



The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning™

2024

Volume 14/Issue 2

Article 2

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Recommended Citations:

APA

Ekoç Özçelik, A., & Gündüz Elgün, Z. (2024). Navigating Identities of Language Instructors During Remote Teaching in Crisis. *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*, 14(2), 18-33.

MLA

Arzu Ekoç Özçelik and Zennure Elgün Gündüz "Navigating Identities of Language Instructors During Remote Teaching in Crisis." 14.2 (2024): 18-33.

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The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning, 2024(2), pp.18-33.

Navigating Identities of Language Instructors During Remote Teaching in Crisis

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received December, 2023

Revisions completed June, 2024

Published 30 July, 2024

Key Words:

Earthquake, English language teaching, higher education, Language teacher identity, Remote teaching

ABSTRACT

This study tries to explore the dynamic nature of language teacher identities, interrogating how language instructors perceive and respond to the sudden shift to remote teaching in Türkiye in the aftermath of Kahramanmaraş earthquakes on February 6, 2023. The study also contrasts face-to-face and remote teaching from the perspectives of 124 English language instructors at state and private universities. Data were collected via a survey with 26 Likert-scale statements, 10 rating scale items, and an open-ended question. Descriptive and thematic analyses reveal the complex, multifaceted nature of teacher identities during crises, emphasizing their resilience and adaptability. The findings provide insights for educational policymakers and teacher trainers in supporting language instructors, particularly in emergency remote teaching contexts. By exploring these dynamics, the study contributes to the growing literature on emergency remote teaching and has implications for professional development and support strategies for language instructors facing similar emergency situations.

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The notion of teacher identity has always been referred to as a factor that is influential in teaching/learning process. Until 1990s, identity was considered to consist of unchangeable characteristics learnt or inherited biologically by the individuals (Block, 2007). In 1990s, there was a shift from such an essentialist view of identity to identity in “contextualized social processes” (Miller, 2009, p.173). Varghese et al. (2005) summarize the basic traits of identity, stating that “identity is not a fixed, stable, unitary, and internally coherent phenomenon but is multiple, shifting, and in conflict” (p. 22), and identity is formed and reformed in relation to “social, cultural, and political contexts” (p.23). Thus, identity is formed, maintained, negotiated and renegotiated in relation to social contexts (Luehmann, 2007; Norton, 2010); and also through one’s experiences (Tsui, 2007).

The literature about identity puts forward the basic traits through which teacher professional identity can be defined (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). One of these traits is the idea that teacher professional identity involves both teachers’ beliefs about themselves as teachers (Cohen, 2010) and other people’s expectations from them as teachers (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Beijaard et al., 2004). Another aspect of teacher professional identity is that it is constructed and reconstructed through social interactions (Cohen, 2010; Rodgers & Scott, 2008) and develops through teachers’ commitment to the profession (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). Therefore, teacher professional identity is depicted as a constantly evolving dynamic process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences (Beijaard et al., 2004; Akkerman & Meijer, 2011) and it shifts from one context to another (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Conceptual framework on identity and teacher identity provides a foundation for understanding Language Teacher Identity (LTI) that will form the focus of the present paper. Considering the multiple

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and dynamic nature of teacher identity, LTI is regarded to involve a dynamic process being constructed and reconstructed in different contexts from time to time and from one context to another (Varghese et al., 2005).

1. Literature Review

1.1. Language Teacher Identity Shifts during Emergency Situations

Emergency situations, such as natural disasters, wars, or pandemics, can significantly impact various aspects of society, including education systems. During Covid-19 pandemic, there was an abrupt shift from face-to-face teaching to emergency remote teaching (Lee et al., 2022; Godhe & Brante, 2022). Teachers have wondered if the popularity of online education would continue after the pandemic and how such a change would affect language teaching and learning in light of this unanticipated shift from the traditional classroom environment to the internet environment in many areas of the world (Kwee, 2021). After a major earthquake in Kahramanmaraş that impacted over 10 cities in Türkiye, more than 7.5 million students in 207 universities in Türkiye took a break from in-person instruction as a result of measures made by the Turkish Council of Higher Education (CoHE) to continue higher education.

Language teachers, as crucial agents in the language learning process, are not immune to the effects of emergency situations. These disruptive circumstances can lead to significant shifts in LTIs, encompassing their beliefs, roles, practices, and sense of self (Çelebi & Eraldemir-Tuyan, 2022). The term "emergency" in this study refers to the earthquake that disrupted formal education at the higher education level in Türkiye. According to Hodges et al. (2020), emergency remote teaching is "a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances."

During emergency situations, language teachers may experience shifts in their beliefs regarding teaching and learning (Foreman-Brown et al., 2023; Nazari & Seyri, 2021). Emergency situations can significantly impact language teachers' self-perception, including their confidence, motivation, and professional satisfaction and make them more vulnerable than they feel (Cutri et al., 2020).

Researchers have found that teachers may experience heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and self-doubt due to the challenges inherent in emergency teaching contexts (Teng & Wu, 2021; Wahjuningsih, 2022). However, it is worth noting that these situations can also foster a sense of professional fulfillment and purpose and enable them to celebrate small victories (Ramakrishna & Singh, 2022) as teachers witness the transformative power of language education in mitigating the adverse effects of emergencies on their students' lives. During times of crisis, teachers who attempt new approaches exhibit hope that their efforts to adapt swiftly to an online teaching format will lead to effective outcomes (Cutri et al., 2020). Research indicates that teachers often find themselves undertaking additional responsibilities, such as providing psychosocial support to students, collaborating with colleagues from different disciplines, or adapting curriculum and instructional materials to meet the immediate needs of learners (Compton, 2009). These role shifts can have a profound impact on teachers' professional identities, requiring them to acquire new skills and adapt to rapidly changing circumstances and show immunity (Gooran et al., 2022). Emergency situations often necessitate the modification of language teaching practices. Studies reveal that teachers employ a range of adaptive strategies, such as integrating technology for remote teaching, creating authentic and meaningful learning opportunities despite limited resources, or incorporating elements of trauma-informed pedagogy to address students' emotional well-being (Moorhouse & Wong, 2022). These practice shifts not only reflect the resourcefulness and resilience of language teachers but also have the potential to shape their professional identities in the long term.

To add to the growing literature on the studies on emergency remote teaching exacerbated by Covid-19 in recent years, this study aims to examine the potential impacts of emergency remote teaching on professional identities of English language instructors within the context of all the changes in the aftermath of the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes by posing the following questions:

RQ1: What are the language instructors' perceptions of emergency remote teaching as a result of the disruption to learning environments at higher education level in the aftermath of Kahramanmaraş earthquake?

RQ2: What are the differences between face-to-face language teaching and remote teaching from the perspectives of language instructors in Türkiye?

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design and Data Collection Instrument

The present study collected both qualitative and quantitative data in order to explore the research questions in depth. The researchers implemented survey method in the current study. Survey method involves implementing a survey to the participants of the study in order to find out the opinions, attitudes and perceptions of the population or characteristics of a certain instance (Cresswell, 2002; Karasar, 2007). In order to collect data in survey method, researchers often use questionnaires that involve a number of questions asking the participants to write their answers or choose from pre-determined options (Brown, 2001). The questionnaire implemented in the current study consisted of three parts: the first part asked the respondents about their demographic background such as their age, gender, teaching experience and educational background. The second part had two sections: the first section asked them to respond to 26 statements on five-point Likert Scale consisting of options "Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly agree" while the second section involved 10 items on a rating scale which was composed by putting an adjective at one end of a scale and its opposite at the other (e.g. high-low) so that the participants could choose the position that represented their opinions or feelings best (Cohen et al., 2007). The last part involved an open-ended question to look into how the participants felt and thought about emergency remote teaching process, which contributed to the interpretation of the quantitative findings from the questionnaire.

The first part about participants' demographic background was developed by the researchers based on the questionnaires used in the literature and involved questions in order to get an understanding of the demographic profile of the participants.

The second part of the questionnaire had two sections. The first section was comprised of 26 closed questions. The researchers preferred to utilize closed questions as they enable researchers to see frequencies of responses and describe the trends in the responses given to the questions or statements (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The first 21 items were adapted from a questionnaire developed by Cutri et al. (2020). They developed their questionnaire in order to measure faculty readiness for online crisis teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. They designed and validated their scale through asking experts to evaluate the items in terms of content and form. In addition, the internal consistency of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a value of 0.71. As a result, they concluded that their scale was "a validated instrument to be applied in other educational contexts." (Cutri et al., 2020, p. 528). Thus, in this study, the content and formulation of the items were largely retained in their original scale format; however, to ensure that the language of the items is easily understood, the researchers chose to make some adaptations to the formulation of certain items. For example, the original formulation of item 8 is as "I would rather return to my regular mode of teaching." However, the researchers adapted it as "I would rather return to face-to-face teaching." in order to make the meaning clearer. Besides, based on the literature on online emergency teaching (i.e. Nazari & Seyri, 2021; Teo, Huang & Hoi, 2018; Zhang & Hwang, 2021), the researchers added five more items to the questionnaire implemented during the current study. In order to ensure the validity of the last version of the scale, the researchers asked three ELT experts who had research studies on online teaching to evaluate the items in terms of their content adequacy and language formulation. In accordance with expert comments, necessary changes were made to develop a validated instrument.

The second section in the second part of the questionnaire consisted of 10 items on a rating scale. These items were included in the questionnaire as they were used in Sawyer (2021) in order to enable the participants to express their feelings and thoughts about emergency remote teaching.

The final part involved an open-ended question. The researchers formulated that open-ended question to invite participants to share their additional thoughts and feelings about the emergency remote teaching process. The question was constructed as follows: "Any comments, anything you would like to share about this remote teaching period after the earthquake? (You can use this space as much as you like)." With that open-ended question, the researchers aimed at enabling the participants to write about their opinions or feelings in their own terms and enable the researchers to interpret the findings in more depth (Cohen et al., 2007; Patton, 1990; Radwan et al., 2022).

2.2. Data Collection

The necessary ethical approval from the university ethical committee was obtained and the participants were informed that all the information collected during the study would be kept confidential, that it was voluntary to participate in the study, that they could be exempt from answering the questions whenever they wanted and that their participation would be completely anonymous. To collect data, the researchers utilized the questionnaire described in the previous section by uploading it to a Google Form and sending the link to language instructors working in 10 state universities and 8 private universities during the spring term of the 2022-2023 academic year. 124 English language instructors from state and private universities in Türkiye replied to the questionnaire. Purposive sampling, defined as "a random selection of sampling units within the segment of the population with the most information on the characteristic of interest," was used to pick them in accordance with the research objectives (Guarte & Barrios, 2007, p. 277).

2.3. Data Analysis

As descriptive statistics can be used to present the characteristics of the sample group (Marshall & Jonker, 2010), the researchers applied descriptive statistics to the collected data. The quantitative data from the questionnaire were evaluated by frequency and percentage in order to have a clear illustration of the participants' perceptions. The qualitative data collected through the open-ended question were assessed through thematic analysis as it is often used in order to identify, organize and report the patterns found in the collected data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researchers started by carefully reading the material and making first notes by underlining the most important concepts. Subsequently, the information was methodically coded for the entire dataset. At this point, certain viewpoints were represented in the language utilized. Following the identification of the codes, they were categorized into themes. The themes were examined for agreement with codes in order to validate them. Choosing compelling and representative extracts that mirrored the research findings was a crucial step in the final analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Two researchers and an expert from the field went over the statements provided by the respondents to the open-ended questions and they arrived at six themes: resilience in emergency remote teaching, emotional work in emergency remote teaching, disruption in language teacher identity, equity issues in remote teaching, learner autonomy in remote teaching and academic needs of language instructors in remote teaching. These themes were utilized as subtitles within the article to organize and explain the data comprehensively. Not only were the qualitative responses analyzed, but the statements in the questionnaire were also examined in relation to these themes. The original themes from the adapted questionnaire also served as a guiding framework. This integrative approach ensured that the themes provided a clear and organized representation of the data, offering deeper insights into the research questions by bridging both qualitative and quantitative findings.

2.4. Participants

This study looked into how 124 English language instructors from Turkish universities felt about emergency remote teaching in crisis. 22 male instructors (17.7%) and 102 female instructors (82.3%) made up our sample distribution. According to the respondents' educational backgrounds, 36 teachers (29%) had their PhD, 64 instructors (51.6%) had their MA, and 24 instructors (19.4%) had their Bachelor's. 31 and above years accounted for 8 (6.5%) of the reported teaching experience of the instructors; 26 to 30 years, 11 (8.9%); 21 to 25 years, 26 (21%); 16 to 20 years, 29 (23.4%); 11 to 15 years, 36 (29%); 6 to 10 years, 9 (7.3%); and 1 to 5 years, 5 (4%). While 15 instructors (12.1%) worked at private universities, 109 instructors (87.9%) were employed by state universities. 19 instructors (15.3%) said they were excellent at using Information Communication Technologies (ICT), followed by 44 (35.5%) as very good, 48 (38.7%) as good, 10 (8.1%) as moderate, and 3 (2.4%) as poor.

3. Results and Discussions

In this section, the findings have been categorized under six identified themes and presented in tables. These are followed by interpretations of the findings, contextualized within the existing literature.

3.1. Resilience in emergency remote teaching

Table 1
Teacher Resilience in Emergency Remote Teaching

Theme	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	SD
Resilience in remote teaching contexts	I am willing to implement novel teaching practices involving technology.	0.8% (n=1)	2.4% (n=3)	20.2% (n=25)	40.3% (n=50)	36.3% (n=45)	0.85
	I am comfortable when I teach online.	2.4% (n=3)	4.8% (n=6)	12.1% (n=15)	42.7% (n=53)	37.9% (n=47)	0.95
	I can try new teaching technologies in my online classes even if I personally haven't fully mastered them.	1.6% (n=2)	8.9% (n=11)	21% (n=26)	43.5% (n=54)	25% (n=31)	0.96
	I can create new methods of teaching that utilize the opportunities of online teaching	3.2% (n=4)	9.7% (n=12)	23.4% (n=29)	41.9% (n=52)	21.8% (n=27)	1.02
	I have not yet established a comfortable way of teaching online	37.1% (n=46)	45.2% (n=56)	9.7% (n=12)	7.3% (n=9)	0.8% (n=1)	0.90

Resilience can be defined as “the process of capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances” (Masten, Best & Garmenzy, 1990, p.425). In this sense, the findings of the questionnaire suggest that the participants strongly agree that they were willing to implement novel teaching practices which involve technology as also put forward by previous studies (Cutri et al., 2020; Beijaard et al., 2000). In parallel to their willingness to use novel teaching practices involving technology, most of the participants agreed that they may try new teaching technologies in their online classes even if they have not mastered them fully. In addition, most of the participants agree that they can create new methods of teaching that utilize the opportunities of online teaching. Teachers' answers to the open-ended question in the questionnaire also suggest that despite the drawbacks of online teaching, they can make use of certain properties of online teaching. Examples from the teachers' statements involve:

“Online teaching is hard; however, I believe that it offers some opportunities for us, as well. For example, the students can watch the courses again whenever they want. And I can design my courses by some technological tools to make them more engaging.” (P. 17)

“At the beginning, teaching online is very difficult due to some technical problems or its limitations. But we can always find ways to adapt to it and use it effectively.” (P. 23)

Previous research studies also provide evidence that teachers perceive the switch to online teaching as a learning experience for adopting technology for educational purposes (Nazari & Seyri, 2021), and despite some difficulties, teachers could adapt to new online teaching methods and made use of online resources to solve problems related to online teaching (Lagat, 2021; Radwan et al., 2022).

As remote teaching poses a number of new challenges for instructors, they need to develop some strategies related to their pedagogical practices in order to cope with those challenges and to adapt to new circumstances (Moorhouse, 2020). For that end, the instructors can demonstrate a “proactive agency” by searching for and adopting new ways in order to improve their online teaching as put forward by Teng & Wu (2021, p. 291). This study points out that many instructors think that they have adapted to remote teaching setting and established a comfortable way of remote teaching. Related literature also indicates that even if teachers had difficulty at the beginning of remote teaching process, they could find various ways to cope with the difficulties of remote teaching and then they could adapt themselves to the new teaching context (Teo et al., 2018; Zhang & Hwang, 2023). This finding is also similar to the findings of research studies conducted during COVID-19, which suggested that teachers tried to be optimistic, positive and resilient in spite of the challenges of remote teaching (Bavli & Kortel, 2022; Gao & Zhang, 2020).

3.2. Emotional work in remote teaching

Table 2
Language Instructors’ Emotional Work in Emergency Remote Teaching

Theme	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	SD
Emotional work	I have strategies to help manage my possible fears and concerns when I teach online.	0% (n=0)	3.2% (n=4)	17.7% (n=22)	55.6% (n=69)	23.4% (n=29)	0.73
	I can acknowledge any fears and concerns in a safe professional environment when I teach online.	0% (n=0)	5.6% (n=7)	19.4% (n=24)	57.3% (n=71)	17.7% (n=22)	0.76
	It is important to use instructional time to develop and build relationships with the students in online classes.	0.8% (n=1)	3.2% (n=4)	8.9% (n=11)	54.8% (n=68)	32.3% (n=40)	0.77
	I feel prepared to support students in an online setting who are having difficult times in their lives.	2.4% (n=3)	8.9% (n=11)	24.2% (n=30)	39.5% (n=49)	25% (n=31)	1.00
	I am happy about the student-teacher interaction during online courses.	43.5% (n=54)	25% (n=31)	16.1% (n=20)	10.5% (n=13)	4.8% (n=6)	1.20
	I have difficulty to get quick feedback from the students during online courses.	6.5% (n=8)	8.9% (n=11)	14.5% (n=18)	33.9% (n=42)	36.3% (n=45)	1.19

The concept of emotional work refers to how workers in particular fields manage their emotions to navigate self-identity, interpersonal interactions, and the social dynamics of their work environment (Hochschild, 1979). In this sense, besides inquiring for instructors’ perceptions towards using technology during online classes, the present questionnaire also tried to find out about their emotional work during online teaching in an emergency situation. For instance, they could acknowledge their fears and concerns during online teaching, and they have indicated that they have strategies to manage those fears and concerns. Some of the statements from the participants can also illustrate this case:

“In online teaching, as you can’t see facial expressions or mimics of your students, you may be worried about that they don’t understand the content. Then I developed some strategies such as short, game-like quizzes during online lessons to make sure that they understand the topic, which helped me cope with my worries.” (P.32)

“I often felt anxious about internet connection or technical problems. But as you get used to the process, you can find solutions negotiating with your students.” (P. 43)

Previous studies also suggest that English teachers made use of a number of strategies to manage their fears and concerns (Austin et al., 2005; MacIntyre et al., 2020) and to reduce their anxiety and stress (Huang et al., 2023; Klapproth et al., 2020).

For the language instructors in this study, it is essential to use instructional time to establish and build relationships with students in online classrooms that may foster a welcoming and inclusive learning environment. They took initiative, tried to be helpful in challenging circumstances, and attempted to understand what students were going through (Foreman-Brown et al., 2023; Farley & Burbules, 2022). In addition, the participants in this study feel prepared to assist students in an online environment who are experiencing difficulties. The reviewed literature also revealed that educators placed a high priority on building social and emotional competence among their students and worked hard to foster these connections within the classroom (Bhatnagar & Many, 2022). It should be remembered that these efforts also include emotional work.

The assumption that they are satisfied with the student-teacher relationship during online courses is strongly disagreed with by the respondents. Factors like limited face-to-face interactions, technical barriers, and reduced non-verbal communication might contribute to this thought. This is in line with previous studies that were conducted during the Covid-19 Pandemic (Gooran et al., 2022; Wahjuningsih, 2022; Kamal & Illiyan, 2021). Similarly, in El-Soussi's (2022) study, all of the participants agreed that the human interaction that is essential to teaching and learning was missing from the online classroom. In the present study, when the participants are asked if they have trouble getting timely feedback from students during online courses, most of them agreed. As many students turned off their webcams, developing interpersonal relationships would be impossible, which increased the emotional work of instructors as put forward by El-Soussi (2022).

3.3. Disruption in Language Teacher Identity in Remote Teaching

Table 3
Disruption in Language Teacher Identity

Theme	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	SD
Disruption in teacher identity	My teacher identity is challenged by online teaching.	19.4% (n=24)	23.4% (n=29)	20.2% (n=25)	22.6% (n=28)	14.5% (n=18)	1.34
	The teaching presence and image I often maintain during face-to-face education have been weakened by online instruction.	12.9% (n=16)	21% (n=26)	22.6% (n=28)	24.2% (n=30)	19.4% (n=24)	1.31
	Online teaching makes me feel like a novice teacher educator again rather than an experienced professional.	34.7% (n=43)	33.1% (n=41)	15.3% (n=19)	12.9% (n=16)	4% (n=5)	1.16

As mentioned in Section 1.1, it is possible that language instructors can have some shifts in their perceptions related to teaching and learning (Foreman-Brown et al., 2023). The participants' responses to the questionnaire show that although most of them disagree with the idea that online teaching makes them feel like a novice teacher again rather than an experienced professional, they think that the teaching presence and image they often maintain during face-to-face education have been weakened by online instruction. As remote teaching during an emergency situation requires adaptation to the conditions which are different from face-to-face teaching environments, teachers can feel that their teaching image is weakened. Some of the statements by the teachers also support that finding:

“In online teaching, sometimes I feel that I don't have a control on some aspects of our courses. For example, the students don't turn on their cameras despite my endless reminders, so I can't have a proper interaction with them, which disturbs my teacher identity.” (P. 50)

“As students often use technical problems as an excuse for not participating in the courses actively, I sometimes feel that the flow of the course is not as I would want it to be.” (P. 68)

The findings of the previous research also suggest that it is possible that teachers feel their teaching image is weakened in remote teaching process (Jin, 2021; Huang et al., 2022). Emergency remote teaching situations can significantly have effects on the self-perception, confidence, motivation, and professional satisfaction of the teachers and make them feel that their teaching identity is disrupted (Cutri et al., 2020). It resonates with Section 1.1. that teachers may experience self-doubt in terms of their teacher identity due to the increased levels of stress and anxiety because of the challenges posed by emergency teaching contexts (Teng & Wu, 2021; Wahjuningsih, 2022) and their changing roles in remote teaching process (Zembylas & Chubbuck, 2018).

3.4. Equity Issues in Remote Teaching

Table 4
Equity Issues in Remote Teaching

Theme	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	SD
Equity issues	It is important to adjust my course assignments and requirements to account for students' potential unequal access to online learning necessities (such as internet access; device access; safe place to learn, etc.).	1.6% (n=2)	0.8% (n=1)	11.3% (n=14)	54.8% (n=68)	31.5% (n=39)	0.76
	I feel prepared to recognize students who may not have equal access to the resources which they need for online learning (such as internet access; device access; safe place to learn, etc.)	4.8% (n=6)	6.5% (n=8)	22.6% (n=28)	44.4% (n=55)	21.8% (n=27)	1.03

In regard to equity issues, most of the instructors agree that they should modify their course assignments and prerequisites to take into consideration students' potential unequal access to online learning environment. From the findings, it is evident that they are prepared to identify students who might not have equitable access to the tools they require for online learning (such as internet access, service access, a quiet location to study, etc.). Instructors' responses to the questionnaire's open-ended question also seem to indicate that students experienced equity problems. This resonates with previous studies indicating that remote teaching increases the financial load on students in addition to making it impossible for students without the required technical resources to fully engage in online learning, (Topkaya et al., 2021). Similar to Macheke's (2023) study, in this study, it was also mentioned that the lack of reliable internet connectivity had a significant impact on students' online learning. Another recurring equity problem is lack of study space for students, which echoes the previous research (Pickett et al., 2023). Examples of what the instructors said include:

“Apart from the educational deficits, online education also caused a serious injustice in terms of access to the internet and computers. All students were assumed to have access to the necessary tech elements while most of them (especially in the earthquake-struck areas) had trouble surviving!” (P. 73)

“If our students lack the necessary equipment (laptop, camera) and access to Internet, if we cannot enable fair-equal access to online education, then all our efforts won't mean anything.” (P. 27)

3.5. *Learner Autonomy in Remote Teaching*Table 5
Learner Autonomy in Remote Teaching

Theme	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	SD
Autonomy	It is okay for me if students rely LESS on direct instruction from me in order to learn course content in my online classes.	4.8% (n=6)	13.7% (n=17)	32.3% (n=40)	34.7% (n=43)	14.5% (n=18)	1.05
	During online education, I am willing to lessen the amount of traditional teacher-directed instruction (e.g. lecturing with slides, textbook reading, etc.) that are common when teaching face-to-face.	4.8% (n=6)	16.1% (n=20)	26.6% (n=33)	39.5% (n=49)	12.9% (n=16)	1.05
	Instead of relying on synchronous instruction, I want to provide students with opportunities that would give students more autonomy over when and how they study (such as allowing them to choose their own speed and course materials).	5.6% (n=7)	7.3% (n=9)	23.4% (n=29)	45.2% (n=56)	18.5% (n=23)	1.04
	I want to create opportunities to increase student autonomy regarding how they prefer to learn from a selection of course materials.	2.4% (n=3)	5.6% (n=7)	21.8% (n=27)	46% (n=57)	24.2% (n=30)	0.94

For most of the participants, it is acceptable if their students rely less on direct instruction from them in order to learn course content in online classes. Fostering student autonomy can help students to have more freedom about how and when they learn so that they can take the responsibility of their own learning. Similar findings are reported in research studies which put forward that transition to remote teaching enabled teachers to enhance students' autonomy (Cutri et al., 2020; Ludwig & Tassinari, 2023). Also, the participants in this study wish to give students more freedom over when and how they study, leading to a more flexible learning schedule. This is particularly beneficial for students who may have other commitments, such as work or family responsibilities, as they can fit their language learning around their existing schedule. Moreover, the participants wish to establish opportunities to promote student autonomy in terms of how they like to study from a variety of course materials. Students are more likely to take ownership of their development and accomplishments when they have a voice in their learning process (Ludwig & Tassinari, 2023). Language instructors in this study appear to view their roles as facilitators rather than knowledge carriers, which is consistent with other studies (Foreman-Brown et al., 2023).

3.6. *Academic Needs of Language Instructors in Remote Teaching*Table 6
Academic Needs of Instructors in Remote Teaching

Theme	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	SD
	Switching my courses to online method will negatively impact my university-based and academic duties such as assessment, grading or academic research.	17.7% (n=22)	25.8% (n=32)	12.1% (n=15)	21.8% (n=27)	22.6% (n=28)	1.44
	I like to have a proper guidance/training on how to conduct online teaching sessions.	14.5% (n=18)	15.3% (n=19)	21.8% (n=27)	32.3% (n=40)	16.1% (n=20)	1.29

Academic needs of language instructors	I am interested in learning from experts in online teaching to convert my course and content to an online format.	4% (n=5)	8.9% (n=11)	20.2% (n=25)	48.4% (n=60)	18.5% (n=23)	1.00
	I find it challenging to assess and evaluate students in online teaching.	9.7% (n=12)	9.7% (n=12)	12.1% (n=15)	32.3% (n=40)	36.3% (n=45)	1.30
	I would rather return to face-to-face teaching.	8.9% (n=11)	4.8% (n=6)	17.7% (n=22)	20.2% (n=25)	48.4% (n=60)	1.28
	I believe the traditional method of teaching (face-to-face teaching) is a better method for effective teaching.	4% (n=5)	10.5% (n=13)	21% (n=26)	21.8% (n=27)	42.7% (n=53)	1.19

The data suggest that some language instructors are likely to believe that moving courses online will have some impact on their academic responsibilities, especially concerning tasks like assessment and grading of academic research. The participants in the study by Bruggeman et al. (2022) likewise reported difficulty juggling their various educational responsibilities. The instructors underlined the difficulty to keep up with academic requirements in their responses to the open-ended question:

“It was unfair to remove higher education into online version within such a short time. I feel like I lost the interest and responsibility of students. Further, the minute it was announced that nobody would have the attendance responsibility, most of the students stopped attending the classes, and some even said ‘why would I attend now that attendance is no longer required.’ That’s why I found it quite challenging to keep up with the academic requirements and lost my motivation too.” (P. 29)

Most of the participants agree with the idea that they would like to have sufficient guidance and instruction on how to conduct remote teaching sessions. This finding aligns with the existing studies that were done during the pandemic (Yuan & Liu, 2021). The language instructors in this study report to be interested in learning from experts in online teaching to convert their courses and content to online format. This finding is consistent with the previous research findings (MacIntyre et al., 2020; Arcueno et al., 2021; Yuan & Liu, 2021).

The participants also found it difficult to evaluate and assess students when teaching online. Similar to previous studies (Kwee, 2021; Wahjuningsih, 2022), assessing students’ understanding and progress may become challenging in online teaching. For the open-ended question, some instructors underlined the difficulty in evaluating students in remote teaching:

“Evaluation is very difficult; there is a lot of cheating unfortunately.” (P. 57)

Due to the challenges about meeting the academic requirements in online teaching, most of the respondents strongly agree that face-to-face instruction is still the most effective form of instruction, which echoes previous studies (Kamal & Illiyan, 2021). It seems that when they are given a chance to return to face-to-face teaching, they would prefer face-to-face teaching, which is similar to the findings presented by Radwan et al. (2022). This finding also resonates the previous research findings conducted during COVID-19 pandemic which present that teachers have dissatisfaction toward remote teaching and prefer face-to-face teaching (Gooran et al., 2022; Kamal & Illiyan, 2021). This view was also evident in their replies to the open-ended question:

“Though I feel that I could adapt to online teaching, it is an undeniable fact that face-to face education far more effective than it.” (P. 86)

3.7. Comparison of Remote Teaching and Face-To-Face Teaching from the Perspectives of Instructors

In the third section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to rate ten statements to make a comparison between online teaching and face-to-face teaching. The findings are given in the Table 7.

Table 7

Comparison of Face-To-Face Teaching with Emergency Remote Teaching from the Perspectives of Language Instructors

	Mean	SD
Student engagement during face-to-face teaching	3.95	0.90
Student engagement during remote teaching	1.81	0.98
Clear communication during face-to-face teaching	4.39	0.66
Clear communication during remote teaching	2.16	1.11
Administration support during face-to-face teaching	3.84	0.95
Administration support during remote teaching	3.11	1.32
Your energy level during face-to-face teaching	4.30	0.78
Your energy level during remote teaching	3.03	1.25
Your feelings of efficacy within your classroom during face-to-face teaching	4.33	0.71
Your feelings of efficacy within your classroom during remote teaching	2.85	1.30

It is seen that there is a decrease in student engagement and communication in emergency remote teaching. That may be attributed to the difficulties posed by the online setting such as technical problems, limited face-to-face interaction and not having an appropriate place to participate in online courses. Research studies conducted during Covid-19 Pandemic also present similar findings (El-Soussi, 2022; Kamal & Illiyan, 2021; Wahjuningsih, 2022). In terms of administration support, it is seen that there is not a considerable decrease in administration support in remote teaching. The instructors' energy levels have also decreased as a result of the online instruction. During remote teaching, they no longer feel as effective as they once did. This decline may be due to the added challenges and adjustments required in the remote teaching environment, leading to potential feelings of exhaustion and reduced effectiveness, which resonates with similar studies (Teng & Wu, 2021). Nazari and Seyri (2021) had similar findings, and they pointed out that the teachers stressed that switching to online lessons had given them more responsibilities, and online classes were perceived in this way as requiring more time commitment and putting more pressure on the lecturers to produce successful teaching.

4. Conclusion

The perceptions of English instructors profoundly impact the attainment of teaching and learning objectives. Therefore, our study aimed to examine the perceptions of university English instructors about emergency remote teaching in crisis within Turkish universities' educational context and delve into how this affected their professional identities.

Conducting an online survey revealed that language instructors experienced some sort of reconstruction of their professional identities during remote teaching. This study demonstrates that during crises, language instructors undergo significant changes in their beliefs, roles, practices, and self-perception. Language instructors are questioning their professional identities as well as their professional qualifications in light of a significant shift in technology and language education. They acknowledged the presence of challenges and difficulties, such as limited interaction, technical barriers, and emotional burden for both educators and students. Nevertheless, they also demonstrated remarkable adaptability, assuming new roles beyond teaching, displaying resilience in the face of unexpected events, maintaining a positive outlook despite the challenges, and developing coping

strategies to navigate the hurdles of remote teaching. Additionally, language instructors perceived differences between face-to-face instruction and emergency remote teaching, noting a decrease in student engagement, communication, and instructors' energy levels.

As for its implications, our study sheds light on the evolving landscape of education, emphasizing the increasingly significant role of remote teaching. While many educators long for a return to traditional classrooms and normalcy post-pandemic, it is clear that unforeseen disruptions, such as earthquakes in the case of our study, can necessitate a swift transition to online instruction. Therefore, the findings of this study are relevant to policy makers and teacher trainers as they provide insights into supporting language instructors, particularly in emergency remote teaching contexts. These insights can guide decisions on how best to encourage and enhance the professional development of teachers during such challenging times. By acknowledging and understanding the shifts in professional identities of language instructors as put forward by this study and similar ones, educational stakeholders can provide targeted support and professional development opportunities that help language instructors navigate emergency situations more effectively. Additionally, this study underscores the need for further empirical research to deepen our understanding of this complex phenomenon and inform evidence-based practices for language instructor support during emergencies. As for the limitations of this study, it primarily focuses on language instructors at tertiary level in Türkiye in the aftermath of two major earthquakes, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or contexts not affected by similar natural disasters. The given responses might be subject to response bias or participants' subjective interpretations. Also, the study does not delve deeply into potential differences among language instructors, such as varying teaching levels or backgrounds, which could affect the nature and extent of identity changes.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the instructors who participated in this study. Additionally, we extend our thanks to the anonymous reviewers for their constructive feedback.

Disclosure Statement

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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