

Teacher Well-Being in English Language Teaching: An Ecological Approach

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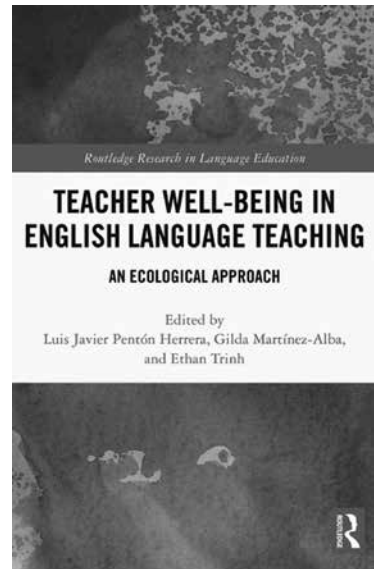
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Recently, there is a growing concern for teachers' well-being in English Language Teaching (ELT) worldwide, especially amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath. Teachers' well-being is highly associated with students' achievements, staff turnover and attrition (Greenier et al., 2021). To address this pressing issue, the editors have responded to Mercer's (2021) call to prioritize teachers' well-being by producing a recent volume that sheds light on factors influencing ELT teachers' well-being in different contexts and corresponding measures from an ecological perspective.

This edited volume comprises an introduction and five parts, totaling 16 chapters. Part I contextualizes teachers' well-being in ELT, discussing its psychological underpinnings in Chapter 1, and unraveling three main influencing factors, namely emotions, work-life balance, services and supports, by reviewing existing research in Chapter 2.

Part II to Part IV are organized according to the ecological systems theory, focusing on the microsystem, mesosystem, and macrosystem respectively. Chapter 3 and 4 demonstrate two autoethnographies respectively, to explore self-care via the interpretation of self-written poetry and the use of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model and Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs. Additionally, Chapter 5 offers reflections on TESOL activists calling for social justice and individual liberation. These three chapters in Part II offer valuable insights into how teachers practice self-care at the micro-level.

Part III analyzes how organizational support influences teachers' well-being at the meso-level. Chapter 6 examines how language teachers' individuality conflicts with institutional specificity as well as impacts on their well-being and identity construction. Chapter 7 deals with the use of appreciative inquiry to promote pre-service teachers' well-being through positive feedback. Nonetheless, a lack of training in teaching survivors of trauma (Chapter 8) and in the challenges posed by the COVID-19 (Chapter 9) can threaten educators' well-being. To improve teachers' well-being, Chapter 10 discusses incorporating well-being into language teacher education and professional development, while Chapter 11 presents the Teachers'



Development Center at SISU as a model for addressing the “Up-or-Out” dilemma in Chinese universities. Part III could have been more logical if these chapters were grouped by their focus on institutional support or lack thereof, instead of being presented in a mixed order.

Part IV (Chapter 12–15) scrutinizes regional education policies that impact teachers’ well-being at the macro-level. Chapter 12 compares the emotion labor of two teacher candidates from the United States and Costa Rica, and the rest three chapters offer strategies employed by the Gulf Region (Chapter 13), Language Teacher Associations (LTAs) like TESOL (Chapter 14), and Palestine (Chapter 15), to promote ELT teachers’ well-being. Illustrating cases in diverse contexts in this way could offer reference for readers worldwide. Finally, concluding with seven thought-provoking questions, Chapter 16 provides guidance for future ecological explorations and encourages more attention and research on language teachers’ well-being.

To sum up, this volume is a timely and compelling work in the field of ELT, despite some minor organizational shortcomings in Part III. By encompassing theoretically and methodologically innovative research in diverse contexts, it brings new perspectives and discussions on critical topics that have been ignored in ELT such as correlation with emotion labor and identity construction. Additionally, in a logical way, it discusses multifarious factors influencing teachers’ well-being at personal, institutional, and societal levels from Part II to Part IV. As such, this book serves as a valuable source of insights for researchers, educational authorities, and graduates interested in the field of ELT.

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