Occupational Stressors of Novice EFL Teachers in Turkey

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the occupational stressors that novice EFL teachers encounter, how these stressors affect them, and whether they tend to use resilience strategies or experience burnout symptoms. Within the qualitative research method, the data was collected through semi-structured interviews from three novice EFL teachers. The data were analyzed by coding and categorizing. The findings show that novice EFL teachers experience multiple stressors related to being inexperienced, students, parents, school administrations, lesson preparation, using a second language, preparing more materials, dealing with many skill areas, not being seen as important as other subjects and social stigmas. Also, they tend to use resilience strategies like social support, collaborating, being prepared, separating teacher identity and self-identity and acceptance rather than experiencing burnout.

Keywords: Occupational stress, resilience strategies, burnout, novice EFL teachers

Türkiye'de Yeni İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Mesleki Stres Kaynakları

Özet: Bu çalışma meslekte yeni İngilizce öğretmenlerinin karşılaştığı mesleki stres kaynaklarını incelemek ve bu stres kaynaklarının onları nasıl etkilediğini, hangi dayanıklılık stratejileri kullandıklarını ve tükenmişlik sendromu belirtilerini gösterip göstermediklerini incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Nitel araştırma yöntemleri çerçevesinde veriler yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler aracılığıyla üç yeni İngilizce öğretmeninden toplanmıştır. Veriler kodlama ve kategorileştirme kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular öğretmenlerin deneyimsizliğe, öğrencilere, velilere, okul idaresine, ders planlamaya, ikinci dil kullanımına, materyal hazırlamaya, farklı becerileri geliştirmeye, diğer branşlar karşısında önemsiz görünmeye ve bazı toplumsal önyargılara bağlı stres yaşadığını göstermektedir. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin tükenmişlik sendromundan ziyade sosyal dayanışma, iş birliği, ön hazırlık, öğretmen kimliğini kişisel kimlikten ayırma ve kabullenme gibi dayanıklılık stratejileri kullandığı görülmüştür.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Mesleki stres, dayanıklılık stratejileri, tükenmişlik, yeni öğretmenler

1. Introduction

The consensus among educators reveals that teacher quality is one of the most significant determiners of student performance (Hanushek, 2006; Rothstein, 2010; Rowe, 2003; Rowe, 2004). However, around the globe, teachers who participated in different studies report that they have been experiencing occupational stress, and they consider teaching as an extremely stressful job (e.g.Dowrkin, Hany, Dworkin & Telschow, 1990; Makinen & Kinnunen, 1986; Payne & Furnham, 1987; Solman & Feld, 1989). The increase in stress among teachers is a concerning issue since stress may cause health problems and result in low-quality teaching practice. When people get stressed, they tend to worry more, feel discouraged to solve problems, be angry and bitter towards their environment, have sleep problems, and finish tasks carelessly (Maddi & Khoshaba, 2005). In addition to these, it is reported that in different parts of the world, stress may also cause teachers to leave the profession. Especially novice teachers, who have five-year experience or less, are more likely to drop out of teaching in comparison with other professions (Ingersoll, 2003). For instance, according to The Michigan Education Association (2000), the first five years of teaching is the retention benchmark; it is predicted that one in five novice teachers will quit within the first three years. Even if they remain in the profession, they experience occupational stress affecting their performance. Therefore, this study sets out to investigate whether novice EFL teachers are affected by stress related to work and how they manage to cope with it.

1.1. Literature Review

Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) divided stress into two: potential occupational stressors and actual occupational stressors. According to this separation, potential occupational stressors include any possible situation related to teaching that might cause stress to teachers, such as too much workload or noisy working environment. These kinds of stressors result in teacher stress only when teachers consider them as a threat to their self-esteem or well-being. Based on Kyriacou and Sutcliffe this kind of appraisal process is a relation to the individual characteristics of teachers such as demographic information (e.g. age and sex), personality traits (e.g. resilience, anxiety levels, flexibility), and the ability to cope with demands and the value system of teachers. In addition to these, potential non-occupational stressors (health issues or other life crises) may have a contribution to this appraisal as well. Teachers use coping mechanisms to deal with actual occupational stressors and these coping mechanisms are also determined by teachers' characteristics. Ultimately, teacher stress is related to how coping mechanisms are unable to deal with the actual stressors and to what extent teachers appraise these threats (Kyriacou& Sutcliffe, 1978). On the other hand, it is introduced that teacher stress has five dimensions that are considered as sources of stress factors: workload (work hours and workload), student misbehavior (disruptive students), professional recognition (seeing teaching as an insignificant occupation), classroom resources (inadequate teaching environment) and poor colleague relations (being in a non-supportive working environment). Also, uncooperative parents, low salary, role conflict, and role ambiguity can contribute to teacher stress as well (Boyle, Borg, Falzon & Baglioni, 1995).

As a response to chronic interpersonal and emotional stressors in the work environment, people develop a psychological syndrome called burnout. Burnout can be defined as a crisis in one's general relationship with work (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). There are three components of burnout: exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Exhaustion is related to wearing out, loss of energy, and debilitation. It is also related to depersonalization which is conceptualized as negative or distant attitudes towards clients/students or work itself, and, reduced personal accomplishments which represents the reduced productivity, withdrawal, and inability to cope (Maslach, 1982). Since teaching is considered as a demanding profession because of the social expectations and the pressure of always being in the need of expanding knowledge and skills that are not only limited to the field but also other disciplines such as special education and psychology or statistics, teachers experience the typical burnout syndrome including the specific stages proposed by Maslach (1982). Regarding the first stage, exhaustion, teachers often feel anxious or depressed, and consequently, they may lose interest in their work. As depersonalization increases, teachers develop negative attitudes towards students; they may stereotype them and may treat them with coldness. These all result in reduced personal accomplishment when teachers feel inefficiency at work (Farber, 1991).

According to studies, the level of burnout and its symptoms may depend on the different fields in which teachers specialized. For example, it is found that secondary school teachers declare a higher level of burnout compared to higher education (Teven, 2007). Thus, it is assumed that foreign language teachers

experience burnout differently in comparison with the teachers of other disciplines since foreign language learning is a unique and ego-threatening experience unlike other school subjects (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2011). Penington and Ho (1992) stated that language teachers are more vulnerable to burnout syndrome because they encounter cultural and emotional barriers that are related to language teaching. Besides, both contextual and personal variables are revealed to be effective in language teacher burnout (Garcia, Munoz & Ortiz, 2005). For instance, a study conducted with EFL teachers found that, unlike other teaching subjects, language teachers experience stress that mainly stemmed from the insecurity of their own language competence (Mousavi, 2007). Besides, language teaching may have additional stressors like teaching internationally, teaching culture, or feeling of job insecurity (King, 2016).

To cope with these physical and psychological stressors, individuals go under the process of 'resiliency' (Richardson, Nieiger, Jenson &Kumpfer, 1990) since resilience is the ability to adapt to changes, demands, and disappointments that are encountered (Morris, 2002). In addition to this, resilience is also considered as a process of bouncing back from negative experiences; hence it can be acquired through the years. Although it is challenging for people to focus on positive rather than negative, research on resilience indicates that with enough resilience, power and stability can emerge from difficulties (Wolin & Wolin, 1993). According to various studies, seven internal characteristics are suggested to be common in resilient individuals: initiative, independence, insight, relationship, humor, creativity, and morality. Resilient individuals use problem-solving and good decision making, form positive relationships, have a sense of humor, keep their self-motivation and self-discipline high, have independence and flexibility, value themselves and others (Henderson & Milstein, 2003; Higgins 1994; Wolin & Wolin, 1993).

There have been different research studies conducted to investigate teacher stress, burnout, and resilience both with primary and secondary school teachers (e.g. Kokkinos, 2007), high school teachers (e.g. Vance, Pendergast&Garvis, 2015), teachers who left the profession (e.g. Hong, 2012), beginning teachers (e.g. Caspersen &Raaen, 2014; Morettini, Luet& Vernon-Dotson, 2020), teachers from different parts of the world (e.g. Papatraianou, Strangeways, Beltman &Schuberg Barnes, 2018; Tsang, 2018). Also, language teachers have been the subject of similar research conducted both quantitatively and qualitatively around the globe (e.g.Kamali& Fahim, 2011; Kong, 2014; Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki, 2017; NajiMeidani, Pishghadam, Ghonsooly& Hosseini Fatemi, 2020; Rizqi, 2017). However, in Turkish context, research related to teacher burnout, resilience and self-efficacy is concentrated on quantitative data (e.g.Barutçu & Serinkan, 2013; Demirel, Güler, Toktamis, Özdemir & Sezer, 2005; Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2011; Özer & Beycioğlu, 2010; Toker, 2011; Sarıçam&Sakız, 2014). Besides, the research in Turkey mainly concentrated on early childhood education teachers and special education teachers (e.g.Dönmez, Karasulu, Aşantoğrul & Zembat, 2018; Erdiller & Doğan, 2015; Küçüksülemnaoğlu, 2011). These research studies show different results from each other; while high school teachers are found to have lower burnout syndrome than teachers in different countries (Demirel, et al., 2005), instructors at high education are found to have mid-level burnout (Toker, 2011). On the other hand, male teachers and novice teachers (Barutçu & Serinkan, 2013), special education teachers (Sarıçam & Sakız, 2014), and early childhood educators (Erdiller & Doğan, 2015) experience higher level of burnout syndrome. Yet, as far as today's knowledge, there is no previous research investigating characteristics of ELT professionals' experiences of burnout and resilience within a qualitative framework in the Turkish context. Therefore, the present study aims to explore the characteristics of burnout and resilience of novice EFL teachers. The present study aims to answer the following questions.

RQ.1. What are the occupational stressors experienced by novice EFL teachers?

RQ.2. How occupational stressors affect novice EFL teachers?

RQ.2.1. Do novice EFL teachers tend to employ resilience strategies or do they tend to experience the effects of burnout resulting from occupational stress?

2. Method
2.1. Research Design

This study uses a qualitative research method since the main interest of the qualitative research method is to explore how people interpret and construct their worlds (Merriam &Tisdell, 2015). With the phenomenological approach, the present study seeks opportunities for exploring the shared meaning of experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, this qualitative study aims to understand the

dimensions of burnout and resilience experienced by novice EFL teachers through the phenomenological approach with semi-structured interviews.

2.2. Participants

For an individual to suffer from burnout or be resilient, they should experience stressful situations (Morris, 2002). Therefore, as novice teachers are more vulnerable to stressors and burnout (Ingersoll, 2003), three novice EFL teachers with one year of teaching experience are chosen for this study. To select convenient participants, purposeful sampling (Merriam &Tisdell, 2015) is used. Two of the participants in the study are known to experience difficulties at work and therefore are invited to join the study, and one of the participants in the study is known to be more relaxed allowing this research to explore different viewpoints. The participants are female. One of them works with primary school students while the other two work with secondary school students. The details about the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Participants

	Gender	Age	Experience Year	School Type
Participant A	Female	25	1	Secondary School
Participant B	Female	23	1	Secondary School
Participant C	Female	23	1	Primary and Secondary School

2.3. Data Collection

The data were gathered with semi-structured interviews since this type of interview allows researchers to learn about participants' viewpoints and experiences with the flexibility of in-depth investigation (Heigham&Croker, 2009). The interview questions are formed based on the literature by the researcher. A pilot interview is conducted with an EFL teacher who is in a similar context as the participants before the actual interviews. All participants contributed to this study voluntarily and the interviews were recorded with **the** permission of the participants.

2.4. Data Analysis

The interviews are conducted in Turkish, then translated into English. The data were analyzed with Creswell's (2014) steps to inductive perspective: (1) data are organized for the analysis; (2) all data are read; (3) data are coded; (4) from the codes themes and descriptions are generated; (5) themes and descriptions are interrelated; (6) meaning of the themes are interpreted. The final versions of the interviews are sent to the participants to determine accuracy as a validity strategy (Creswell, 2014).

2.4. Findings

The findings of this study are presented separately according to related research questions in this part.

Research Question 1. *What are the occupational stressors experienced by novice EFL teachers?*

The result of data analysis shows that the novice teachers who participated in this study expressed different stressors related to being inexperienced, students, parents, school administrations, official proceedings, lesson preparation, and examination. However, the consensus among all of the novice teachers is that stress level is high during the first years of teaching. As Participant B shared, being inexperienced was the main contributor to the stress she experienced when she first started to teach. Also, Participant A shared that being unfamiliar with students, parents, school administration, and school environment, and building a connection with students in this process were the main contributors to her high-stress level at the beginning of her teaching experience. After gaining some experience and getting to know the school environment, novice teachers stated that their stress levels decreased. As Participant A stated,

> *"Well, yes [teaching is] stressful but it is stressful at the very beginning, I think. Yes, you experience stress until you build a connection with children. Because you don't know children, parents, school, school administration and there are many procedures you follow."*

In addition to being inexperienced as a teacher, another consensus among novice teachers is that student misbehavior is a common daily stressor that they had to deal with throughout their teaching experience. Participant A and C gave disrespectful students as an example of why teaching is a stressful profession on a daily basis, and besides, Participant A mentioned that not being able to handle all of the students at once creates a burden for the teacher since, as she shared, some students hurt each other psychically, which is another daily stressor for her.

> *"There are disrespectful and careless students. For example, I am afraid that they would hurt each other and put me in a trouble for it. Because some of them can be really strong or they can lie and slander someone."*

Also, apart from the misbehaviors of students, Participant C stated that students' personal problems are one of the main contributors of stress considering the teaching profession. Participant C reflected that she prefers to build a friendly relationship with students by allowing them to share their personal problems with her, yet even after the classroom time is over, the personal problems of students stick with her and cause extra stress. Also, Participant C mentioned that as she prefers to be a companionable teacher, maintaining a friendly relationship with students without letting them cross the professional line is a daily stressor that affects her. As Participant C stated,

> *"[Teaching is] very stressful. Because it doesn't end with classroom time. There are lots of things that I think outside of the class. For example, one student has a problem that day and he comes and tells you, you go home with that problem. Or in breaks you have to be careful if someone falls or gets hurt. They are children but they all have different problems. ... Sometimes we laugh at a joke in class but I am afraid that I would cross the line. I mean... I prefer to be friendly but I fear that this makes it worse."*

Yet, on the other hand, Participant B stated that although she knows that student misbehavior is one of the most stressful sides of teaching, she has never experienced any serious student misbehavior or disrespectful students. This is why even if she acknowledges the problems that come with students who are against the teacher's authority, she could not contribute to the topic from her own teaching experience. However, Participant B shared another contributor of stress related to students that she has encountered: students with special needs. Working with a classroom consists of only students with special needs, Participant B shared a difficulty that she has to deal with on a daily basis.

> *"We have a classroom and all of the students are either dyslexic or have a learning disorder. So, I do struggle when I teach something. They are eager to learn but there is nothing besides that."*

Apart from students and stressors related to students, novice teachers shared various situations that increase their stress level at work. One of which, shared by Participant A, was the hierarchy. According to Participant A, the most stressful part of her teaching experience is about how school administration interferes in her business without knowing language teaching and being criticized by people who are not knowledgeable about language teaching. In addition to the attitudes of school administration, the strict procedures that need to be followed, required paperwork, and being investigated by people are said to be created a quite stressful work environment for Participant A.

> *"[The most stressful thing is] the administration. Because they interfere in my job although they are not language teachers. Everyone thinks they know how to teach English just because they took English courses before. ... That really bothers me. I mean, it is silly that people who don't know about language teaching criticize you and try to guide you. Of course, they can give opinion but this much interference makes me stressed."*

According to the results of the interview, for Participant A, a combination of student misbehavior, especially students who lie, angry parents and school administration that cannot stand by their teacher might potentially lead to being subjected to injustice, and this possibility is mentioned to be a huge stress source. Along with this idea, Participant A suggested that parents' unrealistic, and demanding expectations are another stress factor that affects her motivation. As she describes,

"Children can say the things you didn't say as if you said it. And if a parent grows violence with that and because the administration doesn't stand by me, I feel like I am at the edge of a cliff. This makes me scared. ... Not because I lose my job, because I can be subjected to injustice. ... And I am a very available teacher, students can reach me by phone etc. and I constantly remind the things they need to do yet parents still hold me responsible for students' not doing their homework or etc. Parents expect everything from the teacher. Everyone thinks their children is so special this is why parents stress me out."

While Participant A mentioned stressors that she encounters outside of the classroom unrelated to the course itself, Participant C reflected on the stressors that she encounters inside of the classroom related to the preparation process of the lessons. The main issues that cause stress for Participant C are given as dealing with nonhomogeneous classrooms, raising and keeping records of students' exam scores. As students' level of language differs from one another and the goal is to raise their exam scores, Participant C stated that preparing appropriate materials also causes some degree of stress in her life. In terms of preparation, both Participant C and B stated that being constantly prepared is another source of stress for novice teachers. In addition to this, again both Participant C and B sees the low salary of teachers as a factor that contributes to teacher stress. However, even if Participant B considered being constantly prepared and low salary as a stress contributor, she clearly explained that teaching is a stress-free profession to some extent. The only major stressful part related to teaching mentioned is making important decisions, and it is considered as a common stressor among different professions. As Participant B states,

"[Teaching] It requires making important decisions at important times. This is why we need to be prepared all the time. In this perspective teaching is a stressful job but every occupation is like that, I think."

In addition to the stressors given by the participants related to teaching, they also shared some stressors they encounter and deal with related to specifically language teaching. The major stressor related to language teaching that was addressed by all of the participants was not being seen as important as other subjects by students and parents. As Participant C and A explains,

"English course is seen insignificant compared to other courses like math. Even parents do not take English very seriously. This makes it stressful."

"But the other teachers teach in Turkish or they have students' attention like math teachers, they are listened to get high scores, teachers don't have to do much."

On the other hand, Participant A and C suggested different stressors related to language teaching whereas Participant B stated that, besides from not being seen important, she cannot see any extra stressors that language teachers experience and other teachers don't.

"Every subject field has its own teaching methods but I can't say that language teaching is harder in these respects. But I can say that English course is not seen important. If you are not a math or psychic teacher, you are not taken seriously."

However, Participant A and C pointed out that using English in the classroom is quite stressful since students do have a hard time understanding what they are saying. While dealing with miscommunication issues creates a burden for novice teachers, Participant A also mentioned that using Turkish instead of English makes her feel like a bad teacher and consequently adds to her stress level. Besides, both Participant A and C agreed that there are too many material options to choose from and too many materials to prepare in the language teaching field compared to any other teaching subject. In addition to more materials, Participant A mentioned that there are too many skill areas for teachers to focus on and this makes lesson preparation harder for language teachers and naturally causes stress. And finally, Participant A pointed out the social stigma around language teaching that suggests language teachers can't teach language causes more stress among language teachers. As Participant A explains,

"I don't want to use Turkish at all and when I do, I feel really sad. It makes me feel like I'm a bad teacher. ... Okay topics are easy but they don't understand. Also, we have too many materials, songs, games, cards and there are listening, speaking, so many subcategories we have... I stressed out while trying to manage all of these. Besides, there is a social stigma that we can't teach language they say "we see English for 12 years but we can't learn it"."

Research Question 2. *How occupational stressors affect novice EFL teachers?*

According to data analysis, occupational stress affects participants rather emotionally. As relatively more prone to be affected by stress, it is seen that Participant A, experienced more effects than other participants. As she considered herself a perfectionist, Participant A stated that she wants to do the best job she could do. However, because of occupational stress, she stated that she experiences feeling tired at the end of the day and getting bored of students. In addition to tiredness and boredom, Participant A mentioned that getting used to this flow takes time, yet after getting used to it, these difficulties become normal. On the other hand, Participant C shared that she was excited when she first started teaching but at this moment, she experiences unwillingness towards her profession. Surprisingly, even though Participant B was relatively less stressed, she suggested she is self-sacrificing towards her job and she stated that her productivity level is low since she is inexperienced. The further effects of occupational stress are explored under the categories of "burnout symptoms" and "resilience strategies".

Research Question 2.1. *Do novice EFL teachers tend to employ resilience strategies or do they tend to experience the effects of burnout resulting from occupational stress?*

According to the results of data analysis, novice teachers that participated in this study tend to employ resilience strategies rather than experiencing severe burnout symptoms. However, among all participants, Participant A is found to be experiencing burnout symptoms unlike Participant B and C. Participant A shared that she is unknowingly copping attitude towards students who do not listen to her and use coping attitude as a punishment. Regarding the attitudes towards students, Participant A mentioned that she treats the students who undermine her authority with coldness and ignore them consciously or unconsciously. However, when asked about quitting teaching, Participant A gave some reasons to hold onto her job: benefit of time schedule, the benefit of holidays, and feeling security. Yet, if there is another occupation with an equal time schedule and holidays like teaching, she said she would definitely quit her job since the hardness of communicating with children and not being able to handle too many children makes teaching not worth it. As she explains,

> *"I would quit. Definitely I would quit and change my job. [Because] It is so hard to tell something to children. They talk too much; my head can't take it sometimes. People think twice before having a child but you suddenly have a hundred children. Besides each year new ones come."*

In terms of the possibility of quitting the profession, other participants were not as interested as Participant A. Participant B explained that loving children would hold herself from quitting the job similar to Participant C who said that the only thing that keeps herself from quitting is being with children. As she further explains,

> *"Only when I burnout I would do it [quit]. Now I am at the beginning of the road. Only when I come to that point... [Reason not to quit] being with children. I can't makeconnections with them while doing other jobs. Only because of children."*

On the other hand, the most common strategy that is used by all participants was social support. All three participants mentioned that to avoid occupational stress and decrease the number of negative thoughts, they exchange ideas with others, they share their experiences and they take advice from people they trust. In addition to social support, Participant C also mentioned that taking help from the school counsellor and talking with students and parents effectively helped her reduce stress. Also, she shared that she tends to ignore problematic situations to overcome them and she tends to try being cool-headed when it comes to stress at work. She further explains,

> *"I think I ignore these situations. I go on like nothing happens. Also, I am a calm person. I can be cool-headed when stressful things happen. I try to escape lightly. I am communicating with the school counsellor. I remain calm and ask for help. Also, I try to manage things by talking to first students and then parents."*

While Participant C concentrated on social support more and focused on using problem ignoring as a coping mechanism, Participant B urged on being prepared. According to Participant B, being prepared and planning the course programs ahead are the main strategies that prevent occupational stress. Also, Participant B mentioned that she does not experience stress because of the topics she teaches since they are not difficult to cover. On the other hand, Participant A, who experiences burnout symptoms the most

among all participants, said that she uses separating her teacher identity and self-identity as a strategy to reduce stress. As each person has different roles and identities in life, she deliberately tries not to focus solely on her teacher identity. Yet, she is the only participant that "accepts the situation" and continues to work through occupational stress. Participant A describes this as,

> "Okay, I sometimes get very stressed but I remind myself that everyone goes through these and we have different needs in life. I mean I do not have solelyteacher role. I don't have to focus on only one aspect of me. Also, people around me make me relaxed. Talking to people and exchanging ideas makes me relaxed. I mean… I will just learn how to live with these."

3. Discussion and Conclusion

The overall results show that novice teachers that participated in this study experience various stressors related to being inexperienced, students, parents, school administrations, official proceedings, lesson preparation, and examination. Along with these general teacher stressors, participants also experience some stress related to language teaching such as using a second language to communicate with students, preparing more materials, dealing with too many skill areas, not being seen as important as other subjects, and social stigma around language teaching that suggests language teachers can't teach language. According to the results, these stressors affected participants at different levels. While Participant A seems to be affected the most, Participant B seems to be affected the least and Participant C seems to stand in the middle of Participant A and B. Besides the emotional effects of stress such as unwillingness, tiredness, and boredom, Participant A is found to be experiencing burnout symptoms like treating students with coldness, ignoring students, and considering quitting the profession. However, the result of data analysis shows that all of the participants tend to use resilience strategies such as social support, collaborating with other teachers, being prepared, separating teacher identity and self-identity, and accepting the situation rather than experiencing severe burnout symptoms.

Occupational stressors include any possible situation related to teaching that causes stress to teachers (Kyriacou& Sutcliffe, 1978). Therefore, teacher stress is an important topic to explore and discuss since the increase of stress may cause a decrease in the quality of teaching (Maddi &Khoshaba, 2005). The findings of this study show that stressors experienced by novice EFL teachers are compatible with the five dimensions of teacher stress introduced by Boyle et al., (1995): workload, student misbehavior, professional recognition, classroom resources, and poor colleague relations. Yet, participants of the study did not mention anything related to classroom resources. Instead, they added, "school administration" alongside other dimensions. As Boyle et al., (1995) suggested teachers are stressed about the workload including the lesson and material preparation process, student misbehaviors including disruptive students, professional recognition including not being seen as a significant occupation, poor colleague relations including being criticized by others. But the findings show that the most uttered stressor among participants was student misbehavior. In line with the present study, another quantitative research study that was conducted with primary school teachers found that managing student misbehavior and time constraints were the stressors that predicted burnout most (Kokkinos, 2007). Also, in their study, role ambiguity and appraisal of teachers by their students remained insignificant factors similar to the present study. Yet, unlike their study, the present study shows that time pressure is not a relevant stressor among participants. Along with Kokkinos's study, the results of the present study are compatible with another study that investigated occupational stress and teacher resilience in Turkey.

Güler and Ceyhan (2019) found that stress experienced in schools was due to school staff, school environment, student misbehavior, parents, the excessive number of students, and mandatory reassignments. Miscommunication with school staff including the lack of support, parents, and problem behaviors of students were also highlighted by the participants of the present study, however, apart from their study, the school environment and mandatory reassignments are not considered as a stressor in the present study. However, the research study conducted by Eres and Atanasoska (2011) pointed that unlike research studies in different countries, teachers are found to be less stressed in Turkish context; they tend to have a mild level of stress related to school principals, student misbehavior, participating in decisions, professional status. Yet, on the contrary to their research finding, the participant of the present study reflected that the major stress source of being a teacher is student misbehavior, problems with school administration, making important decisions and not being seen important. On the other hand, in terms of being a language teacher, the participants of the study put forward different stressors that are compatible with the literature. It is predicted that language teachers experience stress related to using the second

language and emotional barriers (Garcia, et al., 2005), and the findings show that language teachers do have difficulties communicating using the second language and therefore experience stress. In addition to communication issues, according to findings, language teachers also additionally experience stress due to having too many materials to prepare and handling different skills.

It is seen that participants of this study have different levels of occupational stress. As a self-reported perfectionist, Participant A experiences stress relatively higher than other participants and shows burnout symptoms such as changing attitudes towards students and considering quitting. This was within the realm of possibility as according to Pines (1982) teachers who are idealists and try to do their best are more vulnerable to stress and burnout than other teachers. However, overall results indicate that teachers who participated in this study tend to employ resilience strategies rather than experiencing burnout. The resilience strategies that teachers use are in line with some of the fifteen resilience strategies introduced by Mansfield, Beltman, Broadley, and Weatherby-Fell (2016). Building work-life balance, using problem-solving strategies, communication, and help-seeking are the common strategies that were used among the participants. Also, another study showed that teachers use help-seeking, problem-solving, managing difficult relationships, and seeking rejuvenation/renewal as strategies to become resilient (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010). Similar to this finding, the present study shows that teachers try to seek help by consulting other teachers and school counselors, try to use problem-solving strategies, try to manage difficult relationships with parents or colleagues and try to seek renewal including balancing work and personal life and finding satisfaction in being a teacher. Yet, as one addition, the present study shows feeling prepared reduces stress and is used as a coping strategy as well as other strategies. Overall, this study shows that the stress level of novice EFL teachers and their use of resilience strategies are compatible with other research studies in the literature. Yet, this study provides unique information about language teacher stress, showing some differences from other research studies due to contextual, pedagogic, and personal factors.

This study aimed to investigate the occupational stressors that novice EFL teachers encounter, how these stressors affect them, and whether they tend to use resilience strategies or experience burnout symptoms. In order to explore these, this study employed the quantitative research method and the data was collected through semi-structured interviews from three novice EFL teachers. The data was analyzed by transcribing, coding, and categorizing into themes according to Creswell's (2014) steps to an inductive perspective. The result of data analysis showed that novice EFL teachers experience multiple stressors related to being inexperienced, students, parents, school administrations, official proceedings, lesson preparation, and examination. Also, apart from these, participants experience stressors related to language teaching such as using a second language to communicate with students, preparing more materials, dealing with too many skill areas, not being seen as important as other subjects, and social stigma around language teaching that suggests language teachers can't teach language. In addition, the results showed that participants experience stress at different levels. Participant A, who is self-reported perfectionist, experiences stress at a higher level than other participants while Participant B experiences the least amount of stress, and Participant C seems to remain in between. Therefore, Participant A experiences emotional effects of stress such as tiredness and boredom, and burnout symptoms like treating students with coldness, ignoring students, and considering quitting the profession, whereas Participant C and B tend to use more resilience strategies. The reported strategies used to avoid stressful situations are social support, collaborating with other teachers, being prepared, separating teacher identity and self-identity, and accepting the situation. Overall, this study provides information about novice EFL teachers in Turkey and has compatibility with other research findings as well. However, this study also provides differences from other research studies since it includes different contextual, pedagogic, and personal factors.

4.   Implications and Limitations

Teachers are prone to stress during the first years of their teaching career and, consequently, this affects their quality of teaching. To reduce their stress, novice teachers should be carefully assisted so that they can easily get help. Also, school administrations should play a more supportive role as one of the major stressors is found to be school principals. As for student misbehavior, school counsellors, parents, and school administrators should work hand in hand with teachers, and in this way, novice teachers would not feel alone. In addition to these, resilience strategies are found to be effective to reduce stress; therefore, teacher education should teach explicitly resilience strategies to pre-service teachers, which will

eventually help them avoid stress when they start their careers. Also, as Erdiller and Doğan (2015) mentioned, stress is not considered an individualistic issue anymore. It is seen as an understanding of a culture. Since teaching is a social community and centralized by the Ministry of National Education, teacher stress should be taken as an organizational issue and should be handled within a broader context.

This study explored a small sample of three novice teachers, yet with a broader sample including different contexts, detailed qualitative research can be conducted to determine unique language teacher stressors and teachers' strategies to avoid stress. Also, research can be supported with quantitative data to reach a broad sample and achieve generalizable findings.

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Note on Ethical Issues