has a role in establishing immediacy, which leads to a positive or negative influence on interpersonal relationships between teachers and students as well as the classroom climate. Therefore, the study implied that the wellbeing of language teachers can be considered as the predictor of interpersonal relationships between teachers and language learners in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: Teacher wellbeing, teacher verbal immediacy, classroom climate, teacher-student interpersonal relationships.

ÖZET

YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE SINIFLARINDA ÖĞRETMEN-ÖĞRENCİ BİREYLER ARASI İLİŞKİLERİNİN ÖNGÖRÜCÜSÜ OLARAK ÖĞRETMEN İYİ OLUŞU

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Bu çalışma, öğretmen iyi oluşunun öğretmen-öğrenci bireyler arası ilişkilerindeki etkilerini araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu bağlamda, çalışma İngilizce'nin yabancı dil olarak konuşulduğu bir ortamda üniversite seviyesindeki yabancı dil sınıflarında öğretmen iyi oluşunun öğrencilerle iletişimdeki sözel yakınlık davranışlarını ve sınıf iklimini nasıl etkilediğini incelemiştir. Çalışmada beş temaya odaklanılmıştır: kişisel örnek ve deneyim paylaşımı, soru yöneltme, mizah kullanımı, övgü ve eleştiri. Çalışma verileri anket, sınıf gözlemi, sözlü mülakat ve ölçek olmak üzere dört yolla toplanmıştır. Collie, Shapka, Perry ve Martin'in (2015) anketinden uyarlanan Öğretmen İyi Oluş Anketi, 43 öğretmene uygulanmıştır ve araştırmacı dört en yüksek ve dört en düşük sonuca sahip öğretmenleri gözlem yapmak üzere seçmiştir. Gözlem esnasında kullanılmak üzere Gorham'ın (1988) Sözel Yakınlık Maddelerine bağlı olarak Sözel Yakınlık Çerçevesi geliştirilmiştir.

Gözlemlerin ardından, sekiz öğretmen katılımcının öğrencilerine Fraser, Treagust ve Dennis'in (1986) ve Mcber'in (2000) ölçeklerinden uyarlanan bir Sınıf İklimi Ölçeği (SİÖ) uygulanmıştır. Son olarak, sınıf gözlemlerinden ve SİÖ'den toplanan verileri desteklemek amacıyla sekiz öğretmen katılımcıyla tamamlayıcı sözlü mülakat yapılmıştır. SİÖ'den elde edilen veriler SPSS kullanarak nicel olarak analiz edilirken, sınıf gözlemlerinden ve mülakatlardan toplanan nitel veriler Braun ve Clarke'ın (2006) tematik analizine göre analiz edilmiştir.

Bu çalışmanın bulguları iki grup öğretmen arasında önceden belirlenmiş sözel yakınlık temalarının üçünde ve sınıf ikliminde farklılıklar ortaya koymaktadır. Veri analizi daha pozitif iyi oluştaki öğretmenlerin negatif olanlara göre sınıf içinde öğrencilerle iletişimlerinde, daha fazla kişisel örnek ve deneyim paylaştıklarını, daha fazla mizah kullandıklarını, ve öğrencilerine daha sık övgüde bulduklarını göstermiştir. Buna rağmen, öğrencilere yöneltilen soruların sayısı ya da doğası ve öğrencilere karşı yapılan eleştiri bakımından bu iki grup arasında önemli bir fark saptanmamıştır.

Bu bulgular öğretmen iyi oluşunun sınıf iklimine katkısının yanısıra sınıfta öğrencilerle yakınlık kurmakta ve bireyler arası ilişkilerde etki sahibi olduğu sonucunun çıkarılmasına yardımcı olmuştur. Buna bağlı olarak, bu çalışma yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin iyi oluşunun yabancı dil olarak İngilizce sınıflarında öğretmen-öğrenci arası ilişkilerde öngörücü olarak değerlendirilebileceğini göstermiştir. Anahtar kelimeler: Öğretmen, iyi oluş, sözel yakınlık, sınıf iklimi, öğretmen-öğrenci bireyler arası ilişkileri.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Wellbeing, in the most general sense, is the state of being both psychologically and physically healthy and happy. Despite the absence of a consensus definition, it is commonly agreed that wellbeing is more than the lack of negative circumstances in one's life (Schulte & Vainio, 2010). Like most other jobs, teaching as a profession requires high motivation and wellbeing. Teacher wellbeing, which encompasses teachers' job satisfaction, physical health, emotional status, and positive attitude towards teaching, plays a significant role in the interaction between the learners, classroom experiences, and the learning process that takes place. The wellbeing of language teachers can be argued to be even more crucial as the job necessitates continuous social interaction by nature. Despite the considerable amount of research done in different occupations, only a few studies focus on language teachers' wellbeing and none of these studies have investigated its impacts on their teaching.

With the arrival of Positive Psychology in the field of Second Language Acquisition, there has been a shift from negative to positive emotion and from deficiencies to strengths over the last two decades (MacIntyre, 2016). Although there is research that investigates language teachers from negative emotional perspectives such as teacher burnout and anxiety, (e.g., Acheson, Taylor, & Luna, 2016; Mahmoodi-Shahreabaki, 2015; Saboori & Pishghadam, 2016; Özdemir & Demir, 2017) not enough research has been conducted from a positive emotional perspective to evaluate how wellbeing affects teachers' performance and how they communicate with their students in class. This study will investigate how EFL

teachers' positive emotions, strengths and wellbeing are revealed in the classroom environment compared to the absence of them by examining teacher-learner interaction and classroom climate.

Background of the Study

Wellbeing is defined as a multidimensional concept which includes people's emotional responses, domain satisfactions, and global judgments of life satisfaction (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Wellbeing research is categorized in the literature into two conceptual approaches, which are objective wellbeing and subjective wellbeing (Western & Tomaszewski, 2016). According to the objective approach, wellbeing is defined in terms of quality of life indicators like material resources such as income, food, housing and social attributes such as education, health, social networks and connections whereas, according to the subjective approach, wellbeing is related to people's own evaluations of their lives, especially their life satisfaction, happiness and unhappiness (Diener & Suh, 1997). This study will focus on the amalgamation of both approaches.

The wellbeing of employees in various occupations such as doctors, nurses, officers, has been studied heavily in recent years in order to maintain the effective functioning of the workforce (Schulte & Vainio, 2010). Different models and dimensions of professional wellbeing have been developed and studied (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Van Horn, Taris, Schaufeli, & Schreurs, 2004; Warr, 1990). Warr (1990) described wellbeing with five dimensions -affective wellbeing, aspiration, autonomy, competence, integrated functioning- while the model developed by Ryff and Keyes (1995) included six -self-acceptance, environmental mastery, autonomy, positive relations with others, personal growth, and purpose in life- with a behavioral dimension added. Based on these two models, Van Horn et al. (2004) proposed a

five-dimensional model for occupational well-being including a cognitive and psychosomatic dimension to affective, professional, and social dimensions. In this study, all five of these dimensions will be taken into account in the process of the adaptation of a Teacher Wellbeing Questionnaire as they constitute the main pillars of wellbeing.

In contrast to the relatively high amount of research done in occupational or professional wellbeing in general, there have been a smaller number of studies conducted focusing on wellbeing of teachers. Research supports the belief that teachers who are functioning well and flourishing make better teachers (Mercer, Oberdorfer, & Saleem, 2016). However, mostly the foci of the studies that examine teachers are through negative socio-affective constructs such as burnout, stress, and anxiety rather than exploring their wellbeing from a positive perspective (Spilt, Koomen, & Thijs, 2011). Since the definition of wellbeing encompasses more than the opposite of burnout or anxiety, this study will provide a new perspective to the field.

As for the wellbeing of teachers in EFL contexts, there are even fewer studies. Despite the vast majority of research done to examine student psychology and wellbeing along with the rising popularity of learner-centered approaches, the psychology of language teachers has been paid much less attention (Mercer et al., 2016). Second language acquisition has only recently begun to adapt theories of positive psychology to its field of study (MacIntyre, 2016). Unlike traditional psychology, which tends to investigate dysfunction and disease, positive psychology focuses on the positives and strengths. Since the positive psychology of teachers is significant both for them and their students' wellbeing, it is worth being studied further and investigate to what extent it affects teachers' verbal immediacy behavior

and classroom climate.

Verbal immediacy was first defined by a social psychologist, Mehrabian (1966), as “the degree of directness and intensity of interaction between communicator and referent in the communicator’s linguistic message” (p.28). The construct was applied into teaching-learning interaction by Gorham (1988) and explored further in terms of its influence on the learning process in addition to the interpersonal relationship between the teacher and students. In teaching and learning context, verbal teacher immediacy refers to linguistic verbal messages that show empathy, openness, kindness, reward, praise, humor, personal knowledge and willingness to engage students in interaction (Gorham, 1988; Gorham & Christophel, 1990). It is known that what teachers say in the classroom and how they say it has a significant role in engaging the learners in the learning process and promoting student interaction. The verbal immediacy behavior of language teachers encompasses a variety of forms such as giving instructions, asking questions, using positive language to praise the learners, criticizing them, using humor to build rapport, etc. This study will look into the patterns in a variety of verbal immediacy behavior elements that the teachers demonstrate in relation to their wellbeing.

In addition to verbal immediacy behavior, classroom climate will also be evaluated in this study with regard to teacher verbal immediacy behavior and teacher wellbeing. Mcber (2000) defines classroom climate as “the collective perceptions by pupils of what it feels like to be a pupil in any particular teacher's classroom, where those perceptions influence every student's motivation to learn and perform to the best of his or her ability” (p. 27). Classroom climate encompasses interpersonal relationships between teachers and learners as well as the ones between learners, learning opportunities, the atmosphere created by the teachers and learners (Toren &

Seginer, 2015). According to the positive psychology perspective, classroom climate is claimed to play a significant role in enhancing both language learning as well as the wellbeing of teachers and learners (Gabryś-Barker, 2016). Classroom climate at tertiary level was studied by Fraser and Treagust (1986), who developed and validated an inventory called as College and University Classroom Environment Inventory (CUCEI) to survey students' and teachers' perceptions of seven dimensions of the actual or preferred classroom environment, which are: “Personalisation, Involvement, Student Cohesiveness, Satisfaction, Task Orientation, Innovation and Individualisation” (p.46). Another validated inventory developed by Dwyer et al. (2004) is Connected Classroom Climate Inventory (CCCI), which focuses on the communication and connectedness in the classroom among learners. It measures how secure, cooperative, friendly, respectful, and engaging the classroom environment is (Dwyer et al., 2004). In this study, an adaptation of CUCEI and CCCI will be used in order to evaluate the classroom climate.

Statement of the Problem

Occupational wellbeing of various employees such as health care workers and officers has been investigated widely in literature (e.g., Barrett, 2015; Pescud et al., 2015; Schulte & Vainio, 2010; Warr, 1990). Teaching as a profession has also been explored in order to define wellbeing of subject teachers such as in the fields of mathematics, science, etc. and to investigate its components (e.g., Faltis, 2012; Milfont, Denny, Ameratunga, Robinson, & Merry, 2008; Spilt et al., 2011; Van Petegem, Creemers, Rossel, & Aelterman, 2005). While there are a variety of studies suggesting a connection between teacher wellbeing and student performance (e.g., Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006; Day & Qing, 2009), not enough

research has been conducted on the impacts of teacher wellbeing on their teaching, interaction with learners, verbal immediacy, and the classroom climate. Moreover, as aforementioned, most of the studies examine both subject teachers and language teachers from the perspective of negative socio-affective constructs such as burnout, anxiety and stress (Acheson, Taylor, & Luna, 2016; Mahmoodi-Shahrehabaki, 2015; Saboori & Pishghadam, 2016). The studies focusing on specifically language teachers' wellbeing are still quite few and therefore further research is needed (Gabryś & Gałajda, 2016). In this respect, this study will investigate language teachers by examining them from the perspective of positive socio-affective construct, i.e. wellbeing.

Like most other jobs, teaching as a profession has its own merits and challenges. High stress levels that teaching might lead to have been proven by a considerable amount of research (e.g., Geving, 2007; Thomas, Clarke, & Lavery, 2003). Teaching a language at tertiary level requires equal, if not more, effort than teaching a subject. Research findings indicate that instructors who teach English suffer from burnout due to a variety of reasons including excessive workload, low salary, high level of stress, lack of appreciation from administrators, self-efficacy beliefs etc. (e.g., (Cephe, 2010; Evers, Brouwers, & Tomic, 2002; Jacobson & Riedel, 2016; Özkanal, 1996; Öztürk, 2013). Turkish instructors of English also experience serious problems that should not be ignored (Özdemir & Demir, 2017). Based on the researcher's experience and observation over years, the fact that Turkish instructors who teach English at preparatory schools have been suffering from low subjective and objective wellbeing due to various reasons has an impact on their teaching and their relationships with the students. They tend to encounter difficulties in establishing rapport with the learners, managing the classroom, getting responses or reaction from

students, and creating a positive classroom atmosphere. Therefore, there is a clear gap that needs to be addressed by exploring how these teachers' wellbeing level, which is critical both for teachers and learners, might affect teachers' verbal immediacy behavior, hence their interaction with learners in the classroom, and how the classroom climate is influenced by it.

Significance of the Study

This study can contribute to the field of foreign language teaching and possibly psychology in two aspects. First, it will look into language teachers' positive psychological and professional status, from the wellbeing perspective rather than negative socio-affective constructs. Therefore, it might provide further insights on teachers' psychology with an attempt to complement previous research. Second, investigating the impacts of language teachers' wellbeing will shed light onto how their wellbeing is revealed in the language learning context in terms of teachers' verbal immediacy in the classroom while interacting with learners, as well as to what extent the classroom atmosphere is influenced by teachers' wellbeing. Therefore, it will establish connections between wellbeing and the possible ways of how it reveals itself in the teaching and learning environment.

The findings of the study may also contribute to the awareness of the teachers about the significance of their wellbeing in addition to the institution's awareness. The teachers might see how their way of teaching, the language they use, and how their students feel about the classroom environment are affected by their wellbeing compared to others. In addition, the institution might prefer to seek ways to increase its teachers' wellbeing depending on the findings of the research in order to enhance

the interaction between the learners and the teachers in addition to the classroom climate.

Research Question

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the wellbeing of tertiary level Turkish EFL teachers might have an influence on their verbal immediacy behavior while interacting with learners, and the classroom climate. In this respect, this study aims to address the following research questions:

- i. In what ways does the wellbeing of tertiary level Turkish EFL teachers reflect itself on teachers' verbal immediacy, i.e., use of personal examples and experiences, the questions they ask, praise and criticism, use of humor, in teacher-student interaction?
- ii. In what ways might the wellbeing of these teachers affect the classroom climate in terms of the verbal immediacy items listed in RQ1?

Conclusion

In this chapter, a general overview of the literature regarding teacher wellbeing, teacher verbal immediacy, and classroom climate has been presented. The background of the study was followed by the statement of the problem and significance of the study in relation to the research questions. In the following chapter, a detailed review of literature with regard to the history of research in teacher wellbeing, teacher verbal immediacy, and classroom climate will be provided.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter, the related key concepts included in the study are reviewed and a comprehensive overview is presented. Various dimensions of teacher wellbeing in addition to its significance in teacher-student relationship are discussed. Next, positive psychology and its introduction to Second Language Acquisition are explained to have a deeper look at the comparison between wellbeing and negative affective constructs, i.e., burnout, stress, anxiety. As the aim of this study is to investigate to what extent the level of ESL teacher wellbeing in language classrooms is a predictor of how they communicate to their students and what kind of an impact it might have on classroom atmosphere, the concepts that will be discussed are teacher verbal immediacy behavior and classroom climate. In addition to the definition and significance of these concepts in ESL context, some relevant studies are presented and discussed.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is a ubiquitous construct that is encountered in a variety of fields in addition to philosophy, where it has its roots. For several decades, scholars have made attempts to define the concept, divide it into categories like subjective versus objective, and measure it. Subjective facets of wellbeing encapsulate factors such as happiness, emotion, life satisfaction, social relationships, and accomplishment whereas objective wellbeing is associated with external factors like income and goods (Forgeard, Jayawickreme, Kern, & Seligman, 2011). Day & Qing (2009) characterize wellbeing as “both psychological and social construct” encompassing

both personal and professional aspects and define it as “... a dynamic state, in which the individual is able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others, and contribute to their community” (p.15). Another definition proposed by Dodge, Daly, Huyton, & Sanders (2012) is “the balance point between an individual’s resource pool and the challenges faced”, as illustrated in Figure 1 (p. 230).

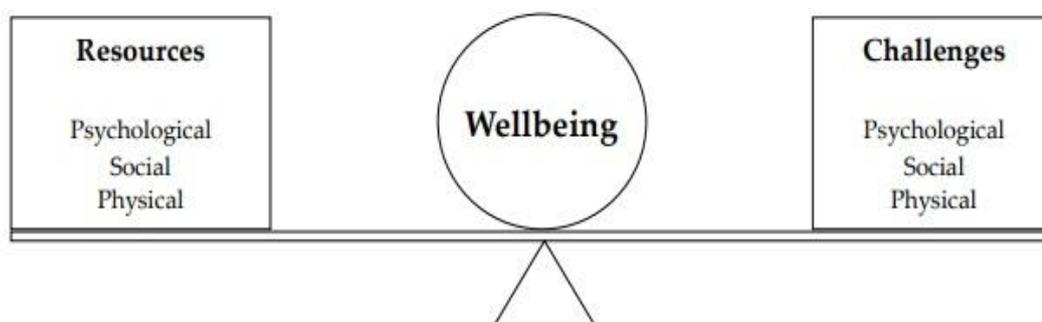


Figure 1. Definition of Wellbeing (Taken from Dodge et al., 2012, p. 230).

They conceptualize wellbeing as “...stable wellbeing (which) is when individuals have the psychological, social and physical resources they need to meet a particular psychological, social and/or physical challenge. When individuals have more challenges than resources, the see-saw dips, along with their wellbeing, and vice-versa” (p. 230). Although different scholars have come up with a variety of definitions so far, it is mostly agreed that it lies at the opposite end of spectrum to the common mental disorders such as depression and anxiety (Huppert & So, 2013).

Teacher Wellbeing

Despite the large number of definitions of wellbeing, definitions of teacher wellbeing are few. One of them is proposed by Aelterman, Engels, Van Petegem, and Verhaeghe (2007): “a positive emotional state, which is the result of harmony

between the sum of specific environmental factors on the one hand, and the personal needs and expectations of teachers on the other hand (p. 286)”.

There is no doubt that the main goals of our educational system are effective teaching and learning, which encompass various complexities and are affected by a number of factors. A great amount of research supports the idea that one of these factors is teacher psychology (e.g., Acheson, Taylor, & Luna, 2016; Schutz & Zembylas, 2009; Van Horn, Taris, Schaufeli, & Schreurs, 2004). In the field of language learning psychology, despite the high amount of attention paid to the psychology of the learners, relatively less attention has been given to the teachers and their psychology, which is equally, if not more, important than learner psychology in the language classroom.

As Maslach and Leiter (1999) state, “the most valuable and costly part of an education system are the people who teach. Maintaining their well-being and their contribution to student education should be a primary objective of educational leaders” (p. 303). Teaching as a profession has always been quite challenging due to the complex nature of the job, which has been proven by the record rates of burnout and high numbers of teachers who leave the profession (e.g., Hong, 2010; Macdonald, 1999). As Lovewell (2012) states “Teaching is among the top-five occupations affected by work-related stress, with 70% of teachers and lecturers saying their health suffered because of their job” (p. 46).

Over the past 50 years, the wellbeing of teachers has been investigated widely through different constructs such as teacher emotions, stress, burnout, self-efficacy, etc. The research that has been done so far mostly focuses on the factors that are the predictors of the wellbeing of teachers. For example, according to one study conducted by Spilt, Koomen, and Thijs (2011), it was concluded that there is

tentative evidence that teachers' self-esteem and wellbeing are affected by their relationships with individual students. Similarly, a study conducted by Tsouloupas, Carson, Matthews, Grawitch, & Barber (2010) has identified problems that are encountered in teacher-student relationship as predictors of teacher stress, emotional exhaustion, and burnout. It was also suggested by Caprara et al. (2006) that teachers' level of job satisfaction and wellbeing are also influenced by teacher's self efficacy beliefs. According to the findings of another research study conducted by Van Petegem et al. (2005), teacher wellbeing is influenced by formal teacher characteristics and interpersonal teacher behavior. In addition to these, according to research, teacher wellbeing is also influenced by how connected they are with their students according to research. A more recent study conducted by Milatz, Lüftenegger, & Schober (2015) found evidence proving the relationship between teachers' connectedness with students and teacher wellbeing. They put forward that teachers who had positive relationships with their students had better wellbeing whereas the ones developing distant and incongruent relationships were more inclined to suffer from burnout. These studies provide valuable data about how teacher wellbeing is affected by various conditions, practices, and beliefs.

Whether teacher wellbeing is the predictor of their interpersonal relationships with students has not been studied as widely as the predictors of teacher wellbeing. One of the few examples of such studies is conducted by Hagenauer, Hascher, & Volet (2015). The findings of the study indicated that the interaction between teacher and students is strongly connected to how teachers feel. Teachers' emotional wellbeing in the job is found to be the predictor of positive interpersonal relationships with students. Another study that highlights teacher emotions and wellbeing (Becker, Goetz, Morger, & Ranellucci, 2014) identified teachers' emotions

as an important predictor of students' emotions and supported the contention that positive wellbeing of teachers induce students positive emotions. There are also studies exploring various components of teacher wellbeing, not necessarily referring to the construct of wellbeing. One example is associated with teacher characteristics and teacher-student relationships. It was concluded by S.Yoon (2002) that teachers' stress level was the predictor of the number of students with whom they had negative relationships with whereas it did not predict the number of students that they had good relationships with.

Positive Psychology in SLA

Positive psychology is one of the key concepts that need to be addressed in this study since "wellbeing" conceptually falls into this field compared to a plethora of other socio affective constructs. Positive psychology is a term introduced by humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow (1954), who stated that "the science of psychology has been far more successful on the negative than on the positive side" (p. 354). While traditional psychology deals with problems, positive psychology has a positive standpoint and aims to explore "how people thrive and flourish" (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014, p. 154). Positive psychology and the concept of happiness along with its role in an individual's life have continued to be studied since the introduction of it in 1954 in the field of humanistic approaches; however, they have been redefined by Seligman based on the empirical study recently (1999). The concept of happiness is replaced with wellbeing since it better reflects eudaimonia, which refers to the aim of fulfilling one's ultimate goal, as opposed to hedonic happiness, which refers to a relatively temporary emotion (Kashdan, Biswas-Diener, & King, 2008). The term wellbeing used in this study is parallel with

Seligman's definition, which is the prolonged state including more than temporary positive emotions (Seligman, 2011).

The relevance of Positive Psychology to the fields of Second Language Learning is obvious when various dimensions of language learning such as practical, human, and social dimensions are considered (McIntyre & Mercer, 2014). The role that positive affect plays in learning has been suggested to be pivotal in engaging learners cognitively in the learning process with the help of positive attitudes and emotions by various studies (Fredrickson, 2001, 2003; Reschly, Huebner, Appleton, & Antaramian, 2008; Schernoff, 2013). According to MacIntyre and Gregerson (2012), positive emotions are also crucial for language classrooms as they substantially contribute to the readiness of the learner for the language input. As Hargreaves (2000) states, teaching is emotional in nature and in a language classroom environment as learners and possibly teachers are required to change identities while learning or teaching a language that is not their native language, which might cause emotional challenges (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). To this end, it is possible to state that the wellbeing of language teachers and their positive attitude might have an impact on fostering the readiness of the learners.

Verbal Teacher Immediacy Behavior

Mehrabian (1966), who is a social psychologist, defined verbal immediacy as “the degree of directness and intensity of interaction between communicator and referent in the communicator's linguistic message” (p.28). Gorham (1988) applied verbal immediacy to teaching-learning interaction and investigated the influence teacher's verbal communicational behaviors on learners' learning and on the interpersonal relationship between the teacher and students. Verbal teacher

immediacy refers to linguistic verbal messages that show empathy, openness, kindness, reward, praise, humor, personal knowledge and willingness to engage students in interaction (Gorham, 1988; Christophel, 1990). According to Gorham and Christophel (1990), the immediacy behavior items that are highly associated with student learning outcome include “being vocally expressive, using humor and praise, indicating a willingness to engage in conversations outside of class, using personal examples, encouraging students to talk, and providing and asking for feedback” (p.46-47). According to Gorham (1988), immediacy behavior items are divided into two categories, which are verbal and nonverbal. Table 1 shows these items suggested by Gorham (1988).

Table 1

Immediacy Behavior Items (Gorham, 1988, p. 44)

Verbal Items	Nonverbal Items
1. Uses personal examples or talks about experiences she/he has had outside of class.	21. Sits behind desk while teaching.
2. Asks questions or encourages students to talk.	22. Gestures while talking to the class.
3. Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up even when this doesn't seem to be part of his/her lecture plan.	23. Uses monotone/dull voice when talking to the class.
4. Uses humor in class.	24. Looks at the class while talking.
5. Addresses students by name.	25. Smiles at the class while talking.
6. Addresses me by name.	26. Has a very tense body position while talking to the class.
7. Gets into conversations with me before, after or outside of class.	27. Touches students in the class.
8. Has initiated conversations with me before, after or outside of class.	28. Moves around the classroom while teaching.
9. Refers to class as "my class or what "I" am doing.	29. Sits on a desk or in a chair while teaching.
10. Refers to class as "our" class or what "we" are doing.	30. Looks at board or notes while talking to the class.
11. Provides feedback on my individual work thorough comments on papers, oral discussions, etc.	31. Stands behind podium or desk while teaching.
12. Calls on students to answer questions even if they have not indicated that they want to talk.	32. Has a very relaxed body position while talking to the class.
13. Asks how students feel about an assignment, due date or discussion topic.	33. Smiles at individual students in the class.
14. Invites students to telephone or meet with him/her outside of class if they have questions or want to discuss something.	34. Uses a variety of vocal expressions when talking to the class.

Table 1 (cont'd)

Immediacy Behavior Items (Gorham, 1988, p. 44)

15. Asks questions that have specific, correct answers.
 16. Asks questions that solicit viewpoints or opinions.
 17. Praises students' work, actions or comments.
 18. Criticizes or points out faults in students' work, actions or comments.
 19. Will have discussion about things unrelated to class with individual students or with the class as a whole.
 20. Is addressed by his/her first name by the students.
-

There has been extensive research done to explore how teachers' verbal behavior influences learners, their learning process, and the classroom environment. To cite an example, Christophel (1990), who studied the relationships among teachers' both verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors, student motivation, and learning found that teachers' salient immediacy behaviors contribute to student learning and motivation to a considerable extent. As the focus of the study is the impacts of language teachers' wellbeing on teacher-learner interaction in a language learning environment, the following section will present studies conducted in this field.

Verbal Teacher Immediacy Behavior in SLA

Although the scholars who made the definition of verbal immediacy behavior and pointed out the impacts of immediacy on student learning did not necessarily focus on language learning contexts, immediacy behaviors can be said to have impacts on foreign language learning due to various reasons. As all the scholars in the field of second language acquisition point out, learning a language requires a cooperative environment where interaction is vital. In such an environment, it is

doubtless that teachers play a significant role in engaging learners in the learning process and enhancing interactions between students. The verbal behavior that they exhibit while communicating to the students is crucial and affects not only affective but also cognitive learning in a foreign language classroom.

It is suggested that one of the aspects of what makes a good teacher is not hiding yourself from the students (Harmer, 2007). Sharing personal anecdotes in class provides students with real life experience in the target language, which can be quality teacher talking time and serve as comprehensible and meaningful input that is exposed to the students by the teacher. These examples and experiences can serve as personal stories, which can make the learning more meaningful and memorable (Wright, 2000). Therefore, it can build links to the memory, which can strengthen input retention. Sharing personal examples and experiences with students also provides opportunities for students to interact with the teacher. It paves the way for real communication, which promotes language learning. Furthermore, learners who are in classrooms where the teacher is willing to share his or her genuine experiences might feel less anxious to talk to the teacher and hence become more engaged in the lesson more. As Thornbury (2005) suggests, whichever instructional approach is adopted by the teacher, when real communication is prioritized, the development of speaking is promoted.

Another prominent aspect of immediacy, which is one of the foci of the present study, is the questions that teachers ask students. For instance, they may ask display questions in order to have them display their knowledge such as “What is the past form of go?” which are suggested to be kept to minimum (Thornbury, 2005). The fact that asking open questions that request genuine information contributes to a

more natural discourse in language classrooms is beyond doubt. Such questions directed to students can also help to reduce teacher talking time and increase student talking time, which is desirable in language classrooms (Harmer, 2007). In this way students become more engaged in the lesson.

The research done specifically in the field of second language acquisition exploring verbal and nonverbal teacher immediacy behavior mainly focuses on increasing learner motivation, enhancing classroom atmosphere, and promoting learner engagement. These studies conclude that all of these are positively affected by teacher immediacy.

Being one of the verbal items in the Gorham's list, praising is undoubtedly one of the teacher behaviors researched most commonly in the literature. It is claimed that recognizing students' achievement and giving praise for their sincere effort is significant both to encourage risk taking and reduce anxiety in language classrooms (Richards & Renandya, 2004). According to a study conducted by Noels (2001), when the language teachers give more informative praise and encouragement to students for their efforts, the learners feel more competent in learning a second language. Similarly, as Williams and Burden (1997) also claim, teachers should give uncritical and positive feedback in order to promote independent learning, competence, and motivation since teachers' behaviors are linked with these.

In addition to praising, the way teachers interact with the learners is said to have an impact on language learning. A study conducted by Noels, Clément, and Pelletier, (1999) came up with findings which supported the idea that the perception of how teachers communicate to the learners in a language learning environment has an impact on students' intrinsic motivation. Similarly, the choice of the questions the

teachers ask learners might construct or obstruct learner participation in face to face classroom interaction and plays a crucial role in maximizing learner involvement, which is conducive to second language acquisition (Walsh, 2002). It is also argued that teacher self-disclosure by sharing information about themselves, telling personal stories, and conveying their personal belief has a positive impact on student motivation, affective learning, and classroom climate (Mazer, Murphy, & Simonds, 2007). Another recent study that explored the way teacher behavior, mindset, and instructional practices promote learner involvement was done by Guz & Tetiurka (2016). According to the results of their study in which they videotaped the lessons to identify teacher behaviors which are conducive to the emergence of learner engagement in a foreign language classroom, they noted teachers' positive attitude and immediacy create a similar attitude in students, which substantially contributes to engagement.

Teacher behavior also plays a significant role in classroom atmosphere. According to a recent qualitative study, language verbal and nonverbal immediacy of language teachers' help create a more favorable and relaxed classroom atmosphere, thereby motivating the learners, promoting learner participation and confidence in language learning skills (Ballester, 2013). Being one of the items in Gorham's list, use of humor is another factor having a profound impact on language learning environment. It is argued that humor can enhance learners' linguistic and cultural competence in foreign language classrooms in addition to being socially and psychologically beneficial to learners helping create a positive classroom atmosphere, promote engagement, and offer a more enjoyable language learning environment (Bell, 2009; Deneire, 1995).

Despite the moderate amount of research conducted in the field of second language learning, the literature supports the contention that what teachers say in the classroom while communicating to the learner matters. Teachers' verbal immediacy plays a significant role in the learning process and is worth exploring whether it is somehow connected to teachers' wellbeing and if it has any influence on classroom climate in a language learning environment.

Classroom Climate

The multifaceted concept of classroom climate has been studied extensively; therefore, both the definitions and the components of it vary according to different sources (Fraser, 1998). To start with the definitions, according to Ambrose, Bridges, DiPietro, and Lovett (2010), classroom climate is 'intellectual, social, emotional, and physical environments in which students learn' (p. 170). Schmidt & Cagran (2006) state that classroom climate is a learning environment that encompasses a variety of interactions such as the physical involvement, the organizational objectives and profiles of teachers and profiles of pupils. Mcber (2000) defines classroom climate as 'the collective perceptions by pupils of what it feels like to be a pupil in any particular teacher's classroom, where those perceptions influence every student's motivation to learn and perform to the best of his or her ability' (p. 27).

As far as the individual perception of the social climate of the classroom is concerned, there are four principal components, which are peer relations; teacher–student relations; how the individuals consider themselves in the academic field; and how they get satisfaction in the classroom (Doll, Spies, Leclair, Kurien, & Foley, 2010). Since teacher wellbeing and its impacts on classroom climate are one of the foci of this study, teacher-student relations are of utmost significance.

Dimensions of Classroom Climate

Being a multifaceted construct, classroom climate has a variety of dimensions. Scholars have developed different inventories with the aim of measuring classroom climate. Fraser & Treagust (1986) described classroom climate in seven categories, which are personalization, involvement, student cohesiveness, satisfaction, task orientation, innovation, and individualization whereas Mcber (2000) included nine dimensions of classroom climate: clarity, order, a clear set of standards, fairness, participation, support, safety, interest, and environment. The components of the Classroom Climate Inventory that were included in this study were adapted from these two validated categorizations according to the purposes of this particular study, which will be further discussed in Chapter 3. The tables are provided below to give insights about the dimensions of classroom climate and further clarify the construct.

Table 2

Components of CUCEI (source Fraser & Treagust, 1986 p. 48)

Category	Description
Personalization	emphasizes opportunities for students to interact with the instructor and the instructor's concern for student personal welfare.
Involvement	assesses the extent to which students participate actively and attentively in class discussions and activities.
Student cohesiveness	looks at the extent to which students know, help and are friendly toward each other.
Satisfaction	measures the degree of enjoyment of classes
Task orientation	considers the extent to which class activities are clear and well organized.
Innovation	to what extent the instructor plans new and unusual class activities, teaching techniques, and assignments.
Individualization	asks to what extent students are allowed to make decisions and are treated differently according to ability, interest and rate of working

Table 3

Dimensions of classroom climate (source McBer, 2000, p. 27)

Dimension	Description
Clarity	The purpose of each lesson. How each lesson relates to the broader subject, as well as clarity regarding the aims and objectives of the school
Order	Within the classroom, where discipline, order and civilized behavior are Maintained
A clear set of standards	How pupils should behave and what each pupil should do or try to achieve, with a clear focus on higher rather than minimum standards
Fairness	The degree to which there is an absence of favoritism, and a consistent link between rewards in the classroom and actual performance
Participation	The opportunity for pupils to participate actively in the class by discussion, questioning, giving out materials and other similar activities
Support	Feeling emotionally supported in the classroom, so that pupils are willing to try new things and learn from mistakes
Safety	The degree to which the classroom is a safe place, where pupils are not at risk from emotional and physical bullying, or other fear-arousing factors
Interest	The feeling that the classroom is an interesting and exciting place to be, where pupils feel simulated to learn
Environment	The feeling that the classroom is a comfortable, well-organized, clear and attractive physical environment

Significance of Classroom Climate

An extensive amount of research has been conducted to explore the ways positive classroom climate contributes to learning a second language. The studies focused on the role of classroom climate in various aspects such as affectivity, connectedness, language development, performance, and achievement.

According to the results of a study on affectivity in a classroom context, it was concluded that a positive classroom environment creates positive feelings and better learning outcomes (Turner, Meyer, & Schweinle, 2003). Similarly, a positive context in terms of affectivity promotes engagement and hence makes learning more

effective owing to less anxiety and stress (Arnold, 2009). The concept of connectedness, which refers to having close connections with the teacher and the peers in the classroom, is another aspect that stands out in the literature when the focus is classroom environment. According to Johnson (2009) who validated Connected Classroom Climate Inventory in her study, connected classroom climate has a substantial impact on student affective learning. Another study indicating that positive classroom climate fosters foreign language acquisition has concluded that when the classroom environment is favorable, it promotes the creative atmosphere in the classroom and contributes to language development (Barzdžiukienė, Urbonienė, & Klimovienė, 2010). Similarly, Gascoigne (2012) has pointed out a positive correlation between classroom climate and performance in post-secondary language instruction and drawn attention to the significance of positive classroom interactions measured by Classroom Climate Inventory. Finally, it was concluded by Gedamu and Siyawik (2015) that positive EFL classroom climate components such as task challenge, involvement, and teacher support paves way to language achievement on tests.

Significance of Teacher in Classroom Climate

It is beyond question that the classroom environment is comprised of multiple interpersonal relationships, which include learner(s)-learner(s) and teacher-learner(s). As many scholars claim, learning outcomes are closely associated with these interpersonal relationships and while evaluating the learning outcomes, one should assess the interactions among students in addition to ones between the instructor and the students (Dwyer et al., 2004). According to Ellis (2004), one of the most important duties of a college instructor is to foster learning and to achieve this; they need to establish satisfying relationships with learners. The Affective Learning

Model (ALM) developed by Rodriguez, Plax, & Kearney, 1996 also supports the idea that instructors' immediacy has a substantial impact on the classroom climate and hence students' learning processes and outcomes.

The study conducted by Rodriguez, Plax, & Kearney (1996) put forward the idea that positive teacher behavior has an impact on promoting students' cognitive learning. Another study which explored the relationship between the rapport that the instructor has with the learners and the classroom environment points out that the learning environment is dictated by teacher behavior to a great extent (Frisby & Martin, 2010). They also suggest that teacher behavior might be equally influential on other outcomes such as learning engagement, which is one of the requirements of a positive classroom climate. Another more recent study by Gabryś-Barker (2016) explored pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions on classroom climate and its significance for the wellbeing of teachers and learners. It was claimed that in order for foreign language teachers to manage classroom climate, it is essential that teachers demonstrate a variety of strengths. These strengths were later compared to the character strengths put forward by Seligman (2003) which are 'wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence' (p. 11). Finally, findings of the study conducted by Frenzel, Goetz, Lüdtke, Pekrun, & Sutton (2009) indicated that teacher enjoyment and student enjoyment are closely linked and teachers' displayed enthusiasm has a considerable impact on students' enjoyment and hence a positive classroom climate (Frenzel et al., 2009). To sum up, teachers play a vital role in creating a positive classroom climate for language learners where they can feel safe, motivated, free of anxiety, and engaged to achieve desirable outcomes.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a review of literature regarding teacher wellbeing, teacher verbal immediacy behavior, and classroom climate. In addition to the definitions of the constructs, their relation to second language acquisition was presented. Studies focusing on aforementioned constructs were shared in order to shed light on their significant role in language teaching and learning.

In the following chapter, the research methodology of the study will be presented with detailed information about the setting, participants, instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter includes five main sections: setting, participants, research design data collection, and analysis. The first section aims to provide detailed information on the setting, where the study was conducted. The second section presents the research design adopted. In the third section, participants of the study are introduced in detail. The fourth section presents the data collection procedure including the instruments used in the study. Finally, the data analysis procedures are described.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to shed light on how the wellbeing of tertiary level Turkish EFL teachers impacts their verbal immediacy behavior while interacting with learners in the classroom setting, and the classroom climate in terms of the pre-determined aspects. In this respect, this study aims to address the following research questions:

- i. In what ways does the wellbeing of tertiary level Turkish EFL teachers reflect itself on teachers' verbal immediacy behavior, i.e., use of personal examples and experiences, the questions they ask, use of humor, praise, and criticism, in teacher-student interaction?
- ii. In what ways might the wellbeing of these teachers affect the classroom climate in terms of the verbal immediacy items listed in RQ1?

Setting

This study was carried out at the Preparatory School of Bilkent University School of English Language (BUSEL), in Ankara, Turkey. Bilkent University is a private university whose medium of instruction is English. All the students who wish to study at this university are required take a proficiency exam in academic English before entering their departments. Based on their performance in this exam, students are either placed at relevant levels, or sent to their departments where they are required to take English courses in Faculty of Academic English (FAE). The Preparatory School of English, which is the setting of this study, provides students with integrated academic English lessons according to the levels of the students. These levels are Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate, and Pre-Faculty. All the levels last for 8 weeks, except Pre-Faculty level, which may last 8 or 16 weeks depending on the time of the academic year when students start this level. Students are taught 25 hours per week at all levels, except 16-week PFC, where they have 20 hours per week. Students are required to attend 90% of the lessons in order to pass each level. As for the teachers, they teach between 15 hours to 25 hours a week depending on the semester. During the Fall semester (2017), when the study was conducted, all the participants' workloads were similar, either 20 or 25. Their class sizes ranges from 18 to 21 students.

Participants

The participants of this study are Turkish EFL teachers who work at the Preparatory School of English in Bilkent University and students studying in the program.

Out of 130 teachers who were employed in the institution, 43 teachers volunteered to participate in the first step of the data collection procedure – the Teacher Wellbeing Questionnaire. Out of these 43 teachers, 8 teachers (those with the four lowest and four highest scores) were chosen to be observed based on their scores from the questionnaire, which revealed their wellbeing levels. All 45 items in the questionnaire were on 7-point Likert Scale, which made it easy to convert into percentages of wellbeing in order to rank the participants from highest to lowest. SPSS was not used at this stage of the data analysis as the only function and purpose of the questionnaire was to select the participants of the study. Table 4 shows the percentages of teacher wellbeing ranked from the highest to the lowest.

Table 4

Results of TWBQ

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Participant</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
P1	48.2	P16	68.2	P31	76.2
P2	48.9	P17	68.2	P32	78.1
P3	49.1	P18	68.8	P33	79.0
P4	50.2	P19	69.0	P34	79.4
P5	54.6	P20	69.4	P35	79.4
P6	56.2	P21	69.8	P36	80.0
P7	58.4	P22	69.8	P37	81.9
P8	58.7	P23	70.5	P38	82.5
P9	61.9	P24	72.7	P39	83.2
P10	62.5	P25	74.0	P40	85.7
P11	64.8	P26	74.0	P41	89.5
P12	65.4	P27	75.2	P42	93.2
P13	66.0	P28	75.6	P43	94.9
P14	67.6	P29	75.6		
P15	67.9	P30	76.0		

All 8 teachers kindly consented to get involved in the second step of the study - class observation and be recorded 6 times in total over the course of 6 weeks. The half of the teachers (4) who were chosen to be observed had the lowest scores in the Teacher Wellbeing Questionnaire whereas the other half (4) had the highest scores. Since the teachers were asked to complete the questionnaire before the summer break and observations were to be held in the following semester in Fall, short interviews were held with each of the 8 participants in order to find out whether they had maintained the same level of wellbeing. Based on the interviews, it was concluded that they were at the same wellbeing levels; therefore, those teachers were kept as the participants to be observed in the study.

As in Table 4, four teachers with the highest wellbeing and four with the lowest were selected as the participants of the study. The following table shows the pseudonyms used for each participant.

Table 5

Profile of participants

Participants with lower wellbeing	Pseudonyms	Participants with higher wellbeing	Pseudonyms
P1 (48.2%)	Berna	P40 (85.7%)	Akasya
P2 (48.9%)	Sema	P41 (89.5%)	Biol
P3 (49.1%)	Senem	P42 (93.2%)	Melis
P4 (50.2%)	Nilay	P43 (94.9%)	Ceren

In addition to these 8 teachers, their students were also participants of the study. Consent was taken from the students attending the 8 selected participants' classes. With 14-16 students in each class, the total number of student participants was 120. In the third step of the data collection procedure, student participants were asked to complete a Classroom Climate Inventory. The target population was Prep

School students who were studying at different levels: Pre-Intermediate, Upper Intermediate, and Pre-faculty.

Research Design

In this study, a mixed methods approach was adopted to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena and to verify different sets of findings against each other (Sandelowski, 2003). As Creswell (2014) stated, combining qualitative and quantitative data provides researchers with “two different perspectives, one drawn from closed-ended response data (quantitative) and one drawn from open-ended personal data (qualitative)” (p.15). The research instruments of this study included a questionnaire, classroom observations through an observation scheme, teacher interviews, and an inventory. The research data were collected and analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Details of the data collection, instruments, and analysis are described in the following sections.

Data Collection

Four different data collection instruments were utilized after being adapted from other relevant sources: a questionnaire aiming to measure teachers' wellbeing in the institution, a classroom observation scheme to record teachers' verbal immediacy behavior in the classroom, teacher interviews in order to supplement the findings on the participants' perceptions regarding the possible implications of their wellbeing levels, and a Classroom Climate Inventory (CCI) to collect data on students' perceptions. Classroom observation data were collected to answer Research Question 1 whereas the data coming from CCI aimed to answer Research Question 2. In order to serve as support to the findings, follow-up interview data were collected as well. Finally, all data were triangulated. The following diagrams illustrate how

data obtained from each instrument was triangulated and how this triangulation helped to answer the research questions.

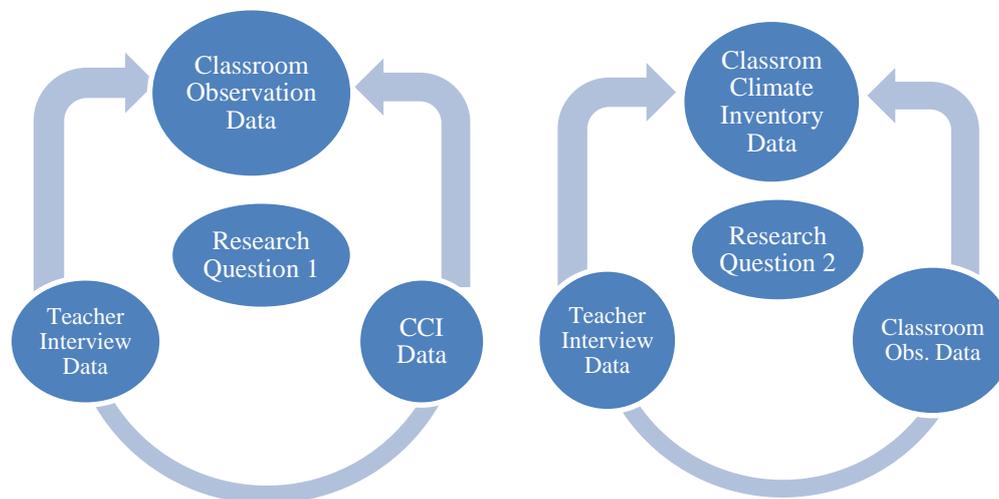


Figure 2. Triangulation of data for each research question.

Teacher Wellbeing Questionnaire

The Teacher Wellbeing Questionnaire (see Appendix A) was adapted from Teacher Wellbeing Scale (TWBS) which was first developed by Collie (2014). After its development, the psychometric properties of TWBS were examined on a sample of Canadian teachers (Collie, Shapka, Perry, & Martin, 2015). The results of this study confirmed the reliability, approximate normality, and factor structure of the scale of TWBS were confirmed (Collie et al., 2015). The TWBS aims to measure three factors of teacher wellbeing: workload wellbeing, organizational wellbeing, and student interaction wellbeing. The workload wellbeing factor aims to measure the issues associated with teachers' workload in and outside the institution by using such items as, "Work I complete outside of school hours for teaching". Focusing on items such as "Support offered by school leadership", the second factor, organizational wellbeing relates to teachers' perceptions of the school as an organization including

the attitude of school management toward teachers and teaching. Finally, the student interaction wellbeing factor aims to measure teachers' perceptions of their interaction with learners using items such as "Relations with students in my class".

The Teacher Wellbeing Scale originally developed by Collie (2014) was a 60-item scale and encompassed different factors as well as the three factors described above. It also aimed to measure the factors which were related to teachers' experiences: stress, job satisfaction, and flourishing (i.e., general life well-being). The instrument used to measure wellbeing in this study was adapted from the original version of Teacher Wellbeing Scale with 60 items since it gave a more comprehensive and detailed picture of the teachers' subjective and professional wellbeing.

The number of the items was reduced from 60 to 45 since those eliminated items were irrelevant to the context of this study. These eliminated items were mostly related to parents of the students (e.g. Item 6 – Relations with my students' parents). The wording of some items was also changed in order to make it more suitable for the specific institution and its teachers. Examples given in the items were also replaced to make them better fit into the context and the terminology with which the participants are more familiar. For example, Item 58 – Standardized testing (e.g. FSA) was changed into Standardized testing (e.g. CAT) as CAT is an example of standardized testing used in Preparatory School of Bilkent University. After adaptation, the factors that were included in the wellbeing questionnaire of this present study were: interpersonal relationships, workload, self-efficacy for teaching, self-efficacy for classroom management, job satisfaction, need satisfaction, organizational commitment, administrative support, and flourishing (i.e. general life wellbeing).

Verbal Teacher Immediacy Framework

The verbal teacher immediacy framework (see Appendix B) used in this study was adapted considering the key aspects of verbal teacher immediacy put forward by Gorham (1988). According to Gorham (1988), immediacy behavior items are divided into two categories, which are verbal and nonverbal. The following table shows these items suggested by Gorham (1988).

Table 6

Immediacy Behavior Items (Gorham, 1988, p. 44)

Verbal Items	Nonverbal Items
1. Uses personal examples or talks about experiences she/he has had outside of class.	21. Sits behind desk while teaching.
2. Asks questions or encourages students to talk.	22. Gestures while talking to the class.
3. Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up even when this doesn't seem to be part of his/her lecture plan.	23. Uses monotone/dull voice when talking to the class.
4. Uses humor in class.	24. Looks at the class while talking.
5. Addresses students by name.	25. Smiles at the class while talking.
6. Addresses me by name.	26. Has a very tense body position while talking to the class.
7. Gets into conversations with me before, after or outside of class.	27. Touches students in the class.
8. Has initiated conversations with me before, after or outside of class.	28. Moves around the classroom while teaching.
9. Refers to class as "my class or what "I" am doing.	29. Sits on a desk or in a chair while teaching.
10. Refers to class as "our" class or what "we" are doing.	30. Looks at board or notes while talking to the class.
11. Provides feedback on my individual work thorough comments on papers, oral discussions	31. Stands behind podium or desk while teaching.
12. Calls on students to answer questions even if they have not indicated that they want to talk., etc.	32. Has a very relaxed body position while talking to the class.

Table 6 (cont'd)

Immediacy Behavior Items (Gorham, 1988, p. 44)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 13. Asks how students feel about an assignment, due date or discussion topic. | 33. Smiles at individual students in the class. |
| 14. Invites students to telephone or meet with him/her outside of class if they have questions or want to discuss something. | 34. Uses a variety of vocal expressions when talking to the class. |
| 15. Asks questions that have specific, correct answers. | |
| 16. Asks questions that solicit viewpoints or opinions. | |
| 17. Praises students' work, actions or comments. | |
| 18. Criticizes or points out faults in students' work, actions or comments. | |
| 19. Will have discussion about things unrelated to class with individual students or with the class as a whole. | |
| 20. Is addressed by his/her first name by the students. | |
-

As verbal teacher immediacy is the focus of this study, only the first 20 items, which are related to verbal immediacy, were taken into consideration in the process of the adaptation. The setting where the study was held, the language classroom context, and the possible relationship between verbal immediacy and teacher wellbeing were taken into account while adapting the observation scheme. However, as discussed in Chapter 1, the literature is not rich on the subject of language teachers' wellbeing and its possible implications in language classroom (Gabryś & Gałajda, 2016). Therefore, it was challenging to decide on the items which might specifically be affected by language teachers' wellbeing. Thus, the researcher used her own discretion based on her experience as a language teacher and experts' opinions on the issue while selecting the items. Five items were selected as the themes to be observed in classroom observations: use of personal examples/experiences, asking questions to encourage students to talk, use of humor,

praising students' work, actions or comments, and criticizing faults in students' work, actions or comments.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the way language teachers communicate to students is one of the crucial elements that promote affective and cognitive learning in a foreign language learning class. It is argued that teacher self-disclosure by sharing information about themselves, telling personal stories, and conveying their personal belief has a positive impact on student motivation, affective learning, and classroom climate (Mazer et al., 2007). Similarly, the choice of the questions the teachers ask learners might construct or obstruct learner participation in face to face classroom interaction and plays a crucial role in maximizing learner involvement, which is conducive to second language acquisition (Walsh, 2002). As for the use of humor, it is claimed that humor can enhance learners' linguistic and cultural competence in foreign language classrooms in addition to being socially and psychologically beneficial to learners helping create a positive classroom atmosphere, promote engagement, and offer a more enjoyable language learning environment (Bell, 2009; Deneire, 1995). Praise is another fundamental factor in foreign language classes. It is argued that recognizing students' achievement and giving praise for their sincere effort is significant both to encourage risk taking and reduce anxiety in language classrooms (Richards & Renandya, 2004). Finally, a criticism item was included in the observation scheme. It is known that fear of being criticized or judged in class either by classmates or the teacher increases anxiety levels and might have a negative impact on language learning (Arnold, 2000).

Classroom Climate Inventory

The inventory to measure the students' perceptions of classroom climate was developed based on two sources in the literature. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the classroom climate inventory developed by Fraser, Treagust, and Dennis (1986), consisted of seven categories: personalization, involvement, student cohesiveness, satisfaction, task orientation, innovation, and individualization; and seven sub-items for each category which made 49 items in total measuring these components. The components naturally focus not only on teacher-student interaction but also the communication among students. Since the student-student interaction is not the focus of the study, only the components related to teacher-student interaction and the items that are possibly influenced by the teacher's verbal immediacy were included in the inventory (CCI). To this end, the items measuring three components were adapted and added to the inventory: *personalization* (emphasizes opportunities for students to interact with the instructor and the instructor's concern for student personal welfare), *innovation* (to what extent the instructor plans new and unusual class activities, teaching techniques, and assignments), and *individualization* (asks to what extent students are allowed to make decisions and are treated differently according to ability, interest and rate of working).

The second source utilized in the process of the developing the instrument was Mcber's categorization (2000). Five of the dimensions in Mcber's categorization were determined to be related to teachers, and their verbal immediacy: *participation* (i.e., the opportunity for pupils to participate actively in the class by discussion, questioning, giving out materials and other similar activities), *support* (i.e., feeling emotionally supported in the classroom, so that pupils are willing to try new things and learn from mistakes), *safety* (i.e., the degree to which the classroom is a safe

place, where pupils are not at risk from emotional and physical bullying, or other fear-arousing factors), *interest* (i.e., the feeling that the classroom is an interesting and exciting place to be, where pupils feel simulated to learn) and *environment* (i.e., the feeling that the classroom is a comfortable, well-organized, clear and attractive physical environment. The Classroom Climate Inventory (see Appendix C) adapted by the researcher has 15 items which are associated with five factors that are selected for Teacher Verbal Immediacy Framework and each factor is measured with three items.

Before conducting the CCI, it had been piloted so that the reliability test could be run on SPSS and measure the internal reliability of the items aiming to measure the same factor, the same theme in this case. Each theme was measured via three items in the inventory which made 15 items in total for 5 themes. CCI was piloted with a sample of 30 students. Based on Cronbach's Alpha, the reliability statistics are listed for each factor in the table below.

Table 7

Reliability Statistics for CCI

<u>Theme 1</u>		<u>Theme 2</u>		<u>Theme 3</u>		<u>Theme 4</u>		<u>Theme 5</u>	
<u>Cronbach's Alpha</u>	<u>N of Items</u>	<u>Cronbach's Alpha</u>	<u>N of Items</u>	<u>Cronbach's Alpha</u>	<u>N of Items</u>	<u>Cronbach's Alpha</u>	<u>N of Items</u>	<u>Cronbach's Alpha</u>	<u>N of Items</u>
.774	3	.831	3	.799	3	.795	3	.858	3

As the reliability co-efficient was found to be higher than .70 for each of the factors, the CCI was considered as acceptable to carry out and to be conducted on the student participants of this study.

Interviews

As the last stage of the data collection, follow-up interviews were conducted with the 8 participant teachers in order to supplement the findings gathered from the classroom observations and capture their feelings about the possible relationships between their wellbeing and verbal immediacy behavior in teaching. After defining the wellbeing construct to ensure clarity, the researcher asked the following questions:

The notion of wellbeing refers to open, engaged, and healthy functioning as a teacher. It is the state of being both psychologically and physically healthy and happy.

1. Do you think your wellbeing as a teacher reflects itself during teaching? If yes, to what extent and in what ways?
2. Do you think your wellbeing as a teacher affects
 - a. how much you use personal examples and experiences in class (talking about yourself, your own life, your experiences, sharing such things in class with the students
 - b. the nature of the questions that you ask your students (i.e. rhetorical questions, personal questions, genuine interest questions etc.)
 - c. use of humor in classroom (both your use of humor and creating an environment where sts can make jokes and laugh)
 - d. the frequency of praising your students when they give a correct answer or make a relevant comment
 - e. the frequency of criticizing the students and pointing out faults in their work, actions or comments

Data Collection Procedure

This study was conducted at a preparatory school of a private university whose medium of instruction is English. After permissions from the Ethics Committee of Bilkent University and Bilkent University School of English Language, the local institution where the data were collected, were granted to carry

out both the questionnaires and the classroom observations, the researcher requested the institution to publish the TWBQ at the weekly online platform for the teachers as an announcement. Having conducted the questionnaire on wellbeing and examined the results, the researcher selected four teachers who scored highest and four teachers who scored lowest to observe six of their lessons. Short interviews were held with the participants to ascertain that they maintained the same level of wellbeing since a period of time had passed after their completion of the questionnaire. Having ensured that they are at same level of wellbeing, the researcher observed the participants' lessons.

Classroom Observations, Classroom Climate Inventory, and Interviews

Supplying direct information rather than self-reported accounts regarding the target phenomena, classroom observations were the preferred main data collection tool in this study (Dörnyei, 2007). To be able to observe as much verbal immediacy behavior as possible, speaking and pre-teaching stages of lessons were selected. The researcher observed the participants' classes for six weeks making use of the Verbal Teacher Immediacy Framework as the observation scheme. As Dörnyei (2007) argues, it is difficult to achieve consistent recording of the target phenomena when *high-inference* need to be employed, namely, when some judgment about the function or meaning of the target behavior is required during observation. Therefore, the classrooms observed were also recorded to ensure that the researcher/observer did not overlook any instances of the behavior included in the framework. Being a nonparticipant observer, the researcher did not interfere with the natural flow of the lessons. The researcher took notes of the instances of the observable phenomena. The researcher also took field notes in the form of running commentary about the details regarding the target behavior and general impressions about the classroom climate to

be helpful in data analysis. The observed teachers were unaware of the focus of the study during observation in order to avoid data contamination.

At the end of four weeks, the classroom climate inventory was carried out with the second group of participants who were the learners taught in the observed classes. Having obtained informed consent from the student participants, the researcher conducted the inventory herself in order to avoid any misunderstandings regarding the items. As the inventory was in English, the researcher remained present in case of any questions that might come from the participants with lower levels of English.

As the last step of the data collection, interviews were conducted with the participant teachers individually to collect data on their perceptions of the relationships between their wellbeing and verbal immediacy to corroborate findings as a means of validation (Dörnyei, 2007).

Data Analysis

Having collected the data through classroom observation, the researcher qualitatively analyzed the data using thematic analysis to identify, analyze and report meaningful patterns in the verbal interactions between teachers and learners (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The number of instances occurred in each theme was counted and the numbers for each group were compared to investigate whether there was any considerable difference between groups. The data coming from CCI were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS. They were entered into SPSS and Independent Samples T-test was run to compare means of the two groups of participants. Having held the interviews with teacher participants, the researcher transcribed the data. The data were compared to existing data coming from observation and inventory. The

following diagram illustrates how the data coming from three instruments were holistically analyzed and triangulated.

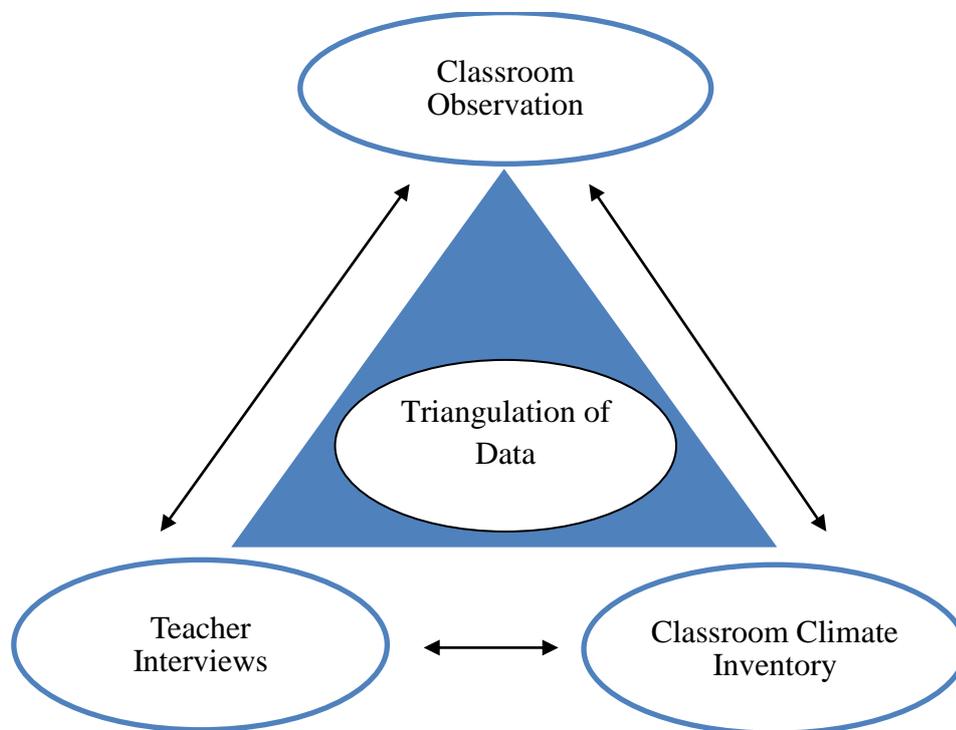


Figure 3. Triangulation of data.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided detailed information about the methodology employed for this study. A description of the sample and the setting has been issued and instruments used in the study have been introduced. Finally, the data collection and analysis procedures have been provided. The results of the data analysis are comprehensively discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The aim of the study is to investigate how teacher wellbeing possibly affects teacher verbal immediacy behavior through various tools. The questions that this study sought to answer were:

- i. In what ways does the wellbeing of tertiary level Turkish EFL teachers reflect itself on teachers' verbal immediacy behavior, i.e., use of personal examples and experiences, the questions they ask, use of humor, praise, and criticism, in teacher-student interaction?
- ii. In what ways might the wellbeing of these teachers affect the classroom climate in terms of the verbal immediacy items listed in RQ1?

In this chapter, the results of data analysis are reported. Analysis of data collected through classroom observation and teacher interviews are discussed first to present findings regarding RQ1. Then, analysis of data coming from Classroom Climate Inventory is provided to address RQ2. These results are followed by charts for each theme to present an overview of all the findings.

Results

Classroom Observation Results

Classroom observations were carried out to observe verbal immediacy behavior of the eight participants, each of whom was visited and audio-recorded four times in total. In addition to the notes the researcher took on the Verbal Teacher Immediacy Framework sheet (see Appendix B for VTIF), audio-recording was

conducted in order not to miss any instances of behavior during observation. Five major themes were included in the VTIF adapted from Gorham's framework (1988): use of personal examples and experiences, asking questions, use of humor, praise, and, criticism. The data collected through the framework were analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis. The results of data analysis are presented in the following section corresponding to each theme in VTIF.

THEME 1: Use of personal examples and experiences. This theme encapsulated the personal examples and experiences used by the teacher during each observed lesson. Each of the instances was recorded in the relevant part of the observation scheme. The most frequently observed personal instances included teachers' own experience of language acquisition process, how they spent the weekend, what their future plans are, something that bothered them recently, etc. The analysis of data showed that the group of teachers with higher wellbeing was more willing to share personal examples and experiences with their students compared to the group of teachers with lower wellbeing. The data are presented below.

Results of the participants with lower wellbeing. The instances of personal examples and experiences lower wellbeing teachers shared were not ample. During two lessons of Sema, Berna, and Senem, and one lesson of Nilay, there was no instance of personal examples or experiences. As for the nature of the instances, some examples that serve the purpose of answering Research Question 1 are presented below.

Table 8

Number of instances for participants with lower wellbeing for Theme 1

Classes	Number of instances (Use of personal examples and experiences)			
	<u>Berna</u>	<u>Sema</u>	<u>Senem</u>	<u>Nilay</u>
Class 1	2	0	1	1
Class 2	1	2	0	0
Class 3	0	0	1	1
Class 4	0	1	0	1

In one lesson of her speaking lessons, Berna uttered the only instance personal experience of this lesson corresponding to the question about how her weekend was:

INSTANCE 1

“I slept most of the time. I was very tired. But we worked on Monday.” (with a disappointed voice)

At this point, it is worth clarifying that there was a specific reason and meaning behind the disappointed tone of voice of the teacher. This utterance was during the lesson conducted on the 26th of December, the next day of Christmas, which was given as holiday to students but not the teachers.

Another similar instance occurred in one of Sema’s lessons. A couple of days before the New Year, Sema asked students about their New Year resolutions. While a student was talking about his semester break (15 *tatil* in Turkish) plans, Sema interrupted and said:

INSTANCE 2

“Please don’t call it “15 tatil” some of us have only 3 days (referring to the instructors) I’m so depressed about it. In the summer we have only 4 weeks.

Student: Hocam niye böyle? {Teacher, why is it like this?}

Sema: I always think about that question.

Another instance of using personal example occurred in Nilay's class. During the pre-listening activity, Nilay complained about traffic by saying:

INSTANCE 3

"I had difficulty coming to school today. Traffic was insane, as usual."

There were also some instances where Nilay was unwilling to give detailed answers to students' questions which required giving personal examples and experiences, which might be attributed to wellbeing. One example was observed in Nilay's lesson when a student asked the following question:

INSTANCE 4

S: "Hocam siz hiç İngilizce çalışıyor musunuz, kelime filan? {Teacher, do you ever study English, like vocabulary and stuff?}

T: Of course.

Results of the participants with higher wellbeing. This group of participants provided the researcher with a higher number of personal examples and experiences in general. The instances were both more frequent and more elaborated compared to the other group.

Table 9

Number of instances for participants with higher wellbeing for Theme 1

Classes	Number of instances (Use of personal examples and experiences)			
	<u>Akasya</u>	<u>Birol</u>	<u>Melis</u>	<u>Ceren</u>
Class 1	3	4	3	2

Table 9 (cont'd)

Number of instances for participants with higher wellbeing for Theme 1

Class 2	2	3	2	3
Class 3	3	4	2	4
Class 4	2	3	4	2

The following table presents some of the instances where this group of participants used personal examples and experiences as detailed answers they gave to students' questions about their personal life and to clarify vocabulary items.

Table 10

Sample instances of participants with higher wellbeing for Theme 1

Participant	Context where the instance occurred	Instance
Akasya, Class 1	During a speaking lesson on a Monday when they started the lesson with what they did at the weekend. Akasya said:	INSTANCE 5 <i>"A couple of my friends came on Saturday. We spent good time together. Yesterday was so relaxing. I did nothing but rested. I just cooked, that's all."</i>
Akasya, Class 1	One student asked whether she liked cooking or not. Akasya said:	INSTANCE 6 <i>"Yes I actually do. It's relaxing most of the time. I try cooking different recipes, and I find it enjoyable to play around the ingredients."</i>
Melis, Class 3	Students complained about the attendance requirements of the school and Melis seemed to show sympathy for the students by saying that she understood how they felt. Then the student asked how she felt and she responded:	INSTANCE 7 <i>"...of course I feel tired at the end of the day, but I like teaching. I do something that gives me pleasure so I can't complain."</i>
Ceren, Class 2	In a post-listening where students were having a whole-class discussion on what changes they would like to see in their city or country to make it more livable, one student shared her comment and asked Ceren what she thought. Ceren willingly shared an experience of hers:	INSTANCE 8 <i>"In New York, I've been there once, in this Central Park I spent the whole day I couldn't see all the places. Think about such a big park. It takes 6 hours to walk all the park. In every corner, there is a different activity – painters, artists, children playing, exhibitions.... You cannot decide which one to go. Yeah in our country, we need sth like that I agree."</i>

Table 10 (cont'd)

Sample instances of participants with higher wellbeing for Theme 1

Biol, Class 4	In order to explain the meaning of “obsessed with” which was asked by a student, Biol said:	INSTANCE 9 <i>...for example, my mother is obsessed with cleaning. She can't spend any moment not thinking about cleaning. Of course, I'm exaggerating</i>
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Finding 1. Participants with higher wellbeing displayed more instances of personal examples and experiences, which were more elaborated, compared to the ones with lower wellbeing.

Teacher Interview Results for Theme 1

The question directed to the participants concerning this theme was:

“Do you think your wellbeing as a teacher affects how much you use personal examples and experiences in class (talking about yourself, your own life, your experiences, sharing such things in class with the students)?”

Results of participants with lower wellbeing. Except Senem, the participants of this group did not think that their wellbeing is a predictor of the use of personal examples and experiences in their lessons. During the interview, Berna was quite certain that her wellbeing had no impact on how much she revealed about herself in the lessons:

I do not believe that my wellbeing affects my use of personal examples and experiences in class since if I feel the need for it, it is nothing to do with my wellbeing.

Sema pointed out an interesting aspect and shared that it is the opposite for her, the more she shared, the stronger the bond with her students got, which increased her wellbeing as a result:

I think giving personal examples contributes to the rapport I have with students and attracts their attention. But I am not sure about how this is connected with wellbeing. I actually feel like it is the other way round. I mean, when I share personal things in class, I bond with the students more and have a better relationship, and this affects my wellbeing positively.

As for Senem, she answered this question affirmatively, and said her wellbeing did affect how much she talked about herself in the lessons. She even provided the researcher with an example by saying that the better she felt, the more she shared with the students about her own life and experiences:

I think yes, I tend to connect my own experiences and personal examples with the focus of the lesson when I'm in a good mood and I feel well. For example, when I teach the word "accountant", I tell the students that it is my sister's job and students ask further questions about my sister and so on. However, I now notice that I do not do this when I don't feel well; I just teach the word and move on.

Results of participants with higher wellbeing. Except Ceren, all the participants in this group agreed strongly that their wellbeing has an impact on the amount of personal examples and experiences shared with the students. Akasya agreed by saying:

I did not use any examples of that kind in the past. Realizing that this affects my students in rather a negative way I mean they did not seem to connect with me on a personal level, I started to use more of them. However, I still cannot do much of this since I believe, maybe mistakenly, that it interferes with my professionalism. However, when I do, I can say that those are the times when I feel better emotionally. So yes, my well being definitely affects how much I share with my students.

Birol gave a similar answer:

It definitely does. When I feel things are under control I mean in life in general or at work, I am more open and I share more of my real life. If I am full of worries, I try to communicate with not only students but with everyone in general at a more superficial level just to achieve some necessary goals; say it is delivering a class or interacting with a family member. I speak less and I ask key questions just to elicit or help students discover.

Melis's answer revealed that she also believed wellbeing could be a predictor of this theme:

I agree that well-being can affect the use of personal examples. Unhappy people might talk about personal experiences less. I personally have started to talk about myself more as I have gained more experiences in teaching.

As for Ceren, she answered the question negatively by saying:

I don't think so. I generally give examples from my life in speaking or language lessons and this is not affected by my well being.

Finding 1 was supported by half of the participants (Senem, Akasya, Birol, and Melis).

THEME 2: Asking questions. All the questions asked by the participants during the classroom observations were recorded and analyzed. They were categorized according to four major types of questions, which are managerial, rhetorical, closed, and open. Considering the focus of the study, the open questions were highlighted and the ones used to promote immediacy were identified as their function is “to promote discussion or student interaction; to stimulate student thinking; to allow freedom to hypothesize, speculate, share ideas about possible activities, etc.” (Blosser, 1975, p.3) The following tables provide samples for each participant’s open questions:

Table 11

Number of instances and sample open questions of teachers with lower wellbeing

<u>Number of Instances</u>			
<u>Berna</u>	<u>Sema</u>	<u>Senem</u>	<u>Nilay</u>
Class 1: 4	Class 1: 4	Class 1: 5	Class 1: 3
Class 2: 6	Class 2: 3	Class 2: 6	Class 2: 5
Class 3: 4	Class 3: 5	Class 3: 7	Class 3: 6
Class 4: 5	Class 4: 4	Class 4: 5	Class 4: 4
<u>Sample Open Questions</u>			
Which one did you like most?	Why do you think it’s an important topic for us?	Ok how was your morning?	How was your lunch, how was your break?
Why do you think that you liked that movie?	Would you like to study abroad?	How is everyone today?	Was it a good break?
Mustafa, did you like the movie?	Do you need more time?	Are you feeling any better?	Is it really a good morning?
How was your long weekend?	So was it a good year for you?		Does it affect you, the snow?
How did you spend your time?	Do you have any new year’s resolutions?		How?

Table 12

Sample open questions of teachers with higher wellbeing

<u>Number of Instances</u>			
<u>Akasya</u>	<u>Birol</u>	<u>Melis</u>	<u>Ceren</u>
Class 1: 6	Class 1:5	Class 1:6	Class 1:5
Class 2: 7	Class 2:6	Class 2:7	Class 2:6
Class 3: 5	Class 3:4	Class 3:5	Class 3:6
Class 4:4	Class 4:5	Class 4:3	Class 4:7
<u>Sample Open Questions</u>			
I would like to hear how your weekend was.	How did you start your day? (after a student replying as "bad")	Do you have any news ? Anything to share?	Have you read any interesting news today?
Was there anything extra ordinary?	What happened?	Is everything good?	How are you feeling today?
How was th match?	You got cold? Oh bad!	Has something interesting happened?	Would you like to share that experience with us?
Which team are you supporting?	Ufuk are you ok?	So after the school are you going to the hospital?	
Do you find it believable?	Something bad happened? What are you thinking about?		
	What happened? Have you lost concentration?		

The data collected through classroom observation did not yield any distinct differences among teachers either in the number or the nature of the questions they asked. Therefore, the data revealing student and teacher perceptions will be revisited in the following relevant sections to gain more insight into this particular theme.

Finding 2. No major differences were found in terms of the questions asked by participants with different levels of wellbeing.

Teacher Interview Results for Theme 2

The question directed to the participants concerning this theme was:

“Do you think your wellbeing as a teacher affects the nature of the questions that you ask your students (i.e. rhetorical questions, personal questions, genuine interest questions etc.)”

Results of participants with lower wellbeing. None of the participants in this group answered this question positively. Berna's answer is given as an example as it is in line with the other teachers' answers.

Berna: For the other questions such as personal questions or genuine interest questions to personalize the topic, then my wellbeing do not interfere with what I believe I need to do.

Results of participants with higher wellbeing. Similarly, participants in this group did not believe the nature of the questions they asked the students was affected by their wellbeing level. One sample answer is as follows:

Akasya: I think that my well-being does not have a great influence on this one.

Finding 2 is supported with teachers' perceptions on asking questions as they did not see their wellbeing as a predictor of the question types they asked.

THEME 3: Use of humor. The analysis of data on the use of humor showed that more humor was used by the group of teachers with higher wellbeing. Except for Senem's lessons, humor was not something distinct in the lessons of the teachers with lower wellbeing.

Results of the participants with lower wellbeing. The numbers of instances for this group of teachers are presented in the following table.

Table 13

Number of instances for participants with lower wellbeing for Theme 3

<u>Classes</u>	<u>Number of instances (Use of humor)</u>			
	<u>Berna</u>	<u>Sema</u>	<u>Senem</u>	<u>Nilay</u>
Class 1	1	0	4	0
Class 2	0	1	4	0
Class 3	1	0	5	0
Class 4	1	1	6	1

Three of the participants with lower wellbeing did not actually provide many instances of use of humor in their lessons. There were only few instances initiated by the students but not responded by the teachers. Senem's case was very different from the other teachers in this group. Use of humor underpinned her lessons and it might even have been considered as too much use of humor by many teachers. One of the most prominent ways of humor she used in her classes was using a funny voice or accent. Another outstanding pattern in her way of using humor was making up words while giving instructions, eliciting answers, and checking answers such as "hadişko, okişko, questionatos, etc." She also used current popular jokes on social media and got students to laugh frequently. She also tolerated students' jokes and provided frequent opportunities for students to laugh.

Results of the participants with higher wellbeing. All the participants with higher wellbeing used humor in their observed lessons in various ways. In addition to making jokes, they also provided opportunities for the students to make relevant jokes and laugh together. As detailed with samples in Table 15, this contributed greatly to the positive atmosphere of the classes. Number of instances for each participant is presented in Table 14.

Table 14

Number of instances for participants with higher wellbeing for Theme 3

<u>Classes</u>	<u>Number of instances (Use of humor)</u>			
	<u>Akasya</u>	<u>Birol</u>	<u>Melis</u>	<u>Ceren</u>
Class 1	2	3	4	3
Class 2	2	3	5	4
Class 3	4	5	3	3
Class 4	5	4	4	2

Table 15

Sample instances of humor use for participants with higher wellbeing

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Context where the instance occurred</u>	<u>Instance</u>
Akasya, Class 1	Akasya asked about what they did at the weekend. After one student told he went to a football match, Akasya asked which team he supported. He hesitated to answer and Akasya said:	INSTANCE 10 "Did you decide when you went there according to the winner?"
Birol, Class 1	While greeting the students, he said:	INSTANCE 11 "Hi guys, how are you? I know you missed me." (Pronouncing the word "missed" wrong on purpose to make students laugh)
Melis, Class 2	After getting the students to listen to a Beatles' song, Melis asked students if it was easy to imagine a world like the one described in the song. One student responded starting as:	INSTANCE 12 S: <i>Now the world is very crowded but in the future...</i> The student paused, probably to think about the rest of his sentence. Melis continued: T: <i>...we can kill some of them?</i>
Ceren, Class 3	When the topic of the lesson was how to raise a child, one student made a sarcastic comment by saying:	INSTANCE 13 S: <i>Kids need slap sometimes.</i> Ceren directly translated a Turkish idiom which made the students laugh: T: <i>If you don't beat your daughter, you will beat your knee.</i>

Finding 3. Participants with higher wellbeing displayed more instances of use of humor compared to the ones with lower wellbeing with one exception, Senem.

Teacher Interview Results for Theme 3

The question directed to the participants concerning this theme was:

“Do you think your wellbeing as a teacher affects use of humour in classroom (both your use of humour and creating an environment where sts can make jokes and laugh)”

Results of participants with lower wellbeing. All the participants in this group except Sema agreed that their use of humor in class is affected by their wellbeing.

Nilay’s answer is presented as an example:

Nilay: My wellbeing affects my outlook on life and how much I make use of my sense of humor.

The answer that Senem gave was quite important for this theme because she was the only one who used humor significantly more frequent than Berna, Sema, and Nilay according to the classroom observation data analysis. Senem justified her behavior by saying:

I think yes, the happier I feel, the more I use humor in the classroom. I make jokes and tease the students and create an environment for students to make jokes. However, I also notice that when I feel down and tired, I still have the tendency to change the mood and try to act energetic. It is like I wear a mask to conceal my real feelings to keep a professional attitude.

Results of participants with higher wellbeing. Similarly, this group of teachers was of the opinion that their wellbeing had a considerable influence on their use of humor in their lessons:

Akasya: *My wellbeing definitely has positive or negative effects on this one. I am more humorous, make more jokes when I feel well. But in other times, I think I push myself to make jokes and entertain students as I said before even when I do not feel well, which sometimes might result in feeling more tired.*

The answers of all the participants except Sema, who thought it mostly depends on students rather than the teacher, supported Finding 3.

THEME 4: Praise. This theme encapsulated instances of praise done by the teachers when students answered a question asked by the teacher correctly or made a relevant comment about the topic they were discussing. According to the results of the analysis, teachers with higher wellbeing seemed to praise students more frequently than the ones with lower wellbeing. In addition to the frequency, the way of their praising was observed to be different from each other. One common praising attempt among participants with higher wellbeing was saying the students' name while praising. Selected instances can be seen below for each group.

Table 16

Instances of praising used by the participants with lower wellbeing

<u>Participant & Number of instances</u>	<u>Instances of praising</u>	
	<u>After a correct answer</u>	<u>After a contribution/relevant comment</u>
Berna	Perfect.	Thank you very much.
Class 1: 3	Ok.	Nice words, thank you very much.
Class 2: 2	Correct.	Wow!
Class 3: 3	Great!	Thanks for sharing.
Class 4: 1	Thank you very much.	
Sema	Ha-ha. (showing approval)	Exactly. Yeah that's a good resolution. Ok that's a nice one too.
Class 1: 2	Yes.	
Class 2: 1	Ok.	
Class 3: 1	Great.	
Class 4: 3		
Senem	Aferin İlaydoşko.	Yes, definitely!
Class 1: 1	Yes.	
Class 2: 1	Of course, Nida knows everything.	
Class 3: 2		
Class 4: 0		

Table 16 (cont'd)

Instances of praising used by the participants with lower wellbeing

Nilay	Yes, that's correct.	Yes.
Class 1: 1	Ok, yes.	Yes, you're right.
Class 2: 2		That's a good question.
Class 3: 1		
Class 4: 1		

Table 17

Samples of praising used by the participants with higher wellbeing

<u>Participant & Number of Instances</u>	<u>Instances of praising</u>	
	<u>After a correct answer</u>	<u>After a contribution/relevant comment</u>
Akasya Class 1: 6 Class 2: 6 Class 3: 8 Class 4: 7	Yes, very good. Yes, definitely. All right guys. Thank you so much. Ok guys great. Yes. That's true. Ha-ha yes. Ok yeah that's great. You have a good point Can, actually. We have some valid points as well. Hah ok. Very good, Çağatay. Hah yes! Hah ok, good.	Thank you Alperen. Hah very good. Yes, very good. Thank you. Yes very good, very good. Hah ok. Hah! Perfect! That's a great point. So you got the idea guys! Yes, very good, Çağatay! Ha-ha yes! A very good example! Yes Doğukan! Yes that's right.
Birol Class 1: 6 Class 2: 7 Class 3: 8 Class 4: 7	Very good. Exactly. Two very good points. Wow. Perfect! Very good Alkım! Very good, Mustafa! You found it very quickly, well done! Well done! Yes! Wow wonderful sentence!	Nuri's answer is perfect! One great idea, thank you. Very good answer! Exactly! Good! A very good question, thank you for asking that! Very good, very good one. A good question came from Ali Taha. Exactly. Good question! Very good! Again good collocations were used, perfect! Yours is very different actually. Very different perspective. Good question, Fatma. Good suggestions! Very good word Alkım.
Melis Class 1: 4 Class 2: 5 Class 3: 4 Class 4: 4	Yes, well done! Perfect. Excellent. Great. Exactly. Perfect. Well done! Good answer ! Exactly.	That's a good point. Wow. Good! Wow, yes! Wow. Great word. Well done. Excellent. Yes, well done. Good job, Ahmet. Well done , Esra. OK, yes!

Table 17 (cont'd)

Samples of praising used by the participants with higher wellbeing

Ceren	Yes, definitely.	Yes Gizem, that's right!
Class 1: 6	OK thank you. Good sample!	Your vocabulary has become so
Class 2: 6	Hah! I was looking for that!	variant! Are you aware of it Atakan?
Class 3: 4	Great!	You were always fluent but now I sense
Class 4: 4	Yes definitely!	it I feel that your vocab is really variant.
	Not newsworthy yes, as Gizem said.	Hmm a different point of view!
	Very good!	Right! Great answer!
	Yes!	Yes, of course!
	Good translation. I got what you	Like the example that Atakan has given
	mean.	(praising his example)
	Good vocab! Well done!	Perfect.
	Yes, perfect.	This is a very good explanation.
		You're right, definitely.

Finding 4. Participants with higher wellbeing displayed more instances of praising compared to the ones with lower wellbeing.

Teacher Interview Results for Theme 4

The question directed to the participants concerning this theme was:

“Do you think your wellbeing as a teacher affects the frequency of praising your students when they give a correct answer or make a relevant comment?”

Results of participants with lower wellbeing. Except Nilay, participants with lower wellbeing did not think that the way they praise the students is affected by their wellbeing. Below is the response of Berna:

Berna: I guess my wellbeing is not a good predictor whether or not I praise my students or how frequent I praise them as I believe that this is one of the core elements of teaching which should not be affected negatively by the daily mood or wellness of the teacher.

Nilay's response was supporting the idea that wellbeing was a predictor of how she praised her students:

Nilay: *As I said before, it probably affects how much I praise my students and point out faults in their performances.*

Results of participants with higher wellbeing. Except Ceren, teachers in this group were of a similar opinion. They did not link praising to their wellbeing level. Akasya's response can be given as an example:

Akasya: I think my well-being does not have a big effect on this one, as far as I am concerned. I try and praise the students all the time regardless of my condition of wellbeing probably because I make a conscious effort in keeping my teaching up to the standard even when I am feeling unwell and as far as I can see, I see this a part of teaching skills.

Ceren's answer supported finding 4 similar to Nilay:

Ceren: This is affected the most. I do not praise the students much when I have a problem. I just make neutral comments like, that is Ok, thank you, another answer? Etc.

Finding 4 was not supported by the perceptions of most of the participants.

THEME 5: Criticism. This theme included instances of disapproval shown by the teachers towards students' wrong answers, comments or actions irrelevant to the lesson. Similar to Theme 2, no distinct differences were observed in the participants' lessons concerning how frequently they criticized students or point out their faults when they made a mistake. All of them used various feedback strategies when students uttered something erroneous or gave a wrong answer to a question that the teacher asked. Although students were not the main focus of the observation at this stage of the study, based on researcher's notes, students did not seem

uncomfortable or anxious about making mistakes as their mistakes were not judged harshly by their teachers. The results of the CCI presented in the following section will be helpful to explore further whether students are of the same opinion regarding criticism.

Finding 5. No major differences were found in terms of criticism used by participants with different levels of wellbeing.

Teacher Interview Results for Theme 5

The question directed to the participants concerning this theme was:

“Do you think your wellbeing as a teacher affects the frequency of criticizing the students and pointing out faults in their work, actions or comments?”

Results of participants with lower wellbeing. Similar to Theme 4, this theme was not considered related to wellbeing construct. None of the teachers thought the two had a relationship. Sema’s answer is presented as an example:

Sema: Similar to praising, I have a general attitude to criticizing students and I think it doesn’t change depending on my wellbeing. I generally try to encourage them to fix their own mistakes and learn from them rather than pointing out their problems harshly. The frequency of my error correction depends on the type of activity. For example, I usually don’t correct grammar mistakes in oral discussions.

Results of participants with higher wellbeing. Except Ceren, this group of teachers did not imply a relationship between their wellbeing and the frequency of criticism like the previous group.

Ceren: This is another point which is affected the most and the students feel it and ask whether there is a problem or not. I point out students fault when I am angry or moody. Sometimes although they make a joke, I may accuse them of being irresponsible and not following the lesson. When I think back and reflect on the day I realize why I have done such things.

Finding 5 was supported by the perceptions of all the participants, except Ceren.

Summary of Classroom Observation and Teacher Interview Findings

The analysis of data collected through classroom observation as well as teacher interviews has been presented. Five main findings were drawn based on the analysis in order to address Research Question 1. Three of the themes, which were using personal examples and experiences, use of humor, and praising seemed to be affected by teachers' level of wellbeing whereas no distinct differences were identified regarding asking open questions and criticism. The following heading will focus on Classroom Climate Inventory results in an attempt to answer Research Question 2.

Classroom Climate Inventory Results

To address the second research question and serve as support to answer RQ1, data were collected on the perceptions of the students in the participant teachers' classes through a Classroom Climate Inventory (CCI). CCI was adapted from two different sources (Fraser et al., 1986; Mcber, 2000) by also considering the pre-determined themes of the study. The data were analyzed for the descriptive statistics of each participant's results based on each factor (corresponding to aforementioned themes) by using One-way Anova on SPSS. Independent Samples T-test was also

run in order to compare means of two groups of participants. The results of CCI and whether they support the findings are discussed below.

Theme 1. Based on the classroom observation data analysis for theme 1, it was concluded that there was a considerable difference between the two groups of participants in terms of the frequency and nature of the personal examples and experiences shared by the teachers while interacting with students in the classroom. Results of CCI data analysis showed that the students were of the same opinion due to the high p -value, which was .000.

Table 18

CCI Results for Theme 1: Use of personal examples and experiences

	<u>Descriptive Statistics</u>				<u>Independent Samples Test</u>	
	<u>Low WB</u>		<u>High WB</u>		<u>Mean Difference</u>	<u>Significance (2-tailed)</u>
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>		
Item 1	2.00	.78	4.43	.65	-2.433	.000
Item 2	2.03	.78	4.57	.56	-2.533	.000
Item 3	2.63	.84	4.58	.62	-1.950	.000

As seen in table above, the means of all three items that measure the same theme were significantly lower for teachers with lower wellbeing compared to the ones with higher wellbeing. Therefore, it can be concluded that the students who were taught by the latter group of participants were exposed to more personal examples and experiences shared by the teacher compared to the former group. The following chart illustrates the overview of findings for Theme 1.

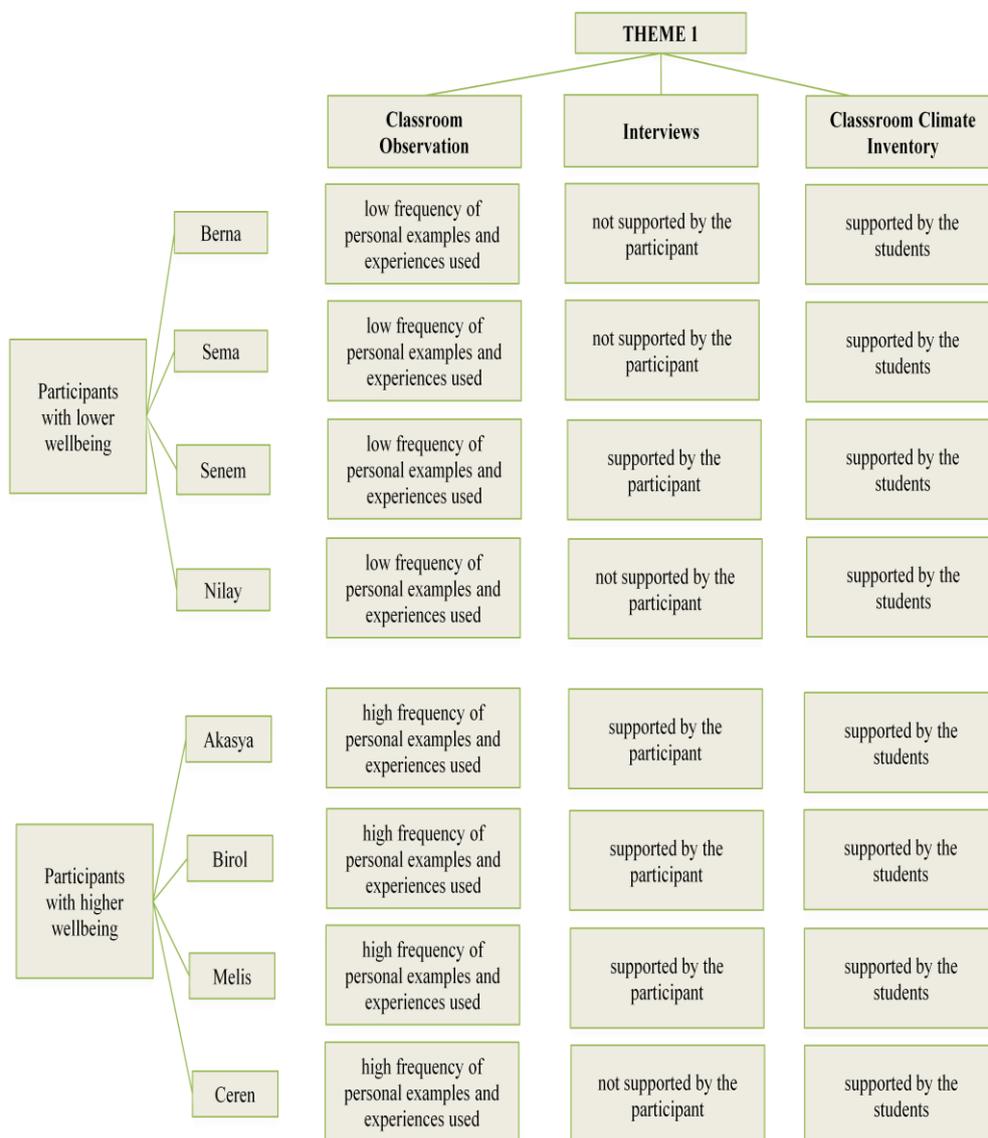


Figure 4. Results for Theme 1.

Theme 2. It was concluded that there was no major difference between two groups considering the questions they asked in the class. However, this finding was not supported by the CCI results since the p -value for two groups was still high (.000).

Table 19

CCI Results for Theme 2: Asking questions

	<u>Descriptive Statistics</u>				<u>Independent Samples Test</u>	
	<u>Low WB</u>		<u>High WB</u>		<u>Mean Difference</u>	<u>Significance</u>
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>		<u>(2-tailed)</u>
Item 4	3.47	.94	4.55	.62	-1.083	.000
Item 5	3.58	1.05	4.32	.60	-.733	.000
Item 6	3.67	.93	4.47	.60	-.800	.000

The data showed that students of teachers with higher wellbeing believed that they were asked more open questions compared to the ones taught by teachers with lower wellbeing, which was not in line with the conclusion drawn based on classroom observation and teacher interview. The following chart presents the overview of findings for Theme 2.

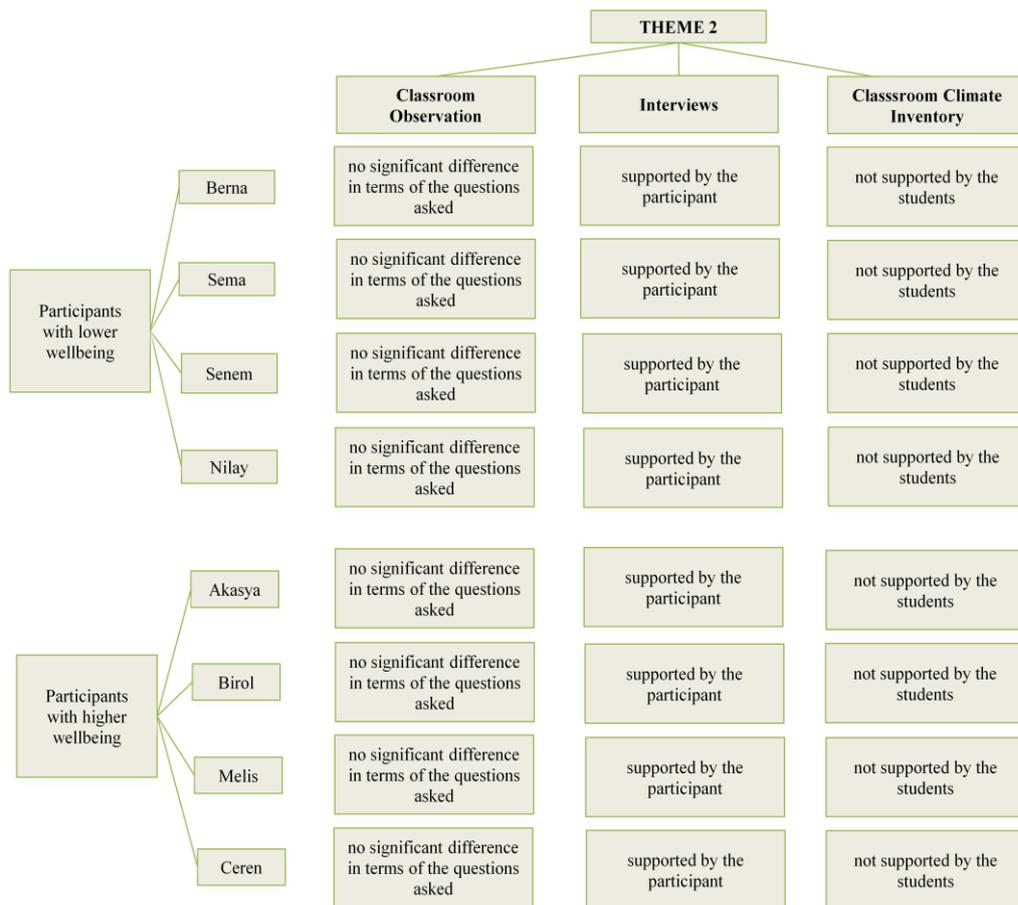


Figure 5. Results for Theme 2.

Theme 3. According to the observation analysis it was concluded that the use of humor by the participant with lower and higher wellbeing showed significant difference if one of the participants with lower wellbeing, Senem, was excluded. The data collected from the students supported Finding 3 with a high *p*-value (.000).

Table 20

CCI Results for Theme 3

	Descriptive Statistics				Independent Samples Test	
	Low WB		High WB		Mean Difference	Significance (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Item 7	2.58	1.53	4.45	.50	-1.867	.000
Item 8	2.50	1.57	4.75	.44	-.733	.000
Item 9	2.57	1.32	4.73	.45	-.800	.000

Table 20 demonstrates that the means of all three items that measure the use of humor by the teacher were significantly higher for teachers with higher wellbeing compared to the ones with lower wellbeing. Therefore, it can be concluded that the students of the former group were exposed to more use of humor compared to the latter group. The overview of findings for Theme 3 is illustrated in the following chart.

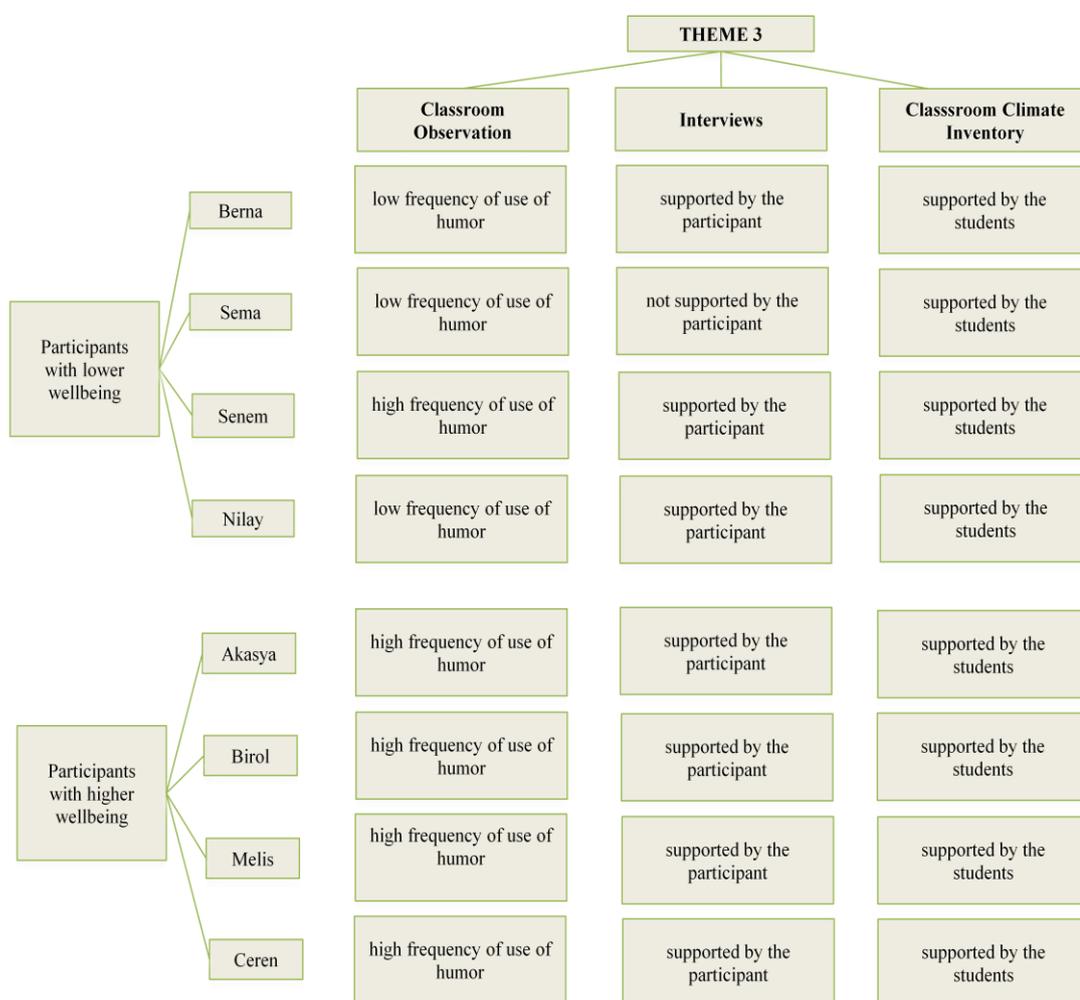


Figure 6. Results for Theme 3.

Theme 4. Praising theme was also supported by CCI results with a significant level of difference between two groups (.000).

Table 21

CCI Results for Theme 4

	<u>Descriptive Statistics</u>				<u>Independent Samples Test</u>	
	<u>Low WB</u>		<u>High WB</u>		<u>Mean Difference</u>	<u>Significance (2-tailed)</u>
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>		
Item 10	2.37	.96	4.47	.62	-2.100	.000
Item 11	2.45	1.02	4.60	.59	-2.150	.000
Item 12	2.70	.94	4.60	.62	-1.900	.000

As it can be understood from the table above, the majority of respondents in the classes of teachers with higher wellbeing agreed with the items that measured whether the teachers praised them in class or not. On the contrary, significantly lower means of the other group proved that those teachers' students mostly disagreed with the items. Similar to theme 2, this result was not in line with the initial finding based on classroom observation and teacher interview. The overview of findings for Theme 4 is presented in the following chart.

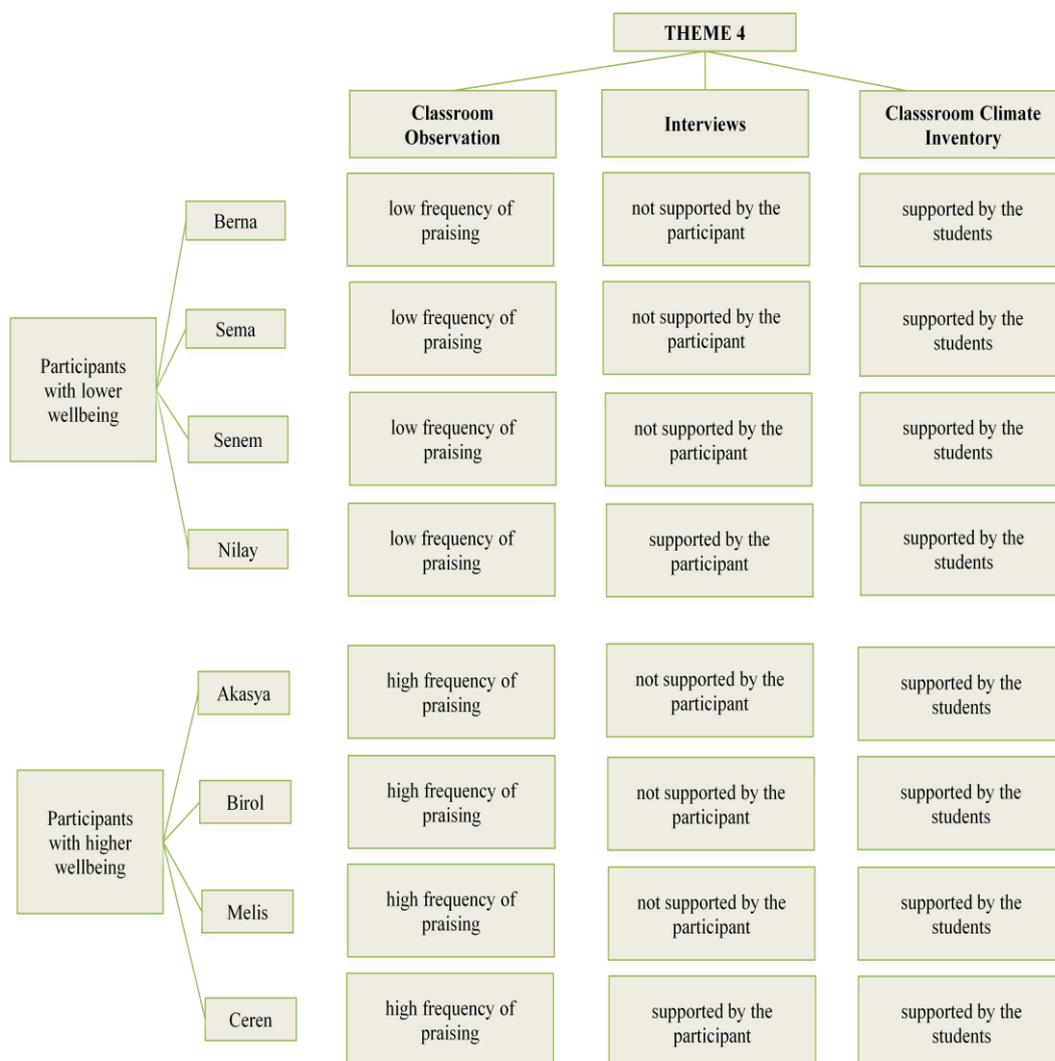


Figure 7. Results for Theme 4.

Theme 5. The frequency of instances where participants criticized students was not significantly different from each other. Data from CCI apparently supported this finding as the p -value is .094 for two items and .262 for one item aiming to measure the factor of criticism.

Table 22

CCI Results for Theme 5

	<u>Descriptive Statistics</u>				<u>Independent Samples Test</u>	
	<u>Low WB</u>		<u>High WB</u>		<u>Mean Difference</u>	<u>Significance (2-tailed)</u>
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>		
Item 13	1.27	.58	1.12	.37	.150	0.94
Item 14	1.27	.58	1.12	.37	.150	0.94
Item 15	1.22	.56	1.12	.38	.098	.262

It is apparent from the table above that the means of all the items measuring criticism were low for both of the groups, which means the majority of students taught by both groups of teachers did not feel criticized by their teachers. The following chart presents the overview of findings for Theme 5.

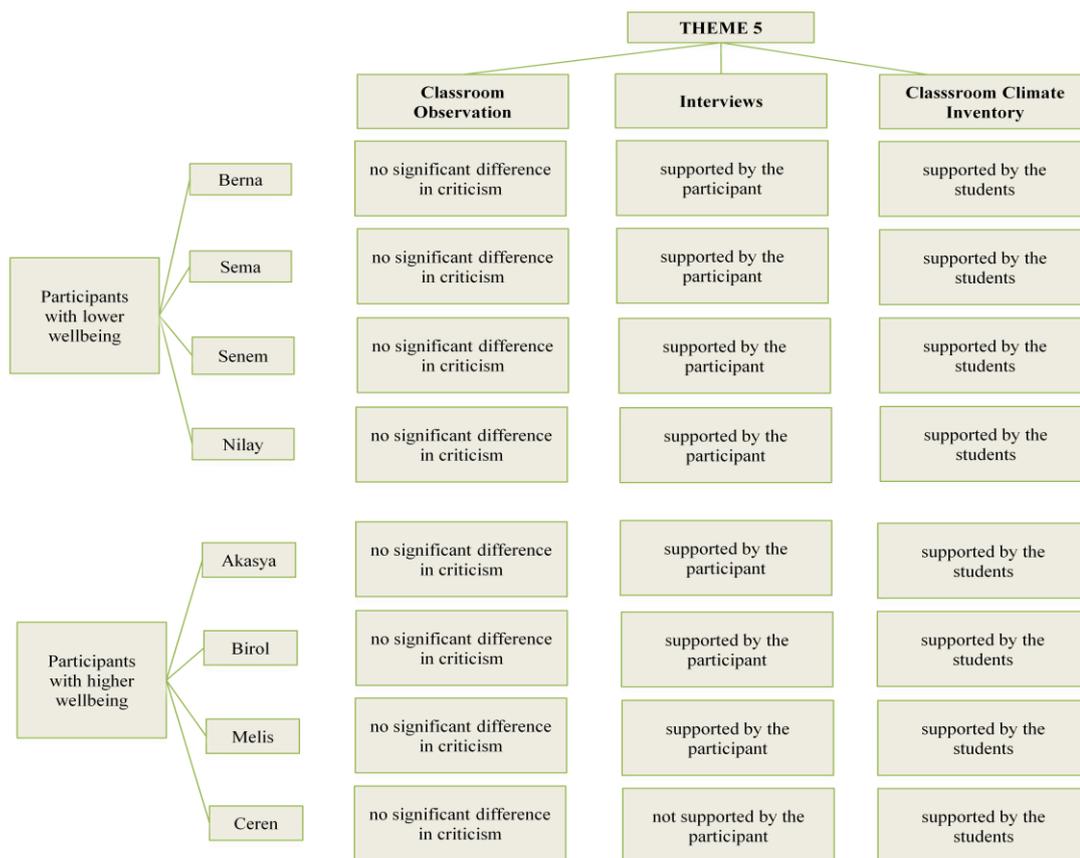


Figure 8. Results for Theme 5.

Summary of the CCI Findings

Based the quantitative data collected from the participant teachers' students to answer RQ2, all the findings discussed earlier were parallel, except Finding 2, asking questions. It is apparent that the students who were in the classes of teachers with higher wellbeing felt that their teachers shared more personal examples and experiences with them, asked them open questions more, used more humor in class, praised them more compared to the ones in the classes of the other group. Based on their perceptions, no significant difference was identified between two groups of students in terms of Theme 5, criticism.

Conclusion

This chapter provided the analysis of data obtained from classroom observation, teacher interviews, and Classroom Climate Inventory. The findings were presented with regard to the research questions. The next chapter will focus on the conclusions that were drawn based on the findings, pedagogical implications, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The aim of the present study was to explore possible impacts of Turkish EFL teachers' positive and negative wellbeing on their verbal immediacy behavior and classroom climate with regard to their in-class interactions with learners. With that purpose, the study addressed the following research questions:

- i. In what ways does the wellbeing of tertiary level Turkish EFL teachers reflect itself on teachers' verbal immediacy behavior, i.e., use of personal examples and experiences, the questions they ask, use of humor, praise, and criticism, in teacher-student interaction?
- ii. In what ways might the wellbeing of these teachers affect the classroom climate in terms of the verbal immediacy items listed in RQ1?

To answer the research questions, data were collected through four different instruments: a teacher wellbeing questionnaire, classroom observations, a verbal immediacy framework to take notes of the instances during observations, and a classroom climate inventory for learners. Having conducted the wellbeing questionnaire with the 43 teachers working at the aforementioned tertiary level preparatory year English program, the researcher ranked the teachers from highest to lowest according to their scores and identified eight participants, four of whom had the highest wellbeing and the other four had the lowest. Four classes taught by each of the eight participants were observed. Notes were taken on verbal immediacy framework and classes were recorded not to miss any instances of the target themes. At the end of four weeks, the students of the participants were asked to fill in a

Classroom Climate Inventory to provide data on their feelings about their teachers' verbal immediacy behavior. In addition to these, participant teachers were interviewed to provide further data on their perceptions about the possible relationship between their wellbeing and verbal immediacy behavior.

In this chapter, the findings of the study will be summarized and discussed in light of the relevant existing literature. Following that, the pedagogical implications and the limitations of the study will be presented. Finally, suggestions for further research will be made.

Discussion of Major Findings

In this section, summary of the main findings will be presented and findings of the study will be compared to the existing literature.

Summary of the findings

The analysis of data revealed five main conclusions that are presented under five themes: use of personal examples and experiences, asking open questions, use of humor, praising, and criticizing.

Finding 1: Use of personal examples and experiences. The data collected through classroom observation indicated that teachers who are at a more positive wellbeing level tend to use more personal examples and experiences while interacting with their students in the classroom. A greater frequency of sharing these occurred in lessons of teachers with higher level of wellbeing than the ones with lower wellbeing. The results of the teacher interview also revealed that half of the teachers were aware of the fact that their wellbeing had an impact on their use of personal examples and experiences. The results of the inventory that was conducted on the students of the participants were in line with this finding. After conducting

comparative analysis of the data gathered from students in two groups of teachers, it was seen that students in classes of teachers with higher wellbeing believed that their teachers used personal examples and experiences more than the ones in the classes of teachers with lower wellbeing with a high significance level (p -value .000).

Finding 2: Asking open questions. The analysis of data collected through classroom observation revealed that there was no significant difference between the numbers and types of the open questions asked by the two groups of teachers. Teacher interviews supported this finding since none of the teachers regarded their wellbeing level as a predictor of the questions they ask in the classroom. However, according to the results of the data analysis of CCI, students of these teachers believed that teachers with higher wellbeing tend to ask more open questions compared to the other group of teachers (p -value .000).

Finding 3: Use of humor. Similar to sharing personal examples and experiences, teachers' use of humor in the classroom was observed to occur at different frequency in the two target groups of teachers. According to classroom observation data analysis, it was concluded that teachers with positive wellbeing tended to use more humor while interacting with students in the classroom. It was also seen that this group of teachers tolerated humor initiated by students more than the other group of teachers as they created an atmosphere where students were comfortable making jokes and laughing. Teacher interview results revealed similar findings as most of the teachers regarded wellbeing as a predictor of their use of humor in the classroom. The finding was also supported by the students' perceptions as the CCI results indicated a significant difference between the two groups of teachers (p -value .000).

Finding 4: Praise. Praise was another theme which was observed to be different in the two groups of teachers according to the results of classroom observation data analysis. It was concluded that teachers with positive wellbeing had a tendency to praise their students more frequently compared to those with negative wellbeing. It was also revealed that this group of teachers tended to address their students' names by name while praising them. According to teacher interview data results, however, only a few teachers regarded wellbeing as a predictor of how they praised their students. They thought praising was a core element of teaching and believed that no matter how they felt, they praised the students when necessary. Students of these teachers were not of the same opinion, however. There was a significant difference between the two groups of teachers according to results of CCI data analysis similar to aforementioned themes (p -value .000).

Finding 5: Criticizing. Similar to asking questions, no major differences were found in terms of criticism used by participants with different levels of wellbeing based on the classroom observation data analysis. The frequency of criticism given by the teachers seemed to be quite similar to each other. Teacher interviews supported this finding as only one teacher associated the frequency of criticism with their wellbeing. Most believed that it was determined by the type of the activity and the error or the nature of the behavior that requires criticism, rather than their wellbeing level. Student perceptions were in line with this finding, as well. There was no significant difference between two groups according to CCI data analysis (p -values .094 and .262).

Discussion

As mentioned in Chapter 1, there is a gap in the literature regarding language teachers' wellbeing and its potential impacts on their teaching and interaction with learners (Gabryś & Gałajda, 2016). It is worth stressing that there is virtually no research that has directly tested the impacts of language teachers' wellbeing on their verbal immediacy behavior. Therefore, the findings will be discussed in relation to the studies conducted on relevant constructs such as teacher and student emotions, teacher burnout, teacher-student interpersonal relationships in addition to teacher wellbeing in different fields as well as language teaching. The findings will also be discussed in regards with studies which explored the relationship in reverse: how the interaction with students affects teacher wellbeing.

Based on the findings presented above, it can be concluded that teachers with positive wellbeing differ from teachers with negative wellbeing in terms of verbal immediacy behavior displayed while interacting with students in a classroom setting. More specifically, the former group share more personal examples and experiences, use more humor, and praise learners more. However, as the difference in asking open questions was not supported either by the teachers or the students and the difference in criticism was only supported by the data collected from students; they cannot be attributed to teachers' wellbeing.

Finding 1 indicates a possible link between the use of personal examples/experiences and teacher wellbeing, which might be associated with the fact that human beings are inclined to be open to share more personal experiences when they are happy and satisfied (Gable, Impett, Reis, & Asher, 2004). It has also been put forward by research that especially when people share their positive life

experience with others; it also contributes to their wellbeing positively (Lambert et al., 2013). Furthermore, happiness is said to be a network phenomenon and it spreads across a diverse array of social ties (Fowler & Christakis, 2008). Therefore, considering the social nature of language learning, it can be said that it is mutually beneficial when teachers share their positive experiences with their students, who are definitely one of the groups of people that they interact with the most frequently in their lives. In the language classroom, this is an opportunity not to be missed as language learners can personalize the input easily with the increased reference to real experiences. Additionally, being one of the six high-leverage teaching practices, “building a classroom discourse community” requires familiarity with and among students and helps learners’ language learning abilities to develop as their bank of shared understandings and experiences grows (Glisan & Donato, 2016, p. 49)

Findings 1, 3, and 4 show that teacher wellbeing is also a predictor of the interpersonal relationships with the students. According to the study conducted by Hagenauer, Hascher, & Volet (2015), it was concluded that the interaction between teacher and students is strongly connected to how teachers feel. Teachers’ emotional wellbeing in the job is found to be the predictor of positive interpersonal relationships with students. The findings of this present study regarding sharing more personal examples and experiences, using more humor in the classroom and praising students more frequently are in line with the conclusion in the study done by Hagenauer et al. (2015). Classroom Climate Inventory results also showed that students of teachers with more positive wellbeing have more positive emotions regarding their teachers’ immediacy, which also supports the conclusion drawn by Hagenauer et al. (2015) and Becker, Goetz, Morger, & Ranellucci (2014) both claiming that positive teacher wellbeing are likely to induce students’ positive

emotions. Considering the significance of affective factors in language learning, it is beyond doubt that these positive emotions are essential to facilitate language learning (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). In any language classroom, where detailed grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension work for skills lessons take place, learners need to feel comfortable to ask questions or share what is not clear to them with the teacher so that teachers can take immediate actions. Another study that investigated whether teacher characteristics had an impact on teacher-student relationships (Yoon, 2002) found that teachers' stress level was the predictor of the number of students with whom they had negative relationships whereas it did not predict the number of students with whom they had good relationships. This conclusion is in line with Findings 1, 3, and 4 but not supported by Finding 5 since teacher wellbeing was not concluded to be the predictor of the frequency of criticism, which has an impact on the quality of teacher-student relationships.

Teachers' positive emotions were reflected in their use of humor in the classroom based on Finding 3. It is also in line with the findings of the study conducted by Frenzel, Goetz, Lüdtke, Pekrun, & Sutton (2009) despite the fact that this study was conducted in mathematics classrooms. The findings of the study indicated that teacher enjoyment and student enjoyment are closely linked and teachers' displayed enthusiasm has a positive impact on students' enjoyment (Frenzel et al., 2009). Teacher wellbeing is one of the predictors of emotionally positive classrooms, which is crucial especially for the highly interactive context of the language classroom. As suggested by Deneire (1995), use of humor employed by the teacher or students helps to reduce the frustration or discomfort that might occur in foreign language learning and has a great potential to enhance learning (Wanzer, Frymier, & Irwin, 2010). Lessening anxiety about using the language and

strengthening the bond among community members, humor use is one of the suggested steps to engage learners in oral classroom communication, build a classroom community and hence enact high-leverage language teaching practices (Glisan & Donato, 2016).

In addition to corroborating the findings of a number of studies mentioned above, findings of this study can also be used to verify other studies by providing a reverse perspective. More specifically, as this study focuses on the potential impacts of teacher wellbeing on teacher-student relationships, the findings might be considered as verification of the conclusions drawn in studies exploring the impacts of teacher-student relationships on teacher wellbeing. One study conducted by Milatz et al. (2015) found evidence proving the relationship between teachers' connectedness with students and teacher wellbeing. They put forward that teachers who had positive relationships with their students had better wellbeing whereas those developing distant and incongruent relationships were more inclined to suffer from burnout. Although this study explored relationships in the opposite direction, the findings regarding the association are similar. Similarly, there is ample amount of research that has identified problems that are encountered in teacher-student relationship as predictors of teacher stress, emotional exhaustion, and burnout (e.g. Spilt, Koomen, & Thijs, 2011; Tsouloupas, Carson, Matthews, Grawitch, & Barber, 2010). This study shows that it is also true in the opposite direction. Despite the fact that the purpose of the study did not focus on the impacts of interpersonal relationships on teacher wellbeing, it should be worth noting that one of the participants, Sema, mentioned such an influence by saying: "I actually feel like it is the other way round. I mean, when I share personal things in class, I bond with the students more and have a better relationship, and this affects my wellbeing

positively”. This was also in line with the previous studies’ findings regarding the connection. Based on Findings 1, 3, and 4, it can be concluded that there is a strong connection between teachers’ level of wellbeing and the immediacy that they display towards their students.

Regarding Findings 2 and 5, they are not in line with any of the conclusions drawn in the studies mentioned above. To start with Finding 2, a clear link between teacher wellbeing and asking open questions has not been identified in this study based on observation and teacher interviews. Specifically, teacher wellbeing is the predictor of neither the nature of the questions that teachers ask nor the frequency of it. This might be because the types of questions that teachers ask their students depend on the purpose of the teacher or the lesson. Like Sema, one of the participants with lower wellbeing, said: “I don’t think my wellbeing affects the kind of questions I ask in class. The nature of my questions depends on the topic or the aim of the lesson.” However, students of teachers with more positive wellbeing responded more positively to the items related to asking open questions. This might be explained with the fact that only four of the lessons were observed to collect data about one participant and it is possible that students feel so due to their overall interaction with the teachers, which also includes interaction outside the classroom. Similarly, Finding 5 does not indicate any significant positive or negative relationship between wellbeing and criticism employed by the teacher. This might be due to a variety of reasons. Like Seren, one of the participants with poor wellbeing suggested, “I usually get upset at students when they do something in class like not listening to me or not paying attention and I start to criticize them because of this, not because I do not have a good sense of well-being at that moment”. She also added that it is like wearing a mask to conceal her feelings and keep a professional attitude.

Implications for Practice

The findings of the present study carry considerable pedagogical implications both for language teachers and school administrators. They give insights into how teacher wellbeing might have a role in establishing immediacy, which leads to a positive or negative influence on interpersonal relationships between teachers and students as well as the classroom climate. First and foremost, the awareness of language teachers regarding this influence can be raised. Becoming aware of this potential impact, language teachers might seek strategies that contribute to the improvement of their wellbeing. Some of the individual teacher wellbeing interventions are “reflection strategies for insight into professional practice, mindfulness training to manage stress, emotional management strategies, coaching psychology to build learning communities, growth mindset approaches to solving problems, self-care practices to restore when needed, celebrate achievements and success to feel valued” (McCallum, Price, Graham, & Morrison, 2017, p.32). Goal setting, both in personal and work domains, can also help teachers improve their wellbeing and achieve work-life balance (Ferguson, 2008). Finally, it might be useful for teachers to get feedback from students to further understand whether their rapport is affected by their wellbeing and if so, they can resort to aforementioned strategies and interventions.

Considering the components of wellbeing, some of which are related to workload, job and need satisfaction, as well as support given by administration, school administrators have a big role in shifting teachers’ attitudes from negative to positive or helping them maintain positive wellbeing. *A psychosocial work environment* refers to “socio-structural range of opportunities that is available to an individual person to meet his or her needs of wellbeing, productivity and positive

self-experience” (Siegrist & Marmot, 2004, p. 1465). Schools are teachers’ psychosocial work environments and they can only be improved by organizational and systematic policies and strategies (Dinos, Stansfeld, Bhui, & White, 2012). As discussed in the study conducted by Ross, Romer, & Horner (2012), teachers can benefit substantially from organizational intervention models such as school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports employed by school administrations, which can increase teachers’ sense of self-efficacy and wellbeing. Organizational interventions, which include building social support mechanisms, redesigning objective workload levels and the work environment, are claimed to improve teacher wellbeing (Naghieh, Montgomery, Bonell, Thompson, & Aber, 2015). School administrators can also enhance the motivation of the teachers by creating a sense of belonging in order to promote organizational commitment, which is another aspect of teacher wellbeing. Some of the ways of achieving this might be creating school projects, establishing more flexible work schedules, providing teachers with more autonomy over their work, and giving them opportunities take part in decision making process (Naghieh et al., 2015). Finally, research confirms that performance bonus and job promotion opportunities boost teachers’ wellbeing and lead to improvements in retention rates (Naghieh et al., 2015).

Individual and organizational investment in teacher wellbeing will help to enhance motivation, self-efficacy, and energy which will contribute to positive outcomes for teachers individually and at the community level, and hence provide better learning outcomes for students (McCallum et al., 2017). Due to the continuous social interaction that a language class requires, it is beyond doubt that the improvement in teacher wellbeing will have a positive influence on students’ language learning experience, as well.

Implications for Further Research

Based on the findings and the limitations of this study, suggestions can be made for further research. First of all, future studies can explore teacher-student relationships for a longer period of time with a larger sample size, which would provide more ample data for the literature. They can also add years of experience or level of the students as variables to the studies to investigate whether immediacy is affected by these or to eliminate these differences.

Teachers' wellbeing can also be explored for a longer period of time by conducting questionnaires and interviews on a regular basis to see whether they maintain the same wellbeing or not. The stability or fluctuation would offer more insights into the possible changes in their immediacy and general practice. More specifically, further studies can be conducted to investigate how language teachers' emotions affect the learners' language learning process with regards to the interactions between teachers and students.

Further studies can also investigate how language teachers' thrive and flourish by observing teachers with high wellbeing without comparing them to the ones with lower wellbeing to provide results from a pure Positive Psychology perspective.

Another suggestion for future research is related to the data collection process. Future studies can video-record lessons to collect data on the non-verbal immediacy of teachers in addition to verbal immediacy, which would provide a wider picture of their interactions with students.

Limitations of the Study

Due to several limitations of the study, the findings should be interpreted with caution. One of the limitations is the short length of time during which the study was conducted. Classroom observation data were collected in four weeks by observing only four of each participant's lessons due to time constraints and the workload of the researcher. Extending the process to one school semester or year and observing a larger number of lessons would have provided more in-depth understanding of the teachers' relationships with the students. Furthermore, the sample size of the study, eight participants, provided limited amount of data. A larger number of participants would surely have offered more insights into the issue by increasing the amount of data on teacher-student interaction in classroom.

The years of experience that the participants had in teaching varied, which can also be considered a limitation of the study. Teachers' immediacy behaviors might be related to their personal experiences as a teacher, as well as their history with a specific group of students. In addition, different levels of students might have an impact on the immediacy teachers display. For instance, teachers who teach higher levels might tend to use more humor in their lessons as they communicate more easily with the students in the target language.

Another limitation of the study is the challenge in measuring wellbeing accurately due to its complex nature. Despite the fact that there is research suggesting that wellbeing remains relatively stable over time and returns to baseline levels rather quickly after changes in life circumstances (Collie, 2014; Lyubomirsky, Dickerhoof, Boehm, & Sheldon, 2011; Schimmack & Lucas, 2010), further longitudinal data, especially on teacher wellbeing, are needed. Furthermore, the

participants might have experienced changes in life circumstances during the data collection process, which might have caused changes in their wellbeing and hence had an impact on their performance.

Although it has been mentioned that this study investigated the phenomenon from the Positive Psychology perspective rather than negative socio-affective constructs, it should be acknowledged that participants with high wellbeing were only observed and interviewed with pre-determined aspects in mind and they compared to the ones with poorer wellbeing, rather than observing how these participants with high wellbeing employed immediacy behavior independently.

Finally, immediacy is a broad construct, encompassing both verbal and nonverbal behaviors displayed by the individual (Gorham, 1988). This study investigated only some of the verbal immediacy behavior items due to time constraints and institutional constraints.

Conclusion

This present study aimed at exploring possible impacts of Turkish EFL teachers' positive and negative wellbeing on their verbal immediacy behavior and classroom climate with regard to their in-class interactions with learners. To achieve this, eight teachers were selected to be observed and interviewed. Learners of the participants also took part in the study by completing an inventory about the immediacy of their teachers and its effect on classroom climate. The findings of the study indicate that teacher wellbeing is the predictor of teachers' verbal immediacy and the classroom climate in terms of three of the items which were investigated: sharing personal examples/experiences, use of humor, and praising. The other two

items, asking open questions and criticism did not indicate considerable differences between the two groups of participants.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Teacher Wellbeing Questionnaire

(adapted from Collie, Shapka, Perry, & Martin, 2015; Collie, 2014)

Teacher Wellbeing Questionnaire (conducted online)

Wellbeing refers to open, engaged, and healthy functioning as a teacher. Currently, how do you feel about the following aspects of being an English teacher in the preparatory school of a Turkish foundation university?

	1 Negative	2 Mostly Negative	3 More Negative than Positive	4 Neither Positive nor Negative	5 More Positive than Negative	6 Mostly Positive	7 Positive
1. Relations with your colleagues							
2. Relations with students in your main class							
3. Relations with students in your support class							
4. Relations with administrators at your school							
5. Relations with your own family at home							
6. Marking work							
7. Lesson planning							
8. Confidence in your knowledge of subject-matter							

9. Completing all your teaching duties in the allotted time							
10. Doing administrative work							
11. Using technology for teaching							
12. The challenge of classroom teaching (e.g., classroom management, student behavior)							
13. Overall satisfaction with your current job							
14. Your ability to meet your student learning goals							
15. Your students' behaviour							
16. Your students' motivation							
17. Your salary and benefits							
18. The adequacy of rest periods/breaks during the day							
19. Administrative work related to teaching							
20. Classroom management							
21. Administration's expectations from you as a teacher							

22. Support offered by administration							
23. The amount of time you have to spend with individual students							
24. The availability of equipment, facilities, or materials for teaching							
25. Number of students in your class(es)							
26. The amount of appreciation for your teaching from your students							
27. The amount of appreciation for your teaching from your institution							
28. Opportunities for promotion							
29. School rules and procedures that are in place							
30. Communication between colleagues in the school							
31. Work you complete outside of school hours for teaching							
32. The community or neighbourhood in which you live							
33. Your commute to school							
34. Your							

physical health							
35. The state of affairs in the world							
36. Being able to finish all your teaching duties							
37. The ability to control what/how you teach							
38. Students' use of cell phones							
39. Using the prescribed curriculum and syllabi							
40. Participation in school-level decision making							
41. The health of your family and/or friends							
42. Your ability to cope with uncontrolled events outside of school (e.g., car breaking down)							
43. Staying late after work for work-related tasks							
44. Standardised testing (e.g. CAT)							
45. Communication between all members of my school							

APPENDIX B

Verbal Immediacy Observation Framework (adapted from Gorham, 1988)

Date: **Participant observed:** **Observation Number:** **Type of lesson:**

Verbal Item Name	Instances of the behaviour	Researcher's notes
Use of personal examples and experiences		
Asking questions		
Use of humor		
Praising students' work, actions or comments		
Criticizing or pointing out faults in students' work, actions or comments.		

APPENDIX C

Classroom Climate Inventory

(adapted from Mcber, 2000; Fraser, Treagust, & Dennis, 1986)

Dear participant,

Please mark the answer that fits your opinion best about the classes that you have had with the instructor

_____.

There are no wrong answers.

	I do not agree	I partially disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I partially agree	I agree
1. The instructor gives personal examples in the lessons.					
2. The instructor shares his/her personal experiences with the students.					
3. The instructor shares his/her feelings in the lessons.					
4. The instructor is interested in what the students think.					
5. The instructor provides opportunities for students to express opinions.					
6. The instructor is interested in what the students feel.					
7. I enjoy going to classes of this instructor.					
8. The instructor uses humor to motivate us.					
9. The instructor provides opportunities for us to use humor and laugh.					
10. The instructor praises us when we complete a task well.					
11. The instructor's attitude is positive towards my comments when they are relevant.					
12. I feel praised by the instructor when I answer a difficult question correctly.					
13. The instructor criticizes me when I make a mistake.					
14. The instructor points out our faults in the lessons.					
15. I feel judged by the instructor when I make a mistake.					

Any other comments: