

Teaching English and Stress: Teacher Trainees vs. Experienced Teachers

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Abstract

The study was conducted during a teaching practicum undergone by a group of Diploma of TESL students of Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Terengganu. The purposes of doing this study were to investigate the element of stress faced by both the English language teacher trainees (Diploma TESL students) and also the experienced English teachers (trainee's school advisors) and also to know the relevant factors of the problem. There were 51 English teacher trainees and 38 experienced English teachers participated in answering an established and adapted set of questionnaires and a few of them also involved in a semi-structured-interview. The findings show that the experienced teachers have suffered from a stressful life being English teachers due to several reasons and at the same time the teacher trainees have a tendency of having the same problem.

Keywords: stress, English Language Teacher (ELT), English Language Teacher Trainee (ELTT)

Introduction

Teachers are regarded as agents or facilitators of knowledge and at the same time teaching is widely recognized as a stressful occupation (Dunham & Varma, 1998; Kyriacou, 2001; Lambert & McCarthy, 2006; Travers & Cooper, 1996). Socially, they are surrounded by criticism for their actions which is related to their teaching and students. Research has shown that between government servants and social workers including those who work in private sectors, teachers have surfaced at the start of the new millennium as the most afflicted with rising stress (Russel, 2000).

At present, the role and responsibility of a teacher is multitasking and significantly developing year by year. Basically, a teacher has to take on his responsibilities in lesson planning and teaching, accountability for student's performance, classroom management and discipline, supervisory role and conducting and monitoring extracurricular activities. Nevertheless, the tasks have mounted with the change in the type of teaching culture, examinations and added managerial responsibilities for teachers including planning instructional lessons, coaching and conducting extracurricular activities, assessing students based on curriculum and delivering information to parents and educational bodies.

According to Cooper (2000) and Kyriacou (2000), teaching is traditionally considered to be one of the most stressful occupations. According to HSE (Health and Safety Executive), teaching has been identified as one of the most stressful professions today. The 2000 report adds that the scale of occupational stress found that 42.5% of teachers reported themselves "highly stressed", while 58% came into 'low stress', 36% of teachers felt the effect of stress all or most of the time. Reasons given are stress (27%), conflict with school managers or colleagues (14%), pressure of workload (9%), loss of confidence and performance anxiety (9%) and relationship, marital and family problems (5%). Shockingly, the stressful teachers were those who teach critical subjects such as second languages, mathematics- and- science-based subjects and history. In 2003, a study undertaken by the Schools Advisory Service, the largest independent provider of teacher absence insurance in the UK, showed that one in three teachers took sick leave in the previous year as a result of work-related stress. A survey on occupational stress, published in the Journal of Managerial Psychology in 2005, ranked teaching as the second most stressful job out of 26 occupations analysed, with only ambulance drivers exceeding the stress levels found in the teaching profession.

Teachers' stress has frequently been discussed in the literature. Larchick & Chance (2001) have discussed this issue from the point of teachers' performance and personal life stress. Carter (1994) and Reglin & Reitzmmer (1998) have offered various solutions for reducing teachers' stress, while Michelson & Harvey (2000) focus on legislation as a way to reduce stress in the teaching profession in Britain. The health of teachers could be seriously affected by stress. Moreover, apart from teachers themselves, work stress suffered by them can also adversely affect their students and the learning environment. In addition, stress problems of teacher might cause an increase in teaching costs. It was sympathetic and worth studying this issue so as to minimize the adverse effects of work stress of teachers on students, classrooms, schools and teachers themselves. Studying on the issue of work stress of teachers

was essential and it was important for the management and teachers to work together to improve the working environment and conditions so as to combat stress.

In definition, 'Stress' has been provided by Selye (1974): "the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it" (p. 27). The term has been further defined by Gold and Roth (1993): "a condition of disequilibrium within the intellectual, emotional and physical state of the individual; it is generated by one's perceptions of a situation, which result in physical and emotional reactions. It can be either positive or negative, depending upon one's interpretations" (p. 17). Some researchers define stress in terms of the level of pressure and demands made on an individual. Other researchers have defined the term by means of the degree of mismatch between the demands made upon an individual and the individual's ability to cope with these demands (Kyriacou 2001). From other point of view, Through her review of the literature, Dr. Younghusband (2005) indicates that workload and increasing time pressures have a negative impact on teachers and as a result, stress levels are rising. Common stressors related to workload and therefore, to teacher stress include time pressures, problems associated with class size, inclusive classrooms, the implications of a heavy workload on family life and the repercussions of on-going change.

Thus, based on the above globalised issue, the research objectives on this study are to:

1. investigate the contributing factors of stress faced by ELTT and ELT.
2. compare and contrast between ELTT and ELT pertaining to teaching English and stress.
3. identify the relationship of teaching English and stress.

Therefore, the research questions are as follows:

1. What are the contributing factors of stress faced by ELTT and ELT?
2. What are the differences and similarities between ELTT and ELT pertaining to teaching English and stress? And
3. What is/are the relationship of teaching English and stress?

The Effects of Stress on Teachers

According to Younghusband (2005) the effects can be manifested in many different ways, including physical effects such as raised heart rate, headache, dizziness, palpitations, skin rashes, aching neck and shoulders and lowering of resistance to infection. Over a long period stress may contribute to chronic health problems

such as heart disease and stomach ulcers. Various psychological and behavioural changes affecting work performance and interpersonal relationships may also be noticed by stressed individuals' colleagues, including inability to concentrate, overworking, irritability or aggression, becoming withdrawn or unsociable, or reluctance to accept constructive criticism and advice.

Literature Reviews

What is usually implied by stress is the negative experience of emotional feelings; nevertheless, stress is not always negative. It can sometimes act as a motivating power for individuals. Among the individual affective factors, 'stress' has been cited as one of the most important variables and this concept has gradually become common in our discourse about life and health (Jepson & Forrest 2006).

Kyriacou (2001) observes that, due to variation between countries and national education systems, there are differences in the main sources of teacher stress (*ibid.*: 30). He also observes that job satisfaction is a complex issue in that 'even in the context of feeling overloaded, taking on additional duties in a valued area of work need not create more stress, and may indeed enhance job satisfaction'. Kyriacou (2001) lists the main sources of stress facing teachers: teaching pupils who lack motivation; maintaining discipline; time pressures and workload; coping with change; being evaluated by others; dealings with colleagues; self-esteem and status; administration and management; role conflict and ambiguity; and poor working conditions (*ibid.*: 29).

Overall, the factors that have been found to impact on the job satisfaction of teachers and principals can be divided into three broad categories: micro level (teacher background factors); meso level (school level factors); and macro level (factors associated with society and the education system). Meso-level factors can further be divided into different domains, namely, school, teacher and student domains. The following sections will provide an overview of existing research drawing on these categories. Previous studies on the issue of teacher stress have shown that teachers who have little control over their occupational environment, planning, and decision-making have referred to their teaching as stressful. Undefined work roles and work overload have also been mentioned in several studies as being among the most stressful experiences for teachers (Kyriacou 2001; Austin et al 2005; Adams 2001; Fimian 1987).

Lambert (2006) conducted a study on 126 teachers of primary schools in Canada to know the sources of stress; symptoms of stress and the coping strategies for the stress. The major sources of stress were society, parents, teaching, the teaching environment, pupils, supervision, curriculum and administration. More than 70% of the teachers reported headaches. Cooper (2000) conducted a study on 100 teachers to study the causes of occupational stress. It was found that in role insufficiency (lack of knowledge, facilities, supports) and role ambiguity (unclear or hidden responsibilities of teacher) led to stress and less experienced teachers have more stress problem.

Similarly, lack of adequate teaching resources, adequate time to deal effectively with students, as well as issues such as salary, lack of feedback for teaching performance, unclear methods of evaluation, lack of peer support and dealing with colleagues, students' misbehaviour and home life quality have also been mentioned as sources of stress (Adams 2001; Kyriacou 2001; Fimian 1987; Jenkins & Calhoun 1991). Students' related problems, such as late arrivals, distracting others who are trying to work, missing the lessons, refusal to do set work, failure to do homework, rude or cheeky remarks, can also cause teachers to become stressed (Joseph 2000; Adams 2001).

With regard to ESL in particular, a study of a group of ESL teachers has shown that the main sources of stress were lack of sufficient time, unwanted classroom observations and poor relations with colleagues (Bress 2006). However, taking their place among the factors that could be considered to be linked to stress are issues surrounding 'non-nativeness', since being a non-native teacher is sometimes associated with a deficiency in teachers (Horwitz 1996) and can therefore be a cause of stress in many of them.

One of the most obvious issues facing ESL teachers and causing them stress can be their own language proficiency. In fact, many of the issues discussed concerning language learner anxiety could be true for many ESL teachers. Ideally, we assume that all language teachers have an acceptable proficiency in English, but as we know language learning is a never-ending process. Therefore "it is appropriate to think of a great number of language teachers as language learners –albeit advance ones" (Horwitz 1996:366). Sometimes even when the teacher has enough language knowledge, he still might lack of self-confidence in himself. According to Kim (2004:1), many ESL teachers reported to suffering from an unnecessary level of emotional stress caused by language issues,

which is detrimental to their confidence as teachers. Horwitz also mentions that for ESL teachers who lack of confidence can "inhibit a teacher's ability to effectively present the target language, interact with students and serve as a positive role model as a language learner" (Horwitz 1996:366). When encouraging teachers to improve their student's language skills, we sometimes forget that there are a group of teachers that lack of confidence in their own language ability (Murdoch 1994). There are also other situations when teachers might feel stressed especially where language content is unpredictable (Tudor, 1993) as in methods like communicative language teaching. Therefore, teachers might face situations where he feels less confident in terms of his language ability.

In addition, a 2001 study commissioned by the UK Department of Education and Skills set out to "identify the main factors that determine teachers' workload and to develop a programme of practical action to eliminate excessive workload". As confirmed in earlier UK studies and the previously cited Canadian references, "Many teachers felt that they were not in control of their work, [and] that it caused them stress". Respondents identified issues underlying excessive workload: Teachers undertaking tasks that could be carried out by other staff, inadequate support from available technology, insufficient time to manage the staff and other resources at their disposal, and to manage their own planning; and feeling they have insufficient ownership of, and access to, high quality professional development, administrators and leadership not seeing teacher workload as part of their responsibility and wide variations in approaches to managing teacher workload between different schools, lack of sufficient thought about the impact on workload by the employer and Government, perception of being mistrusted and consequently, accountability requirements necessitating documenting "every decision, every lesson and most interactions with pupils".

Methodology

This study intends to investigate potential inside and outside classroom sources of stress in teachers of ESL (English as Second Language) and to further examine possible differences between ELTT (English Language Teacher Trainees) and ELT (English Language Teachers/ experienced teachers). In this research, two methods of data collection namely, qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The advantage of using more than one method of data collection is that it allows a triangulation of methods which gives the

research more validity and provides a chance for the findings of one method to be cross-checked with the other (Bryman, 2001).

For the qualitative method, a questionnaire and for the qualitative approach a semi-structured interview, were applied. The questionnaire consisted of 48 items based on a four-likert scale. It elicited English teachers' opinions concerning issues that could be linked to stress, as well as some of their demographical information. The questionnaires were taken and adapted from the actual distribution of the questionnaires from Northumbria University and University of Putra Malaysia, which had carried out similar study pertaining to native and non native EFL. In this research a semi-structure interview was applied because of its flexibility and the degree of power and control it gives the researcher during the interview (Nunan, 1992). The respondents had been given the semi-structured questions earlier so that they had more time to think and construct a response, therefore giving more valid responses than spontaneous ones. Furthermore there is also a reduction of psychological pressure for nervous participants (Bamton and Cowton (2002).

51 English Language Teacher Trainees (ELTT) and 38 English Language Teachers (ELT) were involved in this research. They were given 2 weeks to respond to the questionnaire and also prior to the semi-structured-interview. The four likert-scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree) was summarized into two major results which were agree and disagree (see appendix 1). Out of 48 statements of questionnaire, 4 statements were solely meant for ELT (Item 12, 13, 40 and 41). For the interviews, 21 ELTT and 16 ELT were involved.

Findings

The analysis provided in this study will provide unique insights into whether issues of teaching and stress should be addressed by supporting individual teachers and/or by providing supports and resources at the school level.

Finding 1: Results of the Questionnaire

Similar Views of ELTT and ELT on Issue of Teaching and Stress.

Out of 44 statements given in the questionnaires, both groups shared similar views of 29 statements (65.9%). This shows that although ELTT only underwent 12 weeks of their teaching practicum, the impact of the course was relevant and effective to their field.

They shared similar views on the statement that they understand their

responsibilities as a teacher. The same goes to teaching, the majority of both groups agreed that teachers' needs were as important as those of their student (100% of ELTT and ELT). Preparation of going to class also shows a similarity between both groups where almost equal number of ELTT and ELT shared different views.

From other point of view, 96.07% of ELTT concerned about their student's evaluation on them, the same goes to ELT (73.68%). Both groups agreed that their workload were manageable, 90.19% for ELTT and 78.94% for ELT. Meanwhile, both groups also like to be in school, 86.27% for ELTT and 78.94% for ELT. However, both groups showed their anxiety over other people's evaluation on them, 90.19% for ELTT and 84.21% for ELT.

As regards their working circumstances, both groups showed satisfaction in terms of their relationship with their colleagues, 98.03% for ELTT and 71.05% for ELT and they also agreed that they had enough time to prepare for their class, 92.15% for ELTT and 68.42% for ELT. In terms of the level of relationship with their superiors or supervisors, both groups did not have much problem with them, 92.15% for ELTT and 84.21% for ELT. Both groups also agreed that the level of responsibility as a teacher had increased during the last couple of years/months, 88.23% for ELTT and 86.86% for ELT.

Furthermore, both groups felt that they did not feel stressful if they received complaints from their students, 90.19% for ELTT and 81.57% for ELT. They also responded that they did not keep their works to themselves, 90.19% for ELTT and 82.21% for ELT. Both groups felt that school needed to organize some effective workshops in order to help reduce teacher's stress, 82.35% of ELTT and 92.1% of ELT. Moreover, both groups agreed that they felt stressed when faced with unpredicted situations at class, 78.43% of ELTT and 57.89% of ELT. But both groups did not feel stressed if they did not know the answers given by the students, 31.37% of ELTT and 36.84% of ELT.

Both groups agreed that they did not have enough knowledge of English, 82.35% of ELTT and 60.52% of ELT. Meanwhile, they also did not find that student's attitude and misunderstanding about English was stressful, 52.94% of ELTT and 57.89% of ELT. They also did not feel that the teaching method that they were required to adapt was too demanding, 54.90% of ELTT and 55.26% of ELT. Both groups show an agreement that communicative language teaching puts more responsibility on teachers, 90.15% of ELTT and 57.89% of ELT. Related to that, a research done by Hart,

Wearing and Conn (1995) underscores the value of teacher support by reporting the results of an investigation involving over 4,000 Australian teachers in 32 primary and 52 secondary schools. These teachers were involved in discussions leading to the development and adoption of schoolwide discipline approaches. Even though the teachers in their evaluation study reported, on average, as much student misbehavior as ever, as a result of feeling supported by their peers, "student misbehavior [was] not overtly stressful for most teachers" (p. 44). Consequently, it can be argued that even when student misbehavior disrupts teachers' attempts to instruct students, the teachers' level of stress is reduced when they feel part of, and supported by, their community. Similarly, teachers in elementary (primary) schools do not face much problem pertaining to dealing with students.

Almost equal response of agreement and disagreement for the statement of '*I find my teaching in contradiction with my beliefs about teaching*' of groups, 52.94% of ELTT and 50% of ELT. As expected, both groups loved students, 92.15% of ELTT and 78.95% of ELT. At the same time, both groups agreed that the location of school might influence the level of teacher's stress, 54.9% of ELTT and 73.68% of ELT. Both groups disagreed that the atmosphere among colleagues was too competitive, 80.39% of ELTT and 84.21% of ELT. The two targeted groups were willing to do extra work related to their class that they needed to do at home, 68.62% of ELTT and 57.89% of ELT.

Basically, both groups encouraged their students to become teachers, 90.19% of ELTT and 57.89% of ELT and both groups agreed that teaching was stressful because of exam-oriented approach, 86.27% of ELTT and 68.42% of ELT. Both groups disagreed that teaching was stressful due to student's disciplinary problem, 56.86% of ELTT and 76.31% of ELT. Both groups agreed that the use of ICT and teaching courseware had given a great help in reducing the stress, 78.43% of ELTT and 68.42% of ELT.

In short, the similarities show that both ELTT and ELT groups did not have major problem when it deals with classroom teaching and their students. However, both groups felt unease or stress if students or other people evaluate their performance. Other than that, they also did not have much problem with their students or colleagues and also their superiors or supervisors. Basically, both groups love their profession (that is why they encouraged their students to become teachers); nevertheless the non-teaching elements contribute the stress of being an English teacher.

Different Views of ELTT and ELT on the Issue of Teaching and Stress.

As regards their stress to teach low motivated students, both groups showed a difference where 76.47% of ELTT found it stressful; on the other hand almost equal percentage of ELT. It is common due to lacking of teaching experience of the ELTT, the same goes to having trouble in communicating with students where 72.54% of ELTT found that they faced trouble to communicate with students but ELT did not agree with the statement (81.57%).

Similarly, ELTT also faced difficulty in controlling the class (84.31%) but ELT did not face the problem (76.31%). ELTT agreed that they only taught English in school (96.07%) whereas 94.73% of ELT responded that they had to teach other than English as well. Here, it shows that the ELT felt stress due to other additional tasks that they had to do besides teaching English.

Almost all of the ELTT (96.07%) had been given a choice in deciding how they did their job but only 60.05% of ELT were given a freedom on the job. In term of getting promotion, about 86.84% of ELT agreed that they did not have any query on the matter and the same goes to staff development. However, in terms of job redundancies, 71.5% of ELTT did not find any redundancy but 81.57% of ELT found the element of redundancy.

76.47% of ELTT felt stressed if their students did not understand what they were taught, however, only 23.68% of ELT felt that way and as expected 60.78% of ELTT found observations were stressful but not to ELT, 26.31%. About 64.7% of ELTT felt that the status of ELT had generally declined but only 26.31% of ELT agreed with the statement. Meaning that they felt that the importance of teaching English was still existed in the schools and at the same time it shows that not anybody can teach English.

47.05% of ELTT said they did not have enough time to deal effectively with student's problem but 86.84% of ELT shared the same opinion. This happens because ELTT has a very limited time to be in schools since they were staying at the hostel. About 39.21% of ELTT felt that stress negatively affecting their teaching whereas 76.31% of ELT felt the same thing. About 41.17% of ELTT felt that being an English teacher was more stressful than other teachers but 76.32% shared the same opinion. Although 71.05% of ELT were satisfied with their salary, 60.52% would like to retire earlier. Besides having a little stress of being English teachers, 78.43% of ELTT were planning to become ELT. Nearly 49.01% of ELTT felt that

teaching was stressful due to their low English proficiency but only 21.05% of ELT felt that way. Lastly, 50.98% of ELTT and 76.32% of ELT considered that school as their second home.

In conclusions, the most striking difference between the two considered groups concerned teacher's perceived knowledge of English and the availability of ELTT in schools. The former differences were due ELTT's less experience in teaching they would have problems in teaching low motivated students, class management and student-teacher-communication and the latter difference had caused the ELTT would not be able to function as ELT in schools. From other point of views, the stress among ELT was due to additional tasks given to them and the redundancies of their tasks. Furthermore, the high expectation given to English subject was also a contributing factor of stress faced by the ELT as well.

Finding 2: Results of the Interviews

Based on 21 respondents of ELTT, 17 (80.95%) of them agreed that teaching English was not stressful job however it became more stressful when the result of tests and examinations were seriously taken into consideration by both school managers and parents. The paper work of preparing the reports was taxing and sometimes could cause an uncontrollable stress. This was shared by all 16 respondents (100%) of ELT as well. Within the classroom, 18 respondents (85.71%) the ELTT agreed that teaching was not stressful if they managed to have a good class management especially if they were assigned to teach better classes, for this matter, they shared the same opinion with 12 of ELT (75%).

With regard to issues occurring outside of classroom such as meetings, extracurricular activities, special functions, most ELT 14 respondents (87.5%) agreed that the more outside of classroom activities they had, the more stressful it would be. However, for ELTT, only 10 out of 21 respondents (47.61%) felt it stressful. Both groups did not feel that student's disciplinary problem had caused stress to them because it was controllable, however, it the interferences of parents occasionally made them stress.

In the last question of the interview, based on their 12-week-of practicum, 15 respondents of ELTT (71.42%) felt that teaching English would lead to stress if outside of classroom activities were abundance and irrepressible and they also pointed out that stress was closely related to lack of confidence in one's proficiency, low self-motivation and exam-oriented approach. From other point of

view, 11 of ELT (68.75%) felt that being English teacher was more stressful compared to that of other teachers due to its degree of difficulty in teaching the subjects. They also reckoned that teaching also became uninteresting subject and stressful because of a stereotype/stagnant approaches applied by the teachers due to exam-oriented or lacking of teaching preparation. Last but not least, 14 respondents of ELT (87.5%) agreed that learning should be fun and less stressful if the teachers were creative, loved teaching and children.

Finding 3: Level of Stress

The highest level of stress chosen by ELTT was 8 (1 ELTT) and 10 (1 ELT). Majority of ELTT bunched together at level 5 to 7 and 4 to 6 for ELT. It shows that both ELTT and ELT were in stressful condition.

Conclusions

This paper discusses a combination of factors was discovered that might not only shed some light on teachers' vulnerability to stress but also indicate possible individual strategies for eliminating stress. Based on the study, the major areas of stress faced by ELTT and ELT were surrounded issues such as observation, communicative language teaching, making students understand a point, facing unpredicted situations, student's reaction to the teachers' culture, interference from the outsiders, teaching preparation, work-load, insufficient time, extra work related to outside classroom activities, teachers' beliefs, the status of English teachers (high expectation), and the affect of stress on teaching. For second research question, the main similarities between ELTT and ELT pertaining to teaching English and stress were the realization of the importance of teaching responsibilities and perceptions on stress-related element of outside classroom activities and exam-oriented approach which have widely been practiced.

The problem of teacher stress and related issues of redundant teacher, education reforms, education policy and cutting of classes and schools had already drawn the public attention and frequently be the headlines of newspapers. Commonly, politicians are very fond of interpreting and judging whatever issues related to education in 'opportunist and popularity' ways.

The findings of this research could serve as a useful reference for the government and related organizations when formulating the policies and strategies to help the teachers

relieve and cope with their work-related health problems. Moreover, with the information of common sources of teacher stress found in this research for reference, the government could be more considerate of the teachers while establishing new education policies or educational reforms.

In addition, the main differences between both groups were perceptions on knowledge of teaching field and redundancies of tasks as English teachers. Lastly, teaching English and stress seemed inseparable due to its complexity of ESL and also the high expectation put on English teacher's shoulders. Eventually, stress might lead to more devastated consequences to both teachers and student's performances.

This study makes two recommendations with regard to work related stress in schools. First, the school administration should pay more attention to the psychological needs of their teaching staff. The school should strive to build a good working environment and try its best to reduce teacher stress. This can be done by giving much priority to the teacher's welfare. This ought to be one of the important administration aims for the coming years. Second, the school should set up a committee to care for teachers who are experiencing problems. The ELT are compelled to compete for a place in the school, even without incentives and merit pay have been passed over in favor of threats and dismissal. All of these motivators lead to stress and fear among staff. These fears manifest in teachers undertaking self-improvement is an effort to assure continued employment. Even the mere fact of inspection raises anxiety levels which may lead to physical and emotional problems.

This study has two major limitations. First, since all ELTT underwent only 12-week-teaching-practicum, so the English teaching environment might not be fully nurtured into the trainee's life and the ELT group might not well represent the overall population of all ELT school teachers. Second, the measures used in this study were originally and mainly generated in the Western cultures, therefore, the scales and results might not have a very good reliability in this study. The adapted questionnaire tried to only manoeuvre towards stress among English teacher, so the results should be interpreted with caution. Nevertheless, this study offers an interesting area for future research. This study has some limitations that should be outlined. Besides that, the sample represented a small percentage of the population of university students (one batch) from a small university and also a district. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalised beyond this

subgroup. Moreover, the study relied on self-reported data. There is always a risk of bias and selective recall when using such data (Smith & Glass, 1987), but the use of other techniques was outside the scope of this paper.

As a conclusion, the study suggests that less of outside classroom activities, exam-oriented, observations and some other related elements can help reduce teacher stress and it is not a very strong predictor that respective authorities such as school managers or education department from all levels should take a positive action to ensure that teaching English would be a less-stressful profession. Finally, this research study is believed to be able to enlighten other researchers to conduct further in-depth studies to investigate the stress problems among teachers, specifically English teachers. Last but not least, hopefully, this research study is believed to be able to enlighten other researchers to conduct further in-depth studies to investigate the occupation health problems of the teachers. In a nutshell, both ELT and ELTT should tolerate the endurance and physical requirements of teaching and evaluating students; relay concepts through the use of visual aids, textbooks and audio visual equipment; evaluate students through observation of class work, correcting assignments, storing and retrieving assignments and teaching material; managing the physical environment of the classroom; and communicating with peers.

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Appendix 1:

Teaching and Stress:**English Language Teacher Trainee (ELTT) vs. English Language Teacher (ELT)**

Tick (/) your response.

Item	Statement	ELTT (n=51)		ELT (n=38)	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1	I am clear about my responsibilities as a teacher	50	1	38	0
2	I think teacher's needs are as important as students' needs	50	0	38	0
3	I find it stressful to teach low motivated students	39	12	18	20
4	I sometimes feel stressed before going to the class	25	26	19	19
5	My student's evaluation of me is very important for me	49	2	28	10
6	I sometimes find it difficult to communicate with students	37	14	7	31
7	I sometimes feel unable to control the class	43	8	9	29
8	I mainly teach English because I like teaching English	49	2	36	2
9	I have a choice in deciding how I do my job	49	2	23	15
10	My workload is manageable	46	3	30	8
11	I like to be in school	44	7	30	8
12	I lack opportunities for promotion (<i>not applicable for ELTT</i>)			5	33
13	I lack opportunities for staff development (<i>not applicable for ELTT</i>)			5	33
14	I sometimes worry about other people's evaluation of me	46	5	32	6
15	I am happy with the level of support I obtain from my colleagues	50	1	27	11
16	I have enough time to prepare for my classes	48	3	26	12
17	I have a good relationship with my superior / supervisor	47	4	32	6
18	My level of responsibility as a teacher has increased during the last couple of years/months	45	6	33	5
19	There have been redundancies or job cuts in my school which I find stressful	13	38	31	7
20	I find complains against me by students very stressful	5	46	6	32
21	I keep my work related problems to myself	20	31	4	34
22	I think my school needs to organize some effective workshops in order to help reduce teacher's stress	42	9	35	3
23	I feel stressed when faced with unpredicted situations at class	40	11	22	18
24	I feel stressed when I can't make students understand a point	39	13	9	29
25	I feel stressed when students ask me something that I don't know	16	35	14	24
26	I sometimes feel I don't have enough knowledge of English (vocabulary, grammar, etc.)	42	9	23	15
27	I find students' attitude and misunderstanding about English stressful	24	27	18	22
28	I find the teaching method I am required to adapt too demanding	23	28	17	21
29	I think communicative language teaching puts more responsibility on teachers	46	5	22	16
30	I find my teaching in contradiction with my beliefs about teaching	27	24	19	19
31	I generally find observations stressful	31	20	10	28
32	I think the status of English teachers has generally declined	18	33	21	11
33	I love children/students	47	4	30	8
34	The location of school influences the level of teacher's stress	28	23	28	10
35	I do not have enough time to enable me to deal effectively with students' problems	24	27	33	5
36	The atmosphere among colleagues is too competitive	10	41	6	32
37	I do not feel happy about some extra work related to my class that I need to do at home	16	35	16	22
38	I feel stress is negatively affecting my teaching	20	31	29	9
39	Being an English language teacher is more stressful than other teachers	21	30	29	9
40	I am satisfied with my salary (<i>not applicable for ELTT</i>)			27	11
41	I am planning to retire earlier (<i>not applicable for ELTT</i>)			15	23
42	I encourage my students to become teachers	46	5	22	16
43	I am planning to become an English language teacher(<i>not applicable for ELT</i>)	40	11		
44	Teaching is stressful because of exam-oriented approach	44	7	26	12
45	Teaching is stressful because of my low English proficiency	25	26	8	30
46	Teaching is stressful because of student's disciplinary problem	22	29	9	29
47	I consider school as my second home	26	25	29	9
48	The use of ICT (teaching courseware) has given a great help in reducing the stress	40	11	26	12

What is your stress level of being an ELT / ELTT?

(1= lowest.....10 = highest)

Group	Stress Level										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
ELTT			6	7	14	13	10	1			51
ELT		5	4	11	9	8				1	38