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Pride in language teaching: Scale development and associations with work engagement, wellbeing, and burnout

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Abstract

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in research on language teacher emotions while relatively fewer studies have focused on language teachers' professional pride. This study aims to develop and validate a scale for language teacher pride (LTP), and it seeks to understand how this critically important emotion may be linked to other central, conceptually related constructs including wellbeing, work engagement, and burnout. Data were collected employing an online questionnaire in which 423 language teachers from 52 countries took part in the study. The results of exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and exploratory structural equation modeling revealed that the newly constructed *Language Teacher Pride Scale* (LTPS) reflects the multifaceted nature of LTP as a positive emotional experience. We further found that language teachers with a heightened sense of pride in their teaching were more engaged in their work, had higher wellbeing, and were less prone to burnout. We hope that the results of this study will aid future research by informing policy and practice as well as theory building about the role of pride as a potential core construct in positive psychology, which can help us to understand and support teacher flourishing.

Keywords: language teacher pride; teacher wellbeing; burnout; work engagement; positive psychology; scale development

1. Introduction

"Emotions are at the heart of teaching" (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 278), and teachers experience a wide range of positive and negative emotions during their daily professional lives (Frenzel, 2014). Teachers' emotional experiences can affect

their instructional practices and student achievement (Frenzel et al., 2021). In language education, although teacher emotions have received relatively less attention compared to learners' emotions (Richards, 2022), there has been a growing interest in research on teachers' emotions in recent years (Morris & King, 2025). The introduction of positive psychology into the field of second language acquisition (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014) has brought more attention to the role of emotions more generally, and positive emotions specifically (Richards, 2022). In respect to teacher emotions, the majority of studies to date have focused on language teacher anxiety (Goetze, 2023) and, more recently, language teaching enjoyment (Proietti Ergün & Dewaele, 2021) and boredom (Pawlak et al., 2024), with very little attention given to the other broad range of possible positive or negative emotions.

In research in general education, it has been shown that the second most frequently experienced emotion among teachers after enjoyment is pride mainly due to the sense of accomplishment (Carson, 2006). To the best of our knowledge, only one study to date has specifically examined the nature of pride among language teachers[1] in any depth (Mairitsch et al., 2023). To get a deeper understanding of the concept of language teacher pride (LTP) and to be able to examine its relationships with other variables, the current research builds on the insights gained from the initial qualitative exploration of the construct (e.g., Mairitsch et al., 2023) to develop and validate a scale for LTP. It also seeks to understand how this critically important emotion may be linked to other conceptually related constructs including wellbeing, work engagement, and burnout. In what follows, we review the relevant literature about pride and its links to wellbeing, engagement, and burnout.

2. Literature review

2.1. Conceptualization of pride

Pride is a complex and universal emotion that stems from achievements associated with one's own or someone else's skills (Ho et al., 2016). Scholars have acknowledged that pride cannot be defined as a singular, uniform emotion, but it has multiple facets (Ekman, 2003). Drawing on Ekman (2003), in their seminal work, Tracy and Robins (2007a, 2007b) distinguished between two types of pride, namely, *authentic* and *hubristic pride*. Authentic pride is usually associated with specific achievements and is accompanied by a sense of dignity and self-worth.

[1] In this study, *language teacher* refers to a second/foreign language teacher.

Authentic pride "is the achievement-oriented facet of pride, which is associated with genuine feelings of self-worth and a humble perspective of one's actual level of ability" (Ho et al., 2016, p. 2). Feelings of authentic pride can contribute to increased and genuine self-esteem (Tracy & Robins, 2007b), foster perseverance during difficult times, and correlate positively with prosocial behaviors, such as cooperation, supportive social interaction, and empathy (Muris & Meesters, 2014). When feelings of authentic pride are primarily derived from one's job and professional achievements, they are referred to as professional pride (see e.g., Tracy & Robins, 2007b). In contrast, hubristic pride represents an entirely different set of self-conscious emotions, as it is typically linked to narcissistic personality traits and, at times, is used as a complex self-regulatory mechanism employed to suppress feelings of shame. Hubristic pride "is evoked when the person perceives the achievement as a product of the great self ('I did that well!')" (Muris & Meesters, 2014, p. 22). Researchers have found that hubristic pride is often associated with antisocial behavior, a person's quest for status, dominance, and wanting to be admired by others (Wubben et al., 2012). This form of pride is often not tied to specific accomplishments or goals but is instead a more unconditional self-assessment and pejorative assessment of others. As this study is interested in the constructive and achievement-oriented aspects of pride (Ho et al., 2016), we will focus on instances of authentic pride – more specifically, authentic professional pride – and investigate its connections with wellbeing, engagement, and burnout, as it is closely linked to positive psychological outcomes and intrinsic motivation rather than hubristic pride.

Another important distinction in respect to pride is whether it is self- or other-oriented (Tracy & Robins, 2007a). Self-oriented pride, or self-pride, occurs when an individual is proud of their own accomplishments, abilities, achievements, or qualities; as such, it is focused on oneself and not necessarily dependent on external opinions or evaluations (Lu & Roto, 2016). In contrast, other-focused pride "accentuates interpersonal interaction and the influence between self and others" (Lu & Roto, 2016, p. 4). Given that the teaching profession is inherently other-oriented (Mairitsch et al., 2023), investigating the other-oriented dimension of pride alongside its self-oriented facet is essential in order to be able to provide a fuller picture of how this emotion is experienced by educators.

2.2. Language teacher pride

Carson (2006) found that the emotion of pride was the most prevalent positive emotion experienced by teachers in the classroom, after enjoyment (see also Keller et al. 2014). However, we still know relatively little about possible sources

of pride or consequences of teacher pride. One notable exception is Pawłowska's (2020) study examining the benefits of pride for teachers in the Polish context. She found that pride can influence teachers' self-esteem in both their personal and professional roles. She also highlighted the critical impact of social recognition and appreciation on teachers' perceptions of pride. In respect to language teachers, Khajavy et al.'s (2018) study focused on a large range of pleasant and unpleasant emotions, including enjoyment, anxiety, anger, pride, shame, and boredom. The study revealed that pride was experienced by almost all participants in their study, and it mainly stemmed from positive feedback from students and students' progress, revealing the prosocial nature of pride. Another study which focused only and exclusively on LTP was conducted by Mairitsch et al. (2023), who took a qualitative approach to examining the reported sources of pride experienced by teachers of English around the globe. It revealed that English as a foreign language teachers can experience subject-specific pride; indeed, a large number of participants in this study reported that, through teaching English, they could provide students with opportunities to develop their intercultural competences, critical skills, compassion, and kindness. Furthermore, it showed that teacher-specific pride arises from a sense of competence, personal recognition, and the impact they have on their learners. Our study draws on Mairitsch et al.'s (2023) work given its domain-specificity and in-depth detail about language teacher perspectives. As such, this work contributed to the contents of the scales constructed in this study alongside a critical examination of the existent literature. However, in addition to establishing a valid scale for LTP, this study also aims to explore how pride relates to other critical determinants of teacher behavior, such as their engagement, wellbeing, and burnout, answering vital questions about its potential impact. It should be noted that, to the best of our knowledge, no scale has yet been developed to measure domain-specific LTP. While pride has been one of the emotions included in teacher emotion questionnaires developed in the field of general education (e.g., Burić et al., 2018), this scale does not consider the context-specific characteristics of language teachers.

2.3. Wellbeing, engagement, and burnout

Given the increasing rates of (language) teacher attrition and burnout around the globe (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019), teacher wellbeing research has blossomed over the past few years. In this article, we draw on one of the most prominent holistic models of wellbeing, which is Seligman's (2011) PERMA model. This model conceptualizes wellbeing as a multidimensional construct made up primarily of five different components: positive (and negative) emotions, engagement,

relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. In Seligman's (2011) view, a variety of emotions contribute to wellbeing, including hope, joy, contentment, satisfaction, and pride. The role played by positive emotions in sustaining wellbeing is widely recognized (e.g., Dreer, 2024). Studies focusing on language teacher emotions have also highlighted the crucial contribution of emotions to shaping the wellbeing of language teachers (see e.g., Sulis et al., 2023). This suggests that pride, as a core emotion experienced by language teachers (Mairitsch et al., 2023), is likely to play an important role in shaping their wellbeing. However, despite its potential significance, no research to date has explicitly examined the relationship between pride and wellbeing.

Alongside wellbeing, the present study investigates the relationships between pride and work engagement. Here we draw on Schaufeli et al.'s (2002) seminal definition of work engagement, which is seen as "a positive, fulfilling and work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption dimensions" (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). Engagement can be viewed as a key component of wellbeing in the PERMA framework (Seligman, 2011). The association between wellbeing and work engagement has been highlighted by Timms and Brough (2013), who see work engagement as a "condition of optimal worker wellbeing that is associated with greater worker contentment, input and productivity" (p. 769). Engaged teachers, who are passionate, dedicated, and immersed in their jobs, typically experience higher levels of control over their work, increased job satisfaction, and reduced occupational stress (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014). Within applied linguistics, language teachers' work engagement has barely received any attention thus far, but the limited available body of research, also drawing on Schaufeli et al.'s (2002) definition, has shown its connections to language teacher wellbeing (Albert & Csizér, 2025). For instance, Faskhodi and Siyyari (2018) found a negative correlation between work engagement and burnout. In terms of the link between work engagement and pride, to the best of our knowledge no study has explicitly looked at their relationship in language education.

Finally, the present study investigates the connections between pride and burnout. Drawing on Maslach and Leiter (1997), we conceptualize burnout as a process which develops as "energy turns into exhaustion, involvement turns into cynicism and efficacy becomes inefficacy" (p. 24). Burnout can be viewed as "the erosion of engagement" (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Teachers suffering from burnout may experience dissatisfaction, exhaustion, and a tendency to distance themselves from colleagues and students (e.g., Chang, 2009). While the link between teacher burnout and negative emotions has been explored in previous research (e.g., Chang, 2009), the potential buffering role of positive emotions in preventing teacher burnout has been largely overlooked. However, research in healthcare highlights the unique role of positive emotions in supporting adaptive coping with stress (Cheung

et al., 2020). This line of inquiry suggests that interventions aiming to enhance positive emotions may help prevent or lessen the risk of burnout (see Cheung et al., 2020), as greater positive emotions appear to buffer against stress and burnout. As such, exploring the relationships between LTP and burnout could offer valuable insights into how pride could be fostered to prevent burnout in the long term.

While the connection between pride and engagement, wellbeing, and burnout has not yet been systematically examined in the context of language teachers, research in other fields suggests that these constructs are interrelated (e.g., Chang, 2009; Cheung et al., 2020). Exploring these relationships could provide valuable insights into how teachers can be better supported in terms of wellbeing and job satisfaction, thereby reducing the risk of burnout and attrition.

3. Aims, research questions, and design

The aims of this study are twofold. First, we aim to develop and validate a scale to measure professional pride among language teachers. Second, we intend to investigate how LTP is linked to three key, conceptually relevant variables: work engagement, wellbeing, and burnout. Therefore, we sought to answer the following research questions (RQs):

RQ1: How reliable and valid is the proposed language teacher pride scale (LTPS)?
RQ2: What is the relationship between LTP and work engagement, wellbeing, and burnout?

The procedures for conducting this study are presented in Figure 1. Accordingly, the study began with item pool generation and proceeded to peer checking and pilot testing. Following this, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted using half of the main dataset. Based on the resulting factor structure, different confirmatory factor analysis/exploratory structural equation models (CFA/ESEM) were tested using the second half of the dataset. Finally, the criterion validity of the LTPS was examined by analyzing its relationships with work engagement, wellbeing, and burnout using the whole dataset

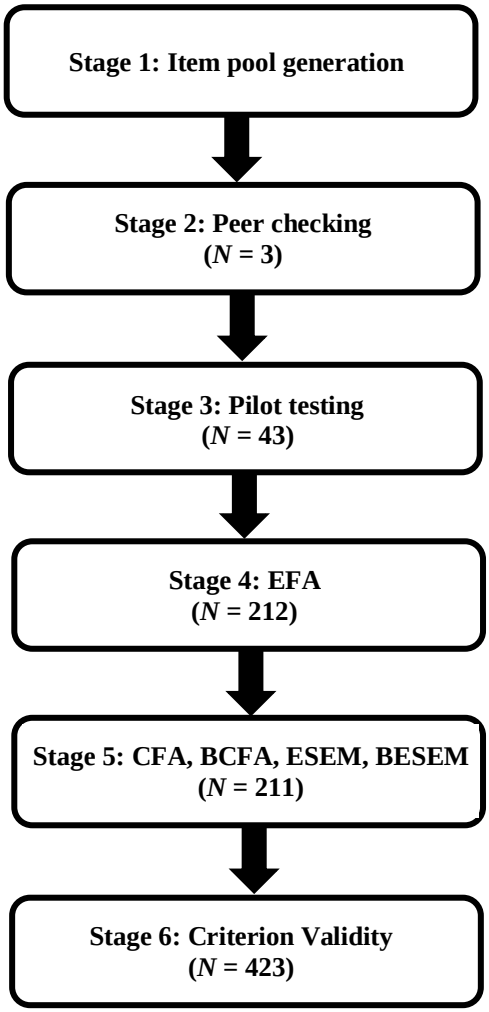

Figure 1 The research design procedures for conducting this study

4. Research methods

4.1. Participants and data collection procedures

The target population of our study was teachers of any language working at the secondary and tertiary level from a global sample. Our final sample consisted of 423 voluntary, opt-in participants from 52 countries (female: *N* = 300, male: *N* = 86, unknown: *N* = 37). The participants were 42 years old on average (range: 22 - 73, *SD* = 11.17 years) and 48 respondents chose not to disclose their age. A detailed report of the participants' demographic information is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 A Summary of participants' demographic information

Category	Subcategory	*N*	%
Gender	Female	300	70.9%
	Male	86	20.3%
	Missing	37	8.7%
Taught Languages	English	338	79.9%
	LOTE	56	13.2%
	Missing	29	6.9%
Self-rated proficiency in the taught language	C2	244	57.7%
	C1	122	28.8%
	B2	26	6.1%
	A1, A2, B1	30	7.1%
	Missing	1	0.2%
Countries	Iran	49	11.6%
	Austria	45	10.6%
	China	37	8.7%
	Spain	37	8.7%
	Türkiye	24	5.7%
	Other 47 countries	221	52.2%
	Missing	10	2.4%
Highest educational attainment	PhD	120	28.4%
	Master's	192	45.4%
	Bachelor's	52	12.3%
	Other (e.g., CELTA)	25	5.9%
	Missing	34	8%
Teaching experience	Less than five years	75	17.7%
	6 to 15 years	151	35.7%
	16 to 25 years	119	28.1%
	More than 26 years	73	17.3%
	Missing	5	1.2%
Level of educational institution	Tertiary	246	58.2%
	Secondary	127	30%
	Other	50	11.8%
Type of institution	Public	261	61.7%
	Private	117	27.7%
	Both	26	6.1%
	Other & missing	19	4.5%

The data were collected online, using the LimeSurvey platform provided by the University of Graz, Austria. Both convenience and snowball sampling (Dörnyei, 2007) were adopted to recruit participants. That is, colleagues in the authors' professional networks were contacted via email and various social media platforms (e.g., X, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram) to complete the questionnaire as well as to further disseminate the call for participation in their own networks. Several strategies were employed to maximize the response rate (Dörnyei & Dewaele, 2023), namely, personalized emails, disseminating the call using an attractive and accessible flyer, using a progression bar in the LimeSurvey data collection platform, and

offering reciprocity on the closing page of the questionnaire in the form of potentially useful websites relating to language teachers' professional development.

Participants had to provide their consent by checking a box on the opening page of the questionnaire before proceeding to the items. Potential respondents were made aware at the outset that the questionnaire was in English, and so they could choose to participate based on their self-rated perceived ability to respond in that language. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and none of the items were compulsory to complete. Our study received ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of the University of Graz (no. 39/177/63 ex 2022/23).

4.2. Data collection instruments

We used an online questionnaire to collect the data. The questionnaire included 62 items for the scales, 14 questions for the sociodemographic information, and one open-ended follow-up question in which participants could comment on their experience of pride and any of the questions raised in the survey. The open-ended question yielded a quite extensive dataset, which we decided to focus on elsewhere due to space limitations. The questionnaire was in English so that we could reach a larger international sample, using it as a lingua franca. More detailed information about the scales is provided below.

4.2.1. Development of the LTP scale

We developed a scale to measure pride among language teachers. The scale was developed based on the findings of Mairitsch et al. (2023), a critical evaluation of the literature (e.g., Khajavy et al., 2018; Pawłowska, 2020), and peer checking among the target community. Given the findings of these studies (Khajavy et al., 2018; Mairitsch et al., 2023; Pawłowska, 2020), we argue that LTP stems from three major sources: a sense of competence, personal recognition, and the impact they have on their learners. Accordingly, we developed our scale based on these three themes and generated an item pool primarily informed by the findings of Mairitsch et al. (2023). The first category was called *pride in teacher competence* (PTC), which refers to language teachers' feelings of pride about their qualifications and competence as effective language teachers (e.g., "Creating a positive classroom atmosphere makes me proud"). The second category was called *pride in terms of impact on learners* (PIL), which refers to language teachers' feelings of pride based on the perceived impact they feel that they have on their learners' linguistic and non-linguistic developments (e.g., "Empowering learners to communicate in diverse

linguistic and cultural settings makes me proud"). Finally, we called the third category *pride in receiving personal recognition* (PPR), which refers to language teachers' feelings of pride when they are acknowledged and appreciated by others, such as their colleagues and the families of their students (e.g., "It makes me proud when I get recognition for my work from my colleagues"). Therefore, in this study, we define LTP as a multifaceted emotional experience that encompasses pride in one's abilities as a teacher, pride in the positive impact one has on students, and pride when one's efforts as a language teacher are recognized.

All authors were involved in generating and fine-tuning the item pool, and four authors contributed to finalizing the scale. As a result of this, we produced an initial item pool (see Appendix A for all the items) including 21 items proposed to measure three aspects of LTP: teacher competence (7 items), impact on learners (9 items), and personal recognition (5 items). Following this, for peer checking (Dörnyei & Dewaele, 2023), three colleagues (two of them pre-service English teachers, one an English teacher graduate and a teacher educator) provided feedback on the comprehensibility and face validity of the items, and the final version of the scale was constructed.

We piloted the scale with 43 (29 females, 10 males, 4 not reported) senior pre-service English teachers in Austria to check the comprehensibility of the items in terms of content and language and also to examine the reliability of the scale and its subscales. Accordingly, participants responded to the items and provided comments on any items that were difficult to understand. All items were answered on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not at all true of me) to 5 (very true of me). Participants provided us with a few minor comments to improve the comprehensibility of the scales. Moreover, the reliability coefficients measured by Cronbach's alpha were high to very high (Cohen et al., 2018), confirming the internal consistency of the LTPS (PTC: α = .877, PPR: α = .909, PIL: α = .950).

4.2.2. Language teacher work engagement

Work engagement among language teachers was assessed by nine items using an adapted version of the *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-9* (UWES-9), developed by Schaufeli et al. (2006). We adapted the items so that they fitted better to the language teaching context. The scale includes three subscales: vigor (e.g., "When I am teaching a language, I feel bursting with energy"), dedication (e.g., "Language teaching inspires me"), and absorption (e.g., "I get absorbed in my language teaching"), each measured by three items on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The reliability coefficients showed that the variables were

reliable to highly reliable (Cohen et al., 2018) for the subscales (vigor: α = .735, dedication: α = .810, absorption: α = .689) and the total scale (α = .877).

4.2.3. Wellbeing

Language teachers' general wellbeing was measured by 18 items using the *PERMA-V Profiler*, developed by Butler and Kern (2016). This scale measures wellbeing based on Seligman's (2011) PERMA model, a multidimensional construct which captures both hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of wellbeing, and it also adds the notion of vitality, which refers to physical health. PERMA-V thus includes: **p**ositive emotions, **e**ngagement, **r**elationships, **m**eaning, **a**ccomplishment, and **v**itality. Each dimension was measured by three items on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 (different descriptors were used for different items, in line with the original study). The reliability coefficients showed that the variables were marginally reliable to highly reliable (Cohen et al., 2018) (positive emotions: α = .822, engagement: α = .605, relationships: α = .761, meaning: α = .848, accomplishment: α = .704, vitality: α = .896, total PERMA-V: α = .919).

4.2.4. Language teacher burnout

Language teacher burnout was measured by 14 items from the *Friedman Teacher Burnout Scale* (Friedman, 2003). The scale measures three aspects of teacher burnout, including emotional exhaustion (five items, e.g., "I feel exhausted from teaching"), depersonalization (4 items, e.g., "I feel that my students do not really try enough"), and lack of accomplishment (five items, e.g., "I feel that I am not doing so well as a teacher"). All items were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not at all true of me) to 5 (very true of me). The reliability coefficients were reliable to very high (Cohen et al., 2018) (emotional exhaustion: α = .915, depersonalization: α = .886, lack of accomplishment: α = .751, total burnout: α = .899).

4.3. Data analysis

To analyze our data, we first examined the factor structure of the LTPS using Morin et al.'s (2016) and Alamer's (2022) guidelines using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to confirmatory factor analysis/exploratory structural equation modeling (CFA/ESEM) approach. To this aim, we first split the data randomly into two halves.

The first half (*N* = 212) was used for EFA and the second half (*N* = 211) was used for CFA/ESEM. Accordingly, we first ran EFA using Jamovi 2.2. After obtaining the optimal factor structure from EFA, we ran CFA, bifactor CFA (BCFA), exploratory structural equation modeling (ESEM), and bifactor ESEM (BESEM) with the second dataset. We followed this procedure because CFA assumes that items load only on their relevant factors, and cross-loadings with other factors are set to zero (Morin et al., 2016). However, this is not the case when dealing with multidimensional constructs which have two or more relevant components (Morin et al., 2016). In these cases, item variance is not just uniquely related to its relevant target factor, and ignoring these cross-loadings causes inflated factor correlations and poor model fit. This issue has been properly addressed in the ESEM approach, in which cross-loadings are incorporated in the models (Morin et al., 2016). Moreover, we inspected bifactor models in both CFA and ESEM solutions because it is common in the case of multidimensional constructs that the specific factors also reflect a more general construct, in our case a general pride score (Morin et al., 2016).

CFA/ESEM analyses were conducted using Mplus 8.6 with the robust maximum likelihood (MLR) estimator, which can handle non-normality in the data. We investigated missing data at the item level, which were very low for all scales, ranging from 0.23% to 6.61%. To handle the missing data, we used full information maximum likelihood (FIML), which considers all the information in hand from the observed variables for calculating parameter estimates and provides unbiased parameter estimates, considering data are missing at random (MAR) in our study. We examined the goodness-of-fit indices, factor correlations, factor loadings, cross-loadings, and composite reliability to select the best model representing the LTPS factor structure. We did this following Morin et al.'s (2016) sequential strategy by first comparing the CFA and ESEM models. Then, the retained model is compared with its bifactor counterpart, and if a well-defined general factor (G) and a minimum part of the specific factors (S) are obtained, the bifactor solution is preferred. With regard to goodness-of-fit indices, we used the comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). CFI and TLI ≥ 0.90 and ≥ 0.95, as well as RMSEA ≤ 0.08 and ≤ 0.06, indicate acceptable and excellent fit, respectively (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Marsh et al., 2004). When comparing models, a change in CFI greater than .010 is usually considered meaningful (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). Moreover, we used McDonald's (1970) omega (ω) to report composite reliability. After obtaining the final model for LTPS, we used it to calculate the correlations with conceptual correlates (defined using CFA) including work engagement, wellbeing, and burnout by combining the two datasets. We interpreted effect sizes based on Cohen's (1988) guidelines with *r* = .10, .30, and .50 representing small, moderate, and large correlations.

5. Results

In this section, we report the results of our analyses. First, we examine the factor structure of the LTPS using exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis/exploratory structural equation models. Following that, we report the relationships between LTPS and conceptually relevant constructs including work engagement, wellbeing, and burnout.

5.1. The factor structure of the LTPS

5.1.1. Exploratory factor analysis

We conducted an EFA on the first dataset using the initial item pool, which included 21 items. We used principal axis factoring with oblimin rotation. To determine the optimum number of factors, we relied on parallel analysis, no cross-loadings, and interpretability of the factor solution. We retained items with factor loadings above |.35| which had no cross-loadings based on guidelines from Hair et al. (2009). Results of the parallel analysis showed a three-factor solution. However, there were four items with cross-loadings (PIL2, PIL4, PIL5, and PTC4) and one item (PTC3) which had a factor loading less than .35. These items were removed from the analysis and the EFA was run again. Following this, we found that one item (PPR3) had cross-loadings and another item (PTC6) was the only item which loaded on the third factor. These two items were omitted and the EFA was run again. The new model (see Figure 2) showed a two-factor solution with 10 items loading on the first factor and four items loading on the second factor. The results of the EFA are shown in Table 2. The items which loaded on the first factor are related to feeling pride due to teachers' competence and the impact they have on their learners. As teachers' impact on their learners can be considered part of teachers' competence, we called the first factor *pride in teacher competence*. Moreover, the four items which loaded on the second factor refer to teachers' feelings of pride due to the recognition they receive from others such as their colleagues or students' families. Therefore, we called this factor *pride in personal recognition*. This model was used for further analysis with the second dataset.

Table 2 Results of EFA for the LTPS

Items	PTC	PPR	Uniq.
1. Creating a positive classroom atmosphere makes me proud.	.889		.315
2. It makes me proud when I build my learners' confidence.	.877		.330
3. It makes me proud when I make a positive difference to my learners' lives.	.795		.330
4. It makes me proud when my learners learn the language successfully.	.701		.472
5. Building positive relationships with learners makes me proud.	.697		.406
6. It makes me proud when I motivate my learners to want to make the world a better place.	.693		.453
7. Holding engaging lessons makes me proud.	.686		.478
8. It makes me proud when I see my learners' progress.	.676		.459
9. Raising learners' cultural awareness makes me proud.	.482		.656
10. It makes me proud that I have continued to develop my skills as a language teacher through professional development.	.473		.587
11. It makes me proud when I get recognition for my work from my colleagues.		.935	.209
12. It makes me proud when I get recognition for my work from my head of department/school.		.715	.374
13. Being positively evaluated for my teaching makes me proud.		.614	.369
14. It makes me proud when parents appreciate me as a language teacher.		.357	.730

Note. The "principal axis factoring" extraction method was used in combination with an oblimin rotation. PTC = Pride – teacher competence, PPR = pride – personal recognition, uniq = uniqueness (the proportion of variance which is unique to an observed variable and not explained by the common factors)

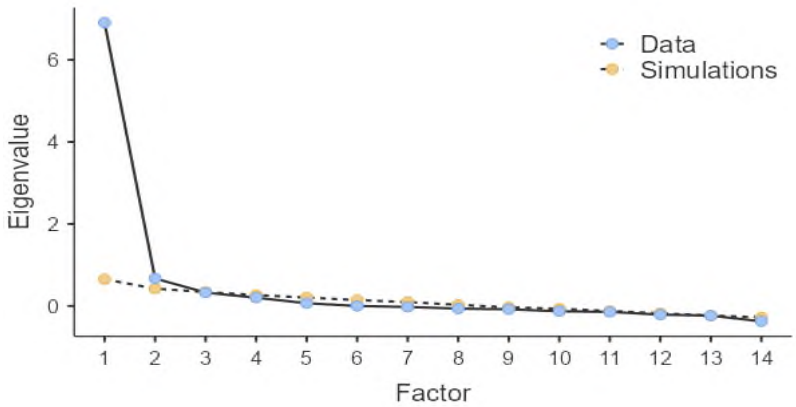

Figure 2 The scree plot from parallel analysis for the final list of LTPS items (data = eigenvalues from the actual dataset, simulations = eigenvalues from the randomly simulated dataset; we retained factors whose actual eigenvalues were larger than simulated eigenvalues)

5.1.2. Confirmatory factor analysis/exploratory structural equation modeling

The factor structure of the LTPS (two factors with 14 items), obtained from the EFA, was further examined using CFA, ESEM, BCFA, and BESEM. Fit indices for all models are reported in Table 3. The one-factor CFA model did not provide an acceptable fit. However, the two-factor CFA and BCFA models had acceptable fit indices. We also added a covariance between the error terms of two items of

PTC, as these two items had similar wording, which justified adding these covariances for the two-factor CFA model and subsequent models. However, we removed it for the BESEM, as removing this covariance improved model fit, but the ESEM still provided generally superior fit. Both the ESEM and BESEM also had acceptable fit indices which were improved in comparison with their CFA (ΔCFI = + 0.014, ΔTLI = 0.004, ΔRMSEA = -0.002) and BCFA (ΔCFI = + 0.030, ΔTLI = +0.029, ΔRMSEA = -0.008) counterparts. Moreover, the ESEM had relatively better TLI and RMSEA (ΔTLI = +0.014, ΔRMSEA = -0.005) but marginally lower CFI (ΔCFI = - 0.002) than the BESEM, and this CFI difference was not above the recommended value of .010, suggesting that the models are practically equivalent in terms of CFI. Overall, based on the fit indices, there is more support for the ESEM and BESEM factor structures. Nevertheless, we followed Morin et al.'s (2016) recommendations by comparing parameter estimates obtained from the models.

Table 3 Goodness-of-fit indices for the measurement and latent correlation models

	χ^2	*df*	CFI	TLI	RMSEA [90% CI]
	LTP measurement models				
One-factor CFA	201.368***	77	.813	.779	.087 [.073 - .102]
Two-factor CFA	123.841***	75	.927	.911	.056 [.037 - .073]
ESEM	101.920**	63	.941	.915	.054 [.034 - .073]
Bifactor CFA	119.925***	62	.913	.872	.067 [.048 - .084]
Bifactor ESEM	89.718***	52	.943	.901	.059 [.037 - .079]
	Latent correlations models				
WE-LTP Model	228.151***	103	.948	.932	.054 [.044 - .063]
Wellbeing-LTP Model	314.985***	154	.945	.932	.050 [.042 - .058]
Burnout-LTP Model	209.688***	103	.951	.935	.049 [.040 - .059]

Note. CFA = confirmatory factor analysis, ESEM = exploratory structural equation modeling, LTP = language teacher pride, WE = work engagement. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Parameter estimates for all models can be seen in Table 4. Considering the two-factor CFA model, factor loadings were relatively high (λ = .496 to .823, M = .642) and good coefficients of composite reliability were obtained (ω = .784 and .866, M = .805). Similarly, for the ESEM, main factor loadings were reasonably high (λ = .375 to .863, M = .618) with acceptable coefficients of composite reliability (ω = .762 to .862, M = .812) and some cross-loadings as 6 (out of 14) of which were above .100. In addition, latent factor correlations were relatively larger in the CFA (r = .629) than in the ESEM (r = .588). The high factor correlation in the CFA along with the presence of cross-loadings in ESEM suggest the superiority of ESEM over CFA. Therefore, we next compared the ESEM with its bifactor counterpart. The BESEM model indicated good factor loadings and excellent composite reliability for the G-factor (λ = .398 to .716, M = .575; ω = .898), though these estimates were weaker for the S-factors, especially for PTC (λ = -.008 to .651, M = .123; ω = .219), and PPR (λ = .293 to .684, M = .501; ω = .682).

Table 4 Standardized parameter estimates for the measurement models of the LTPS

	Two-factor CFA		Bifactor-CFA			ESEM			Bifactor-ESEM			
	λ	δ	G-λ	S-λ	δ	λ	λ	δ	G-λ	S-λ	S-λ	δ
PTC												
Item1	.648	.579	.644	-.030	.584	**.615**	.036	.595	.607	**.202**	.018	.590
Item2	.711	.495	.714	.185	.456	**.863**	-.197	.417	.716	**.141**	-.158	.443
Item3	.618	.618	.671	-.519	.281	**.545**	.091	.637	.576	**.202**	.062	.623
Item4	.574	.671	.579	.259	.597	**.633**	-.056	.638	.675	**-.152**	-.089	.514
Item5	.714	.491	.712	-.033	.492	**.634**	.124	.490	.712	**-.008**	.093	.485
Item6	.648	.580	.645	-.062	.580	**.544**	.143	.592	.569	**.651**	.097	.243
Item7	.618	.619	.617	.126	.604	**.652**	-.042	.606	.625	**.017**	-.038	.608
Item8	.623	.612	.620	-.095	.607	**.618**	.009	.612	.696	**-.123**	-.043	.498
Item9	.561	.685	.562	.249	.622	**.596**	-.045	.674	.523	**.242**	-.032	.667
Item10	.539	.710	.525	.133	.707	**.406**	.189	.709	.509	**.057**	.146	.716
ω	.866			.008		.862				.219		
PPR												
Item11	.823	.323	.477	.701	.282	-.031	**.847**	.312	.472	.033	**.682**	.311
Item12	.773	.403	.434	.657	.379	-.078	**.852**	.346	.416	.158	**.684**	.334
Item13	.644	.585	.507	.385	.595	.228	**.468**	.603	.550	-.155	**.376**	.533
Item14	.496	.754	.383	.297	.765	.162	**.375**	.762	.398	.009	**.293**	.756
ω	.784		.897	.673			.762		.898		.682	

Note. LTPS = Language Teacher Pride Scale, CFA = confirmatory factor analysis, ESEM = exploratory structural equation modeling, PTC = pride in teacher competence, PPR = pride in personal recognition. Bold numbers indicate the factor loadings on the target factor. The order of the items is based on Table 2

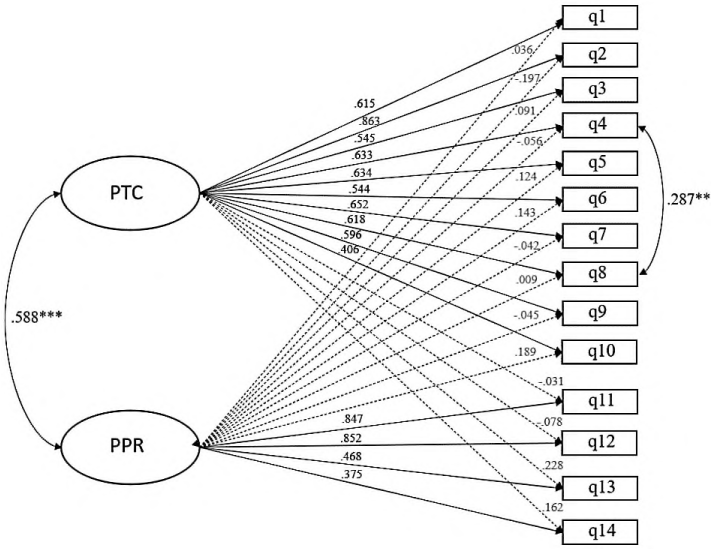

Figure 3 The finalized ESEM model (dotted lines show non-target items for each factor. PTC: pride in teacher competence, PPR = pride in personal recognition; *** $p < .001$)

Comparing the ESEM and BESEM, we see that factor loadings for PTC in the BESEM are very low, fit indices are generally better in the ESEM in comparison with the BESEM, and the composite reliability coefficients are higher for PTC

and PPR in the ESEM. We further examined the BCFA and BESEM models using additional indices recommended for checking bifactor models using Rodriguez et al.'s (2016) guidelines (see Appendix B). These additional indices also did not support the bifactor models. Therefore, we preferred to retain the ESEM model for further analyses (see Figure 3 for the final model).

5.2. The relationships between LTP, work engagement, wellbeing, and burnout

To examine how LTP is associated with the conceptually-related variables of work engagement, wellbeing, and burnout, we used the LTP factor structure obtained from ESEM as well as the CFA solutions for other variables (see Appendix C). Then, we built three structural equation models by combining the datasets used for the EFA and CFA/ESEM analyses to examine the latent correlations between these variables. All three models showed excellent fit indices (see Table 3).

The results of latent correlations between LTP subscales and the other variables are reported in Table 5. The findings indicate that PTC was positively and largely related to work engagement (r = .643, p < .001), positively and moderately related to wellbeing (r = .312, p < .001), and negatively and moderately related to burnout (r = -.355, p < .001). Moreover, PPR was positively and moderately related to work engagement (r = .460, p < .001), positively and minimally related to wellbeing (r = .244, p < .001), and negatively and minimally related to burnout (r = -.166, p = .015). These findings suggest that the stronger the professional pride a language teacher experiences in connection with their competence and recognition, the higher one's work engagement and wellbeing, and the lower one's likelihood of burning out at work, respectively.

Table 5 Latent correlations between LTP, work engagement, wellbeing, and burnout

	Work engagement	Wellbeing	Burnout
PTC	.643***	.312***	-.355***
PPR	.460***	.244***	-.166*

Note. LTP: language teacher pride, PTC: pride in teacher competence, PPR = pride in personal recognition; * p < .05, *** p < .001

6. Discussion

Our first aim was to develop a scale to measure LTP and to examine its factor structure. Consistent with previous research on language teachers (e.g., Khajavy et al., 2018; Mairitsch et al., 2023), we conceptualized LTP as a multidimensional construct which includes feeling pride due to teachers' perceived competence,

their impact on their learners, and the recognition they receive from others, though in the final model we found support for a two-dimensional model of LTP (i.e., PTC and PPR). We found that multidimensional models of LTP (i.e., two-factor CFA, BCFA, ESEM, and BESEM) had acceptable and excellent fit indices, while the one-factor model did not have an acceptable fit, supporting previous research that highlights the multidimensionality and complexity of teacher pride (e.g., Khajavy et al., 2018; Mairitsch et al., 2023; Pawłowska, 2020). Therefore, the LTPS supports the conceptualization of LTP as a multidimensional construct.

Moreover, research has shown that experiencing pride is linked to one's accomplishments or the accomplishments of significant others, in this case, the accomplishments of students (Tracy & Robins, 2007b). Our findings confirm that LTP is indeed both self- and other-oriented as anticipated. It stems not only from teachers' own efforts and accomplishments, but also from their sense of achievement in what they observe in their learners' progress and success (Tracy & Robins, 2007b). These findings underscore the importance of social contexts and significant others in how, when, and if teachers experience pride. The findings show that these language teachers feel pride when their work and efforts are recognized and acknowledged by others. This means that LTP includes self and social dimensions as conceptualized in this study, which aligns with previous research that positions pride as both a self-focused and socially-oriented emotion (van Osch et al., 2018). In this study, the factor represents teachers' pride stemming from their professional competence, acknowledgment by others, and their contribution to broader social contexts. It should be noted that while we originally considered pride to have three factors, in our analyses, the items of PTC and those of PIL loaded on one factor, indicating overlap between the two. This may be because the impact teachers have on their learners can be perceived as part of their competence. Therefore, we labeled this factor PTC, which also includes items that measure pride due to teachers' impact on their learners.

In addition, the excellent fit indices of ESEM and BESEM compared to their counterparts signify that the items used for measuring teacher pride dimensions are interconnected rather than existing in isolated categories. Although both ESEM and BESEM had excellent fit indices, we retained the two-factor ESEM solution as our final model. This includes two factors, PTC and PPR. Accordingly, we propose that the LTPS can be used as a psychometrically sound tool to provide valuable insights into the relationships between LTP and other factors within the domain of language education.

Regarding the second research question, we aimed to establish the relationship between LTP and work engagement, wellbeing, and burnout. LTP factors displayed moderate and large positive correlations to work engagement, suggesting that language teachers with a strong sense of pride are more likely

to exhibit higher engagement in their work. This corresponds with Schaufeli et al.'s (2002) conceptualization of engagement, in which experiencing pride is an indicator of dedication, which is a core component of engagement. One possible explanation for the relationship between engagement and pride observed in our study can also stem from the fact that positive emotions enhance approach behavior, which may influence goal setting and engagement to achieve those goals (Dreer, 2024). These findings suggest that boosting teacher pride could enhance work engagement, which highlights the importance of teachers feeling valued, appreciated, and supported in their professional roles.

Additionally, LTP factors had small and moderate positive correlations with wellbeing, emphasizing the importance of pride in supporting language teacher wellbeing. Generally, this is consistent with other studies that have highlighted the role of positive emotions for teacher wellbeing (Dreer, 2024; Sulis et al., 2023) and, indeed, the fact that many definitions of wellbeing include the notion of a relatively higher ratio of positive compared to negative emotions as being a key determinant of what wellbeing is (e.g., Seligman, 2011). Our findings also support Fredrickson's (2001) broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. According to Fredrickson (2001), positive emotions affect wellbeing through different biological and psychological pathways. Therefore, language teachers' feelings of pride could be associated with enhanced wellbeing by broadening their thoughts and building long-term psychosocial resources such as resilience, confidence, and pro-social behaviors. Language teachers possessing these resources are more likely to capitalize on opportunities within the workplace, deal with work-related challenges more effectively, and, consequently, achieve success and satisfaction in their work (Ouweneel et al., 2012).

Finally, LTP factors had small to moderate negative correlations to burnout, indicating that language teachers with a stronger sense of pride are less at risk of burnout. Prior studies have mostly examined the role of negative emotions in relation to burnout (Chang, 2009). Yet, our study suggests that one pathway to reducing the risk of burnout may be to enhance positive emotions deliberately rather than merely seeking to reduce the effects of negative emotions in order to reduce the risk of burnout. This aligns with the core principles of positive psychology (Seligman, 2011), which centers on how positive experiences and emotions can contribute to lives well lived and serve as a buffer against negative experiences and stressors.

7. Implications of the study

Given the adaptive role we found for LTP in our study, we propose implications focusing on how we can best support teachers in experiencing an authentic sense of pride in their professional lives. First, educational institutions can seek to consciously

and deliberately enhance teacher pride by, for example, offering professional development opportunities that can boost language teachers' sense of competence (Valmori & De Costa, 2016). Opportunities to take leadership roles, such as a headteacher, mentor for new teachers, and curriculum developer, can also enable teachers to become more involved in their profession, gaining in authority and expanding their competence set (Taylor et al., 2011). In a similar vein, promoting collaborative teaching practices by, for instance, offering relevant workshops and pairing teachers up, can also potentially help foster language teachers' sense of competence. Teacher collaboration can enhance autonomy and professional development (Xu, 2015) by offering opportunities for constructive feedback and fostering mutual understanding within the work community. This promotes a sense of professional inclusion and reduces the risk of burnout (Fullan, 2006) and thus reinforces their sense of pride. In addition, giving teachers autonomy can further boost their sense of competence (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014) and is a way of acknowledging teachers' professional authority and expertise (Kadel, 2021), which in turn can boost their feelings of professional pride.

Finally, establishing systems to recognize and reward teachers' efforts and successes internationally, nationally, and institutionally, could boost teacher pride as well as potentially enhance their work engagement (Andrews, 2011). This could be done by, for example, introducing formal recognition programs (e.g., teacher of the month/year), financial incentives, personalized thank-you notes, and promotions. All of these steps that seek to boost pride also aim indirectly to enhance wellbeing, strengthen teachers' positive sense of engagement, and lower their risk of burnout and attrition from the profession. If we truly value and esteem teachers as professionals and enable them to take pride in their work, not only is it likely to lead to teachers staying and flourishing in the profession, but to result in learners reaping benefits as well (Lavy & Naama-Ghanayim, 2020).

8. Limitations and recommendations for future research

As with all research, this study is not without its limitations. First, while this study identified correlations at a particular moment, it could not uncover whether LTP causes changes in the variables, or vice versa. To account for potential changes in these variables and to confirm the stability of the LTPS factor structures, experimental and longitudinal study designs would be necessary. We need to know what causes pride for language teachers in diverse contexts, but also what the effects of this are on their practice and their learners.

Second, even though we implemented the LTPS with language teachers from different countries for this study, to maximize diversity within our sample, there is

a need to explore measurements of LTP in culture-specific and cross-cultural studies, as emotions can be conceptualized differently across cultures. We have to take great care not to assume that pride is understood, experienced, or even communicated in the same way across languages and cultures. This study represents the first step towards untangling the complexity of this core emotion. Third, in this study, we developed the LTPS mainly based on Mairitsch et al.'s (2023) data, which were gathered from English language teachers. Therefore, future qualitative research can examine the sources of pride among teachers of languages other than English to see if different results are obtained. Moreover, the findings of this study are only generalizable to its participants, and future research is needed to examine whether similar results can be obtained in other contexts.

Fourth, we found an unequal number of items across the two factors (i.e., four and ten). This might affect the reliability of the scale, especially as factors with a smaller number of items might show lower internal consistency. Future research can consider adding more items to this factor and re-examining its psychometric properties.

Fifth, we did not examine the role of demographic information (e.g., age and gender) in the present study. Future research can examine how these variables might affect LTP and its associations with relevant constructs.

Finally, this study focused only on LTP without examining its potential relationship with language learner pride. Connecting with existing scales to measure language learner pride (e.g., Csizér et al., 2024; Khajavy & Lüftenegger, 2025), a next step for the field would be to understand how language teacher and language learner pride relate to each other and are potentially mediated by other learner and teacher variables or contextual factors.

9. Conclusion

In this study, we developed and validated a scale to measure pride among language teachers. Moreover, considering the positive links between LTP and wellbeing and work engagement, as well as the negative link it had with burnout, we concluded that LTP could play an important adaptive role in language teachers' psychological functioning. This resonates well with Tracy and Robins' (2007a) suggestion that, "[authentic] pride is likely to be an adaptive part of human nature" (p. 264).

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APPENDIX A

Initial item pool for LTP

Pride in teacher competence (PTC)

PTC1 = It makes me proud that I have continued to develop my skills as a language teacher through professional development.
PTC2 = Creating a positive classroom atmosphere makes me proud.
PTC3* = Creating my own materials makes me proud.
PTC4* = Organizing special projects, excursions, or exchanges with my learners makes me proud.
PTC5 = Building positive relationships with learners makes me proud.
PTC6* = Being fluent in the language makes me proud.
PTC7 = Holding engaging lessons makes me proud.

Pride in personal recognition (PPR)

PPR1 = It makes me proud when I get recognition for my work from my head of department/ school.
PPR2 = It makes me proud when I get recognition for my work from my colleagues.
PPR3* = It makes me proud when my learners appreciate me as a language teacher.
PPR4 = Being positively evaluated for my teaching makes me proud.
PPR5 = It makes me proud when parents appreciate me as a language teacher.

Pride in terms of impact on learners (PIL)

PIL1 = It makes me proud when I motivate my learners to want to make the world a better place.
PIL2* = Empowering learners to communicate in diverse linguistic and cultural settings makes me proud.
PIL3 = It makes me proud when I make a positive difference to my learners' lives.
PIL4* = Cultivating learners' critical thinking skills makes me proud.
PIL5* = Developing learners' sense of tolerance makes me proud.
PIL6 = It makes me proud when I see my learners' progress.
PIL7 = It makes me proud when my learners learn the language successfully.
PIL8 = It makes me proud when I build my learners' confidence.
PIL9 = Raising learners' cultural awareness makes me proud.

Note. Items with an asterisk were omitted from the final scale. The final scale with the two dimensions and relevant items can be seen in Table 2.

APPENDIX B

Examining additional indices for the bifactor models

We examined our bifactor models using some additional measures including omega hierarchical for both the general factor (ω_H) and the specific factors (ω_{HS}), factor determinacy (FD), construct replicability (H), explained common variance (ECV), item explained common variance (IECV), and percentage of uncontaminated correlations (PUC). As Table A indicates, ω_H values are high for the general factor, while they are very low for PTC and low for PPR in both BCFA and BESEM, indicating that S-factors are not reliable. Moreover, ECV values were higher for the G-factor but lower for the S-factors in both BCFA and BESEM models, showing that G-factor explains most of the common variance. In addition, H and FD values were above the recommended values of .80 and .90, respectively, for the G-factor but below these thresholds for the S-factors for both BCFA and BESEM models (Rodriguez et al., 2016). Then, we examined IECV values which ranged from .270 to 1.000 for the BESEM and from .304 to .998 for the BCFA model. This included seven and six items with IECV values below .85 for the BCFA and BESEM models, respectively, suggesting that these items can have a substantial S-factor variance. Finally, PUC values (.440 for both BCFA and BESEM models) show multidimensionality in the data. These findings suggest that while a G-factor is present, the S-factors do not capture reliable unique variance beyond the G-factor. This means subscale scores are uninterpretable in both bifactor models. Therefore, considering both fit indices and reliable S-factor scores, we retained the ESEM model.

Table A BCFA and BESEM indices for the LTPS

	BCFA				BESEM			
	ω_H /ω_{HS}	FD	*H*	ECV	ω_H /ω_{HS}	FD	*H*	ECV
General-factor LTP	0.848	0.945	0.888	0.746	.832	0.937	0.888	0.727
PTC	0.001	0.752	0.372	0.108	.033	0.787	0.486	0.138
PPR	0.441	0.854	0.666	0.586	.436	0.849	0.667	0.575

Note. LTPS = language teacher pride scale, BCFA = bifactor confirmatory factor analysis, BESEM = bifactor exploratory structural equation modeling, PTC = pride in teacher competence, PPR = pride in personal recognition, FD = factor determinacy, *H* = construct replicability, ECV = explained common variance

APPENDIX C

Convergent and discriminant validity of wellbeing, work engagement, and burnout

To assess the convergent and discriminant validity of wellbeing, work engagement, and burnout, we created a measurement model in which each of these constructs was represented by a latent variable indicated by its relevant dimensions. Results of CFA indicated that the measurement model fitted the data adequately (χ^2 = 140.75, df = 51, CFI = .951, TLI = .936, RMSEA = .064 [.052 - .077]). Regarding convergent validity, we checked factor loadings and reported average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR). Factor loadings for all variables including wellbeing (λ = .586 to .846, M = .733), work engagement (λ = .757 to .833, M = .803), and burnout (λ = .559 to .887, M = .705), were above the recommended value of .50. We further found that AVE values for wellbeing (.546), work engagement (.645), and burnout (.515) were above .50. Finally, CR values for wellbeing (.877), work engagement (.845), and burnout (.754) were above .70. Regarding discriminant validity, we examined if the square root of AVE for each construct is higher than that construct's correlation with other constructs. As Table B indicates, for all constructs, this assumption was met. Therefore, these findings support the convergent and discriminant validity of all three scales.

Table B Latent correlations and squared AVEs for wellbeing, work engagement, and burnout

	1	2	3
1- Wellbeing	**.739**		
2- Work engagement	.537***	**.803**	
3- Burnout	-.563***	-.605***	**.718**

Note. Bold values show the square root of AVE; *** p < .001