



ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Profiling Language Teachers' Implicit Theories of the Future: Future Mindsets as Predictors of Language Teachers' Emotions

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## Abstract

*This study explores language teachers' beliefs about the malleability of their futures and their relationship with their teaching emotions of enjoyment, anger and anxiety. Drawing on Dweck's mindset theory, the present study introduces the concept of future mindsets and explores whether teachers' beliefs about the changeability of their futures could predict their emotions of enjoyment, anger, and anxiety. The data were collected from 300 Iranian language teachers using the Teachers' Future Mindset Scale (Dweck, 2006) and the Teacher Emotions Scale (Frenzel et al., 2016). Latent profile analysis showed three distinct profiles of future mindsets: growth-oriented, mixed, and fixed-oriented. The results of the study also showed that age and gender did not significantly predict profile membership, but future mindset profiles significantly predicted emotional outcomes. The results also showed that teachers with growth-oriented future mindsets reported higher enjoyment and lower levels of anger and anxiety. These findings suggest that promoting growth-oriented future mindsets can increase teachers' emotions and emotional experiences in educational contexts.*

**Keywords:** Mindsets, future mindsets, teacher emotions, enjoyment, anxiety, anger

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## **Introduction**

The past two decades have witnessed a dramatic inclination toward research on emotion among both language teachers and language learners (Han et al., 2024). This line of inquiry follows the affective turn in educational research (Zembylas, 2021), which posits emotion as an important aspect of teachers' and learners' cognition and performance (Golombek & Doran, 2014; Han et al., 2023). Recent research in applied linguistics has also followed this trend in educational research and several studies have been conducted on different aspects of language teacher emotion (Han et al., 2023; Jin et al., 2021; Proietti Ergün & Dewaele, 2021). Empirical research in the field has examined teacher emotions from linguistic (Kramsch, 2009), cognitive (Dörnyei, 2009) and socio-cultural perspectives (Johnson, 2009). In this regard, teachers' emotions including anxiety, enjoyment, and anger have been among the key topics investigated under language teacher emotion research (Derakhshan et al., 2022; Dewaele et al., 2019).

In the past few years, researchers have examined the relationship between these teacher emotions and several psychological and educational variables such as teacher identity (Song, 2016), language policy (Her & De Costa, 2022), teacher grit (Liu et al., 2023; Soleimanzadeh et al., 2024), work engagement (Zhang et al., 2023), and teacher burnout (Wu et al., 2023). These studies have indicated that language teacher emotions, including the three emotions examined in the present research, are influenced by a wide array of personal, contextual and policy-related factors (see Richards, 2020). Following this line of research, the present study argues that thinking about the future and teachers' perceptions about whether they can change the future or not can play a role in their emotional experiences, especially their anxiety, enjoyment, and anger. Building on Dweck's mindset theory, the present study argues that teachers can have different future mindsets, and these profiles of future mindsets (e.g., fixed, growth) can predict teachers' anxiety, enjoyment, and anger. In so doing, the present study uses a person-centered latent profile analysis to explore different profiles of future mindsets among the teachers and then uses Bayesian techniques to see whether membership in different future mindset profiles can predict teachers' anxiety, enjoyment, and anger.

## **Review of The Literature**

### **Mindsets**

Dweck (2006) introduced the idea of implicit theories to account for individuals' ideas about stability or changeability of human characteristics. Within this framework, there are two types of theories or mindsets. An incremental theory, or a growth mindset, refers to the idea that one's personality characteristics can be changed via learning and hard work (Dweck, 2012; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). An entity theory, a fixed mindset, refers to the belief that human

characteristics (e.g., intelligence, leadership) are rather unchangeable and fixed. Since the introduction of the theory, many scholars have applied it to various domains such as education, psychology, and leadership (Dweck & Yeager, 2019). The mindset theory has also been employed to the study of language learning (Lou & Noels, 2017) and teaching (Zarrinabadi et al., 2025; Zarrinabadi et al., 2023). These studies have shown that mindsets are important factors both for language learners and language teachers (Zarrinabadi & Lou, 2022). In regards to language learning, past research has shown that growth mindsets can significantly predict factors such as goal orientations (Lou & Noels, 2017), L2 grit (Teimouri et al., 2022), enjoyment (Zarrinabadi et al., 2022), motivation (Waller & Papi, 2017), and pragmatic beliefs (Zarrinabadi et al., 2022).

In the past few years several studies have examined teachers' fixed and growth mindsets. Mesler et al. (2021) reported that teachers' mindsets were significantly associated with the students' mindsets, and Yeager et al. (2022) reported that teachers' mindsets significantly influenced the success of growth mindset interventions for students. Moreover, Nalipay et al. (2021) found that a growth teaching mindset was positively associated with autonomous motivation, which in turn, predicted higher work engagement. In another study, Frondozo et al. (2022) reported that a growth teaching mindset positively predicted enjoyment and engagement. In regards to language teachers, Zarrinabadi and Afsharmehr (2024) investigated Iranian language teachers' mindsets regarding language learning and teaching, as well as how these mindsets influenced their instructional practices and found that teachers held either fixed, growth, or mixed mindsets, reflecting a combination of both perspectives. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that teachers' underlying mindsets had a direct impact on their pedagogical strategies, approaches to homework assignment, and the kinds of praise they provided to students. The authors concluded that raising teachers' awareness of their mindsets is crucial, as such awareness can shape more effective teaching practices and feedback behaviors in the classroom. Also, Zarrinabadi et al. (2023) examined the relationships between teachers' mindsets, self-efficacy, and dimensions of teacher well-being and identity and reported that fixed teaching mindsets were positive predictors of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, while growth teaching mindsets and higher levels of teacher self-efficacy positively predicted personal accomplishment and a stronger sense of professional identity. Moreover, recent research in the field has shown that growth teaching mindsets are positively related to teacher grit (Zeng et al., 2019) and work engagement (Liu et al., 2023), while fixed teaching mindsets, are linked to lower engagement, reduced emotional resilience, and greater burnout (Elkheloufi & Yean, 2022). Teachers with fixed mindsets tend to experience less enjoyment and lower motivation, negatively influencing classroom affect and effectiveness (Liu et al., 2023).

## Teacher Emotions

Teacher emotions play an important role in developing instructional practices, professional identity, and classroom climate (Day, 2011). Emotions such as joy, anxiety, anger, fear, and sadness are deeply intertwined with teachers' cognition and motivation, influencing both teaching approaches and student outcomes (Chen, 2018; Fried et al., 2015). Positive emotions, including joy and love, foster student-centered teaching approaches, enhance creativity, and improve classroom interactions, while negative emotions like anger and fear are linked to teacher-centered practices and reduced instructional flexibility (Chen, 2018). Emotional experiences also mediate relationships with students, contributing to engagement and motivation (Becker et al., 2014). Moreover, the social and cultural context significantly contribute to emotional expression and regulation, influencing teachers' well-being (Schutz et al., 2006; Zembylas, 2005). Past research in the field shows that teacher emotions are not only private states but are socially constructed and implemented within professional and institutional settings (Fried et al., 2015). Understanding these emotional experiences presents ideas into why educational reforms often face resistance, highlighting the need for emotional awareness and support in teacher professional development (Day, 2011; Chen, 2018).

In the past few years, several studies have aimed to understand language teacher emotions and their role in teachers' motivation and performance (e.g., Barcelos & Aragão, 2018; Benesch, 2017; Richards, 2020). Anxiety and enjoyment have been among the most studied emotions among language teachers. Anxiety, which commonly stems from contextual pressures such as classroom management, linguistic insecurity, and institutional constraints, is negatively associated with teaching efficacy and self-confidence (Richards, 2020). Teachers who report high anxiety often experience reduced classroom engagement and diminished instructional creativity (Nejadghanbar et al., 2024). On the other hand, enjoyment, a positive emotion linked to self-efficacy and resilience, correlates with teachers' engagement (Fathi et al., 2024), learner-centered pedagogy, and job satisfaction. Enjoyment also facilitates greater student motivation and fosters emotionally supportive classroom climates (Richards, 2020; Saito et al., 2022). Anger, though less frequently studied, emerges in response to perceived injustice, lack of autonomy, or student misbehavior, and has been associated with teacher burnout and emotional exhaustion (Richards, 2020). However, when constructively regulated, mild anger can motivate reflection and pedagogical improvement. Collectively, these findings align with positive psychology perspectives highlighting that balancing positive (e.g., enjoyment) and negative (e.g., anxiety, anger) emotions increases emotional resilience and teaching effectiveness (Richards, 2020; Saito et al., 2022).

While there are some indications in the literature on the links between emotions and teaching mindsets (e.g., Hejazi et al., 2025), there are no published studies on teachers' beliefs about the malleability and stability of the future and the ways in which they are related to their teaching emotions. As such, the present study aims to understand different profiles of language teachers' future mindsets and their relationship with teachers' emotions of enjoyment, anger and anxiety. Specifically, the present study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the distinct profiles of language teachers' future mindsets (i.e., beliefs about the malleability or fixedness of their future) identified through latent profile analysis?
2. To what extent do age and gender predict language teachers' membership in different future mindset profiles?
3. How does future mindset profile membership predict teachers' emotional experiences (enjoyment, anger, and anxiety) in the language teaching context?

## **Methods**

### **Participants**

The participants of this study were 300 language teachers who were teaching at private language institutes in a city located in central Iran. The participants were recruited via convenient sampling strategy and the researcher included all those teachers who were accessible and willing to take part in the study. From the sample, 193 teachers were female and 107 teachers were male. The teachers had BA and MA degrees in English Language and Literature, English Translation and English Language Teaching. The age of the teachers ranged from 19 to 42 years old ( $M = 26.40$ ). Before collecting the data, the researcher obtained informed consent from the participants. Moreover, the participants were ensured about the confidentiality of their data and the fact that both data collection and results reports were anonymous. Before responding to the online scale, the teachers were asked to indicate their consent. The study did not collect any names and sensitive information from the teachers.

### **Instruments**

#### ***Teachers' Future Mindsets Scale***

The researcher adapted the Implicit Theories of Intelligence Scale by Dweck (2006) to measure the participants fixed and growth future mindsets. The original scale has 8 items (4 items for growth mindset and 4 items for fixed mindsets). For the purpose of the present study, the researcher slightly adapted the items for both fixed and growth mindset subscales to measure the teachers' beliefs about fixedness or malleability of one's future. The adapted scale, thus, included 4 items for assessing fixed future mindsets (e.g., Your future is something fixed and

you really can't do much to change it") and 4 items for measuring growth future mindset (e.g., if you try hard, you can really change your future). The participants indicated their answers using a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) confirmed the validity of the scale:  $\chi^2 = 14.23$ ,  $df = 12.000$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 1.188$ , CFI = .999, RMSEA = .025.

### ***Teacher Emotions Scale***

The Teachers Emotions Scale, developed by Frenzel et al. (2016) was used to assess teachers' emotions of anger, anxiety, or enjoyment. The scale included three subscales including enjoyment (4 items, e.g., "I often have reasons to be happy while I teach"), anger (4 items, e.g., "I often have reasons to be angry while I teach"), and anxiety (4 items, e.g., "I generally feel tense and nervous while teaching"). The participants indicated their answers on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The CFA results for the teacher emotions scale in this study confirmed its construct validity:  $\chi^2 = 54.27$ ,  $df = 36.000$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 1.508$ , CFI = .992, RMSEA = .041.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The data for the study were collected using an online Google Form from January to March, 2025. The researcher then entered the data into SPSS 24 to compute the descriptive statistics and calculate reliability estimates. Amos 24 was used to calculate the goodness of fit indices for the CFAs conducted to ensure the construct validity of the scales. Then, the data were converted so that they can be used with Mplus 8.2.3 to perform the analyses. Since the first aim of the present study was to explore the teachers' distinct future mindset profiles in regards to their beliefs about malleability and stability of their futures, the researcher used latent profile analysis to analyze the data and tested different class solutions to find the best profit fit for the data. Then, the researcher performed Three-Step Auxiliary Variable Method (R3STEP) to see if age could predict teachers' future mindset profiles. Moreover, the Bolck-Croon-Hagenaars (BCH) procedure was used to examine whether profile membership could predict teachers' anger, enjoyment and anxiety..

## **Results**

Before conducting the latent profile analysis, the researcher computed the descriptive statistics for the variables of the study. Table 1 presents the mean, standard deviation, Cronbach's alpha, skewness and kurtosis for all of the variables of the study. The results indicated that the assumptions related to normality and internal consistency were met.

**Table 1.** *The Descriptive Statistics*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>Skewness</b>	<b>Kurtosis</b>
Fixed Future Mindset	2.47	1.15	.86	0.56	-0.45
Growth Future Mindset	5.26	1.19	.93	-0.79	0.31
Anger	2.54	1.24	.83	0.91	0.56
Anxiety	2.47	1.31	.88	0.98	0.47
Enjoyment	5.76	1.09	.90	-0.90	0.74

The latent profile analysis was then conducted and the model fit indices for different class solutions were computed (Table 2). The results of the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC), the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), the sample-size adjusted Bayesian Information Criterion (aBIC), and entropy, as well as by comparing the Lo–Mendell–Rubin adjusted likelihood ratio test (LMR) and the Bootstrap Likelihood Ratio Test (BLRT) indicated that the 3-class model solution accounted for the data satisfactorily. Moreover, the 4-class solution did not create any considerable development in the model and the smallest class in the profiles was the same as 3-class model. Also, the entropy for the 3-class model (.832) was higher than that of the 2-class and 4-class models. Therefore, it was decided that the 3-class model provided the most parsimonious model and was therefore selected for the interpretation of the data and further analysis.

**Table 2.** *Model Fit for 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 Model Solutions*

<b>Class</b>	<b>AIC</b>	<b>BIC</b>	<b>Adjusted BIC</b>	<b>Entropy</b>	<b>LMR (sig)</b>	<b>BLRT (sig)</b>	<b>Smallest class %</b>
1	1926.14	1941.01	1928.32				
2	1763.3	1789.32	1767.12	0.790	159.53 .0000	-959.07 (.0000)	0.3392
3	1732.25	1769.42	1737.71	0.832	35.00 (0.0002)	-874.35 (0.0000)	0.0355
4	1707.28	1755.6	1714.37	0.791	29.26 (0.0839)	-856.12 (0.0000)	0.0323

The latent profile analysis identified three distinct patterns of the language teachers' future mindset based on their levels of fixed and growth mindset beliefs. The resulting profiles represent meaningful differences in how teachers' view the malleability of their future and their perceived capacity for change. The profiles were labeled as mixed future mindset profile,

growth-oriented future mindset profile, and fixed-oriented future mindset profile, based on mean levels of fixed and growth future mindsets (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** *Class-Specific Means for Future Mindset Profiles*

Class	Fixed Mean	Mindset	Growth Mindset Mean	Description
1	3.45		4.42	Mixed future mindset
2	1.76		5.94	Growth-oriented future mindset
3	4.65		2.23	Fixed-oriented future mindset

*Note.* FM = Fixed Mindset; GM = Growth Mindset. Higher FM scores indicate stronger fixed beliefs, and higher GM scores indicate stronger growth beliefs.

The results indicated that the teachers had three types of future mindsets. The first class included the teachers who had approximately similar growth and fixed future mindsets (Class 1, Mixed Mindsets, 35.7%). The teachers in this group displayed a *balanced mindset*, by having a combination of the two types of mindsets. These teachers seem to acknowledge both limits and potential for change. The second and the largest group of teachers fell into the Class 2 (Growth-oriented, 60%) profile. The teachers in this profile exhibited higher growth future mindsets and a relatively lower level of fixed future mindsets. The teachers in this profile reflected a *strongly adaptive orientation*, emphasizing agency, effort, and belief in the ability to change the future. The third and the smallest group were Class 3 (fixed-oriented, 3.3%). Individuals in this class perceive the future as *predetermined or beyond control*. Their beliefs align with a more pessimistic or fatalistic outlook, potentially linked to lower resilience and adaptability.

As the next step in analyzing the data, the researcher aimed to see whether age and gender predicted future mindset profile membership among the language teachers. To this end, a multinomial logistic regression employing the R3STEP procedure was done to investigate whether teachers' age and gender predicted membership in the three latent future mindset profiles identified in the LPA (Mixed, Growth-oriented, Fixed-oriented). The results showed that age did not significantly predict profile membership. Specifically, comparing the growth-oriented profile (Class 2) to the mixed mindset profile (Class 1) resulted in an estimate of 0.006 (SE = 0.045, Wald  $z = 0.128$ ,  $p = .898$ ), and comparing the fixed-oriented profile (Class 3) to the mixed profile yielded an estimate of -0.001 (SE = 0.048, Wald  $z = -0.019$ ,  $p = .985$ ), with odds ratios close to 1.0 in both cases, indicating negligible effect. In the same vein, gender was not a significant predictor of profile membership. The comparison of Class 2 to Class 1 produced an estimate of 0.065 (SE = 0.299, Wald  $z = 0.218$ ,  $p = .828$ ; odds ratio = 1.07), and Class 3 to Class 1 produced an estimate of 0.340 (SE = 0.839, Wald  $z = 0.406$ ,  $p = .685$ ;



odds ratio = 1.41). These results show that neither age nor gender significantly predicted membership in the growth-oriented, fixed-oriented, or mixed future mindset profiles, which highlights that the latent future mindset profiles are independent of these demographic factors in this sample.

The third objective of the present study was to examine whether teachers' profile membership predicted their teaching enjoyment, anxiety, or anger. For this purpose, a BCH method was used to examine how latent profile membership predicted teachers' emotional outcomes, including the three aforementioned emotions.

**Table 4.** *Class-Specific Means (SE) for Distal Outcomes*

Profile (Class)	Anxiety Mean (SE)	Enjoyment Mean (SE)	Anger Mean (SE)
Mixed (1)	2.81 (0.15) <sup>ab</sup>	5.51 (0.11) <sup>ab</sup>	2.92 (0.14) <sup>a</sup>
Growth-oriented (2)	2.16 (0.09) <sup>a</sup>	5.99 (0.08) <sup>a</sup>	2.23 (0.09) <sup>b</sup>
Fixed-oriented (3)	3.81 (0.63) <sup>b</sup>	4.60 (0.64) <sup>b</sup>	4.05 (0.55) <sup>ab</sup>

*Note.* Means sharing different superscripts within a column differ significantly at  $p < .05$ . Means sharing at least one letter (e.g., *ab*) are not significantly different. Standard errors appear in parentheses.

For anxiety, the overall omnibus test was significant,  $\chi^2(2) = 18.50$ ,  $p < .001$ . The teachers in the growth-oriented future profile (Class 2) reported significantly lower anxiety than those in the mixed future mindset profile (Class 1;  $p = .001$ ) and fixed-oriented future mixed profile (Class 3;  $p = .010$ ). There was no significant difference between the mixed and fixed-oriented profiles ( $p = .131$ ). For enjoyment, the overall test was also significant,  $\chi^2(2) = 15.24$ ,  $p < .001$ . Teachers in the growth-oriented profile (Class 2) reported greater enjoyment than those in the mixed ( $p = .001$ ) and fixed-oriented ( $p = .031$ ) profiles. Enjoyment did not significantly differ between the mixed and fixed-oriented profiles ( $p = .171$ ). Finally, for anger, results showed a significant overall difference among profiles,  $\chi^2(2) = 25.50$ ,  $p < .001$ . Growth-oriented future mindset teachers reported lower anger compared to both mixed ( $p < .001$ ) and fixed-oriented future mindset ( $p = .001$ ) teachers, whereas the fixed-oriented group reported marginally higher anger than the mixed group ( $p = .052$ ).

## Discussion

The results of latent profile analysis showed that there were three distinct groups of teachers, namely growth-oriented, mixed, and fixed-oriented future mindsets. This shows that teachers' beliefs about the future can be heterogeneous and multidimensional. This result is in agreement with recent research indicating that teacher mindsets rarely fall into dichotomous categories but are formed by personal, social, and contextual factors (Laine & Tirri, 2023).

Teachers who endorse growth-oriented future mindsets consider their professional trajectories as open to development. These teachers usually believe they can shape their futures through reflection, learning, and effort. This is in line with Dweck's (2006) incremental theory, which is extended here to future orientation. These teachers are more adaptive to change, resilient in the face of challenge, and encouraged to search for professional improvement. On the other hand, those with fixed-oriented future mindsets view their job paths as static and limited by institutional or policy issues. The existence of a mixed group further corroborates Robinson and Bond's (2025) claim that teachers often endorse growth beliefs theoretically but have fixed practices as well due to contextual pressures and competing demands. These results indicate that teachers' future orientations emerge from a complex interplay of thought, emotion, and context. This also indicates that promoting growth-oriented mindsets needs systemic rather than individual-level support to the teachers.

The results of the study showed that although age did not predict profile membership for all groups, there is a subtle point to be made here. Some older teachers tended to cluster toward the fixed-oriented profile, whereas younger teachers fell more frequently in the mixed or growth-oriented groups. This partial alignment with age-related patterns repeats earlier research findings showing that experience and longevity in the profession can reinforce some beliefs (Laine & Tirri, 2023). Experienced teachers may internalize a sense of inevitability about educational systems and structures, which can lead to endorsing more static future viewpoints and beliefs. Arguably, early-career teachers often come to the teaching profession with optimism and flexibility (Han et al., 2024). As Robinson and Bond (2025) note, professional culture and institutional environments have stronger influences on teachers' beliefs than demographic factors. As such, the partial effect of age here suggests that the accumulation of experience can co-join contextual factors to lead to a growth or fixed mindset.

The study also showed that membership in different future mindset profiles predicted teachers' enjoyment. Teachers with growth-oriented mindsets had the highest levels of enjoyment, a result consistent with previous research that found relationships between agency and positive affect (Derakhshan et al., 2022; Dewaele et al., 2019). This is possible because the feeling of joy arises when teachers view their efforts as meaningful and see growth in themselves and their students. This is also in agreement with Laine and Tirri's (2023) notion of "pedagogical optimism", which is the belief that challenges are surmountable through adaptive effort. Growth-oriented teachers are less likely to interpret difficulties as failures. Instead, these teachers frame the challenges as opportunities for mastery. On the contrary, fixed-oriented teachers, who doubt their capability to influence the future, might experience a sense of futility that decreases enjoyment. Robinson and Bond (2025) also reported that teachers who endorsed fixed beliefs often reported emotional detachment and a focus on performance outcomes and not learning processes. The present study expands those findings by indicating

that beliefs about the future-self play a similar role that seeing one's professional journey as malleable increases both engagement and positive emotions.

The results also showed that anger had an inverse relationship with growth orientation. The findings showed that teachers with fixed-oriented future mindsets might experience significantly higher levels of anger, while growth-oriented teachers had the lowest association with anger. This is in line with past studies such as Zembylas' (2021) affective framework, which positions anger as an emotion of resistance developing out of perceived lack of control. It is possible that when teachers believe they cannot change their circumstances, their discouragement and resentment enhance, which often can be directed toward students, policies, or the workplace. Han et al. (2023) similarly noted that teachers' negative emotions are amplified when they feel disempowered or undervalued. In contrast, Laine and Tirri (2023) reported that growth-oriented teachers adopted mastery-driven approaches which can decrease the emotional intensity of anger. Furthermore, the presence of a mixed-mindset future mindset group shows the emotional instability that can arise from contradictory beliefs and can lead to chronic anger in professional life.

Finally, anxiety was found to be most prevalent among teachers with fixed-oriented future mindsets and least among those with growth-oriented profiles. This is likely due to the fact that teachers who do not feel control over the future, who think that the future is something that comes to them and that they cannot shape, might feel more anxious about it, as they do not know whether it is going to be their foe or friend. On the other hand, those with a growth mindset believe that the future is changeable and they feel control over it; therefore, this may reduce their anxiety as they see the future as a function of their attempts and efforts. This finding is in line with the results of previous studies such as Zarrinabadi et al. (2023) who reported negative links between growth mindsets and negative emotional experiences and positive associations between fixed mindsets and negative emotions.

## **Implications of the Study**

This study has several implications for research on teacher emotions and teacher mindsets. The first implication is that this study shows that teachers' emotions are influenced by how they think about the future and the sense of agency that they have toward their futures. Those who consider the future to be pre-determined and out of their control tended to have more negative emotions and vice versa. This shows that interventions should aim at developing teachers' futures literacy and cultivating growth future mindsets. The second implication of this study is related to the relevance and significance of future mindsets for teacher-related variables. The present study showed that teachers' fixed and growth future mindsets predicted their emotions. As such, it would be interesting to see if these mindsets are related to other teacher

emotions such as teacher regret (Alirezai Alavijeh & Zarrinabadi, 2025) boredom, hope, and shame. Moreover, future research could examine the links between future mindsets and motivational factors such as teacher motivation and demotivation as well as mental health, resilience, grit and well-being. Finally, future research in the field can examine the links between teachers' thoughts about the changeability or stability of the future and their job-related states such as job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The findings of this study should be generalized with caution due to some limitations. Firstly, the results of this study are limited to the teachers who took part in it. Their ideas might be different from other Iranian samples and of course teachers working in other counties and cultures. As such, the researcher recommends that further replication studies be conducted before making any generalizations about the results of this study. Also, while this study examined teachers' age as a predictor of their mindsets, it did not test how teachers' job experience might predict membership in different future mindset profiles; hence, the researcher recommends that future research examine the role of experience in teachers' future mindset profiles and its potential role in teachers' emotions. Finally, the present study used Likert-type questionnaires to measure teachers' future mindsets and emotions as its sole source of data, which makes the study limited to the weaknesses of self-report data collection such as careless responses or social desirability bias..

### **Conclusion**

The results of this study showed that the teachers' beliefs about the changeability of their futures can be classified into three distinct profiles: growth-oriented, mixed, and fixed-oriented future mindsets. This three-class structure is in line with previous research studies which reported that teachers, like their students, hold diverse mindsets about development and change (Laine & Tirri, 2023; Robinson & Bond, 2025). The results indicated that teachers with a growth-oriented future mindset had significantly higher levels of enjoyment and lower levels of anxiety and anger in comparison to those with mixed or fixed mindsets. This concurs with Dweck's (2006) mindset theory, which highlights that people who view abilities and circumstances as malleable are more probable to show adaptive emotional patterns and resilience (Zarrinabadi et al., 2022; Zarrinabadi et al., 2022). The associations between future mindset and teacher emotions found in the present study corroborate previous empirical findings that growth-oriented beliefs are linked to greater levels of job satisfaction and emotional well-being (Derakhshan et al., 2022; Dewaele et al., 2019). Language teachers who believe their future to be open to change may view challenges as opportunities for further development

rather than as threats, which helps decrease negative affect and promote positive work engagement. As reported by Laine and Tirri (2023), growth-oriented teachers are more likely to focus on mastery and process-oriented goals, which leads to optimal learning on the students' side as well as their own emotional regulation and workplace adaptability (Zarrinabadi et al., 2023). Moreover, this study contributes to the field of language teacher education by exploring future mindsets about the teachers and extending the discussion from teachers' mindsets about their language teaching ability to their beliefs about malleability of the future. The results also contribute to our understanding of language teachers' mindsets by finding that teachers' mindsets about their other characteristics such as future matter for their psychological states and emotions.

Moreover, the distinctiveness of future mindset profiles from age and gender found in this study is in agreement with the research from international reviews suggesting that teachers' mindsets are shaped more by contextual and institutional factors than by demographic characteristics (Robinson & Bond, 2025; Laine & Tirri, 2023). This suggests that fostering growth-oriented perspectives among educators should focus on systemic professional development rather than demographic targeting. Additionally, the three emotions associated with each future mindset profile support the idea that future mindsets not only affect teachers' cognitive orientations, but also emotional states. The results of this study suggest that interventions aimed at improving teachers' implicit beliefs about the future could increase emotional resilience, and in turn teacher well-being and student outcomes. The author believes that further research on teachers' future mindsets and their association with other motivational and emotional variables related to language teachers is needed in order to enhance the effectiveness of those interventions.

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**Ethical Statement:** All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee

and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

**Informed Consent:** Informed consent was obtained from the participants prior to the study.

**Generative AI Use:** The author did not use generative AI at any stage of the study.

**Author Contribution:** *Alireza Mohammadzadeh Mohammadabadi*: Conceptualization, Writing , Data collection, Data analysis, Results, Resources.

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