

## Stress and Resilience: an Interview Study of Special School Teacher in Teaching English

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### Abstract

This research focused on students' speaking problems in English and the purpose of this research is to know problems happening in speaking especially when they are presented by the second semester of STKIP Nurul Huda Sukarja's English Education Program in their speaking presentations. This research used the descriptive method. The author uses observation, questionnaires, and interviews as a data collection tool. From the results of the questionnaire, psychological problems are most often problems experienced by the second semester English Education Program of STKIP Nurul Huda Sukarja with a mean of 72,73% who had a problem in vocabulary, 54,55% who have problems in grammar, 60,61% who had problems in pronunciation, 72,73% who fear of making mistake, and 57,58% who have problems in lack of confidence. In conclusion, linguistics and psychological problems are a problem that experienced by the second semester of the English Education Program of STKIP Nurul Huda Sukarja.

**Keywords:** speaking problems, linguistics problem, psychological problems

### INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a profession that requires teachers not only to educate their students but also to improve their attributes which cover intellectual dimensions, skills, and knowledge (Patrinis, 2013). Teachers will learn teaching skills to realize the importance of qualified teachers in society. The studies by (Muhibbin, 1997) describe a teacher's capacity as a teacher's ability to exercise responsibility adequately. This quote indicates that teaching skills are a task-based capacity to do a job. The National Education Ministry number 045/U/2002 has supported that a teacher belongs to a teacher to provide instructional skills as a unit of responsible actions. Teacher competency standards include: (1) the selection of methods suitable for evaluation objectives in a skilled way; (2) the development of evaluation methods suited for evaluation purposes; (3) the competent handling and interpretation of the evaluation results; and (4) the ability to use evaluation results to make decisions concerning individual students; planning lessons. Evaluation standards (5) establish successful evaluation procedures skilfully, (6) provide students, parents, also other education staff. with competent communication of evaluation results and (7) accept appraisal methods and evaluate their appropriacy for useful reporting of information (Buros, 1990). In Indonesia Law No. 14, 2005, all of these things apply to teach that "competitors are intellectual abilities and roles that are part of teaching and teaching in their jobs". This Law, particularly in the first part of Chapter 14 and section 8, which legally defines the professor's competence, says: "Every teacher must be trained, qualified and certified by a professor, healthy and able to achieve the aim of national education". In addition, it is specifically noted in Chapter 10 that teaching expertise is intended as pedagogical skill, personal expertise, social competence, and the skills acquired by vocational training. However, teachers are required to always be professional in teaching, although sometimes the teacher has problems both personal and external problems, the teacher must still be professional in teaching.

In practice, the teacher must teach 10 hours every day, but it is not finished, other things must be done by the teacher such as making lesson plans, making exercises for

students, evaluating their performance, and even becoming a facilitator for parents of students. Parents may ask the teachers to investigate the progress and make about the teaching of their children in some situations. Wong et al (2017) investigated the consequences of teacher stress and the associated burnouts in teacher behaviors, teacher stress influenced teaching quality. The management of workloads influenced teaching intentions and expected emotional weight loss and that they showed a link between job engagement and stress (Betini et al, 2017). Therefore, it is difficult to imagine that teachers' jobs will not only be psychologically but physically drained, and it can make teachers stress.

Teachers sometimes also get pressures which become their burden. Several studies (Travers and Cooper, 1996) found the dominant factors contributing to the pressure of educators, such as disruptive students, incorporated parents, poor working conditions (labor and pay), and working partnerships (with students, associates, and principal) or overlapping positions and confusion of responsibilities. A relevant finding from a survey carried out by Musavi (2007) shows that 87.6 percent of non-native teachers agree that their pressure was mainly caused by poor language skills.

Besides that, Bettini et al (2017) said that special teachers feel fatigued and have great stress on their job, which also affects their quality of work. The studies of workload and career management show that teachers are more likely to focus on continuing education when their workloads are seen to be manageable (Albrecht et al, 2009; Bettini et al, 2017). When teachers find workloads less manageable and more challenging, they have a greater chance of leaving and feeling emotional exhaustion because they feel that they have lost their strength and that they can't give themselves emotionally again (Maslach and Jackson, 1981:99).

Even though teachers are often stressed, and have a lot of pressure when they teach their students, they persist in teaching, in addition to burnout is a robust comporment when someone is in constant contact with pressure. After going through difficult times in one's educational career, Resilience can be described as a bumping back strength (Dowerkin, 2009). The durability of teachers is also regarded as an uncertain system that changes over time (Gu and Day, 2013). Gu and Day investigated ways in which resilient teachers can maintain a feeling of balance against pressure and stress, the advice also showed that the strength of helping schools is not innate and can be encouraged.

While resistance to teachers has shown an increasing trend, there is little knowledge as to how EFL teachers who teach in regular education can resolve their time of emotional drainage. Ainur (2017) stated that the teacher also seemed very optimistic, as inspired by people around her, for example, her students. The results may allow a better understanding of whether the negative effects of stress can be minimized through the promotion, particularly in the Indonesian teaching context, of key elements of resilience. Therefore, this article is intended to explore those aspects, especially those who work in Indonesia, that enable durable teachers to overcome the exhaustion of their profession and commit themselves to work for a long time. To concluded the research, Ainur recommended further study was followed up by several key findings.

Comparing to Ainur's research, (Edward et al, 2017) stated that special educators in their positions reported tension. This stress could be due to increased workloads, different tasks, motivation to accomplish goals, actions of students, and questions about the performance of their positions. The results generally show that specialist educators experience stress in the workplace that affects their quality of work. In stress management,

most professional educators use adaptive techniques to minimize it.

In research conducted by Ainur and Edward, some EFL teachers who teach in general schools also special teachers experience stress caused by internal and external factors. In this research, the researcher wants to do the same thing as the Ainur and Edward research. Edward has researched about work on tension in the education of special needs children only and Ainur researched EFL teachers' stress and resilience in teaching, but the researcher examines not the EFL teacher. The researcher examined special school teachers who taught English to special need students. The researcher examined it because, in reality, teachers who teach normal students have several constraints that make them stress, it also happened teachers who teach students with special needs, of course, those teachers are more stressed than teachers who teach normal students. The researcher also wants to know what makes the teacher resilience to teach students with special needs.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The method of study the writer used descriptive research method. Jackson (2008, p.98) used descriptive research methods to observe behavior. Observations involving the most basic level of description. Through this kind of descriptive research, it is hoped that students' oral problems related to linguistics and psychological problems can be found. This means that qualitative and descriptive research can be done through observation, questionnaires, interviews. In this research, the population is the second-semester students of the English Education Program of STKIP Nurul Huda Sukaraja in the academic year 2019/2020.

According to Arikunto (2006: 134) when the subject is less than 100, it is better to select all the subjects. However, if the number is too large, the subject can be between 10-15% or 20-25% or more. According to the theory, the author removed all subjects because there were fewer than 100 subjects and up to 35 students. In this study, there is only one variable. The variable is the student's oral problems

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This research is a case study involved by one of the special school teachers who taught English. Time and assets constraints stopped me, as recommended by Dornyei (2013) from achieving the optimal number of people (6 to 10). The analysis also presents a comprehensive summary of the participant's stress and resilience, contributing to a better understanding of both frameworks. To establish that participants could be included in the sample, the researcher also defined a strict limit or requirements. It is important to account for the small size of the study participant. The study's selection depended on the following criteria, In the first place, the participant has to be "risk-related" to emotional exhaustion, commitment drop, and burnout in stressful circumstances (Dornyei, 2013). Furthermore, as suggested by Kriyacou (2001) teachers should have five to ten years' training expertise.

This teacher is a special school teacher who handled mentally disabled students in class VII-IX. She started teaching in 2009 up to now at Special School 2 Yogyakarta. The data collection in this study was done through a semi-structured interview. The benefit of this approach is that the interviewer has structured instructions, even if interesting questions emerge during the discussion can be skewed from this guide. The interview is especially relevant if the researcher knows the context and the phenomenon and "does not want to use categories of ready-made reply that limit the depth and breadth of the respondent's history,"

stated (Duernyei, 2007). The researcher has updated the Howard and Johnson (2004) interview guide for a similar study in Australia to achieve the goals of the report and it consisted of three main parts. In the first section, the participants' data were addressed while in the second section, they discussed the source of stress. In the last section, the participant was asked questions about how she manages pressure.

The interviewer also allowed her to express her final comment before leaving the discussion in anticipation of additional information that the respondent wanted to share. In the sense of data analysis, the interview was also specifically informed that her actual name would not be used to guarantee her privacy during the whole of the study. The researcher was eventually allowed to use Indonesian to make the participant feel as comfortable as possible. Since the primary information was audio, it must first be translated into written data by transcription. I subsequently adapted it to the (Creswell, 2012) suggested coding system. The first step was to read the raw text, which consists of many pages. Furthermore, the texts are split into minor sections so that important details on the subject could be defined and emphasized. The researcher has subsequently allocated codes to the points that the researcher underlined, which should be the first label. The next move involved defining and classifying identical and redundant codes in fewer languages. Eventually, the codes were further reduced to establish wider classes, called topics.

## Result

This paragraph presents the findings of the two research questions relating to stress factors and the key to the resilience of the educator. Because of relevant literature, it also addresses the findings. To order to provide information on the results, some of the statements made by the teacher in this interview are quoted literally.

### The Condition of Students

Sosnowsky (2002) has indicated that SE (Special Education) teachers who work with children with emotive disorders and conduct problems have a higher level of stress than those who work with learning disabled, various disabilities, and intellectual disabilities. The results of the current study appear to show this phenomenon, in particular special student conditions.

Nuri said that one of the stress factors is her students' condition:

"I teach the students who have mentally disabled, so the material must be repeated, you can imagine the condition of that students and I should teach English, You know, teaching English to normal children is very difficult to let alone teaching children with special needs like this. Hmmm, I am also stressed because of the conditions of students. I teach mentally disabled students who are slow in accepting learning. Hmmm, but what makes me stress is because of the new curriculum rather than the condition of the students whom I teach".

All of that can lead to harm to mental well-being and even physical health from reading so many papers. If this negative climate is long-lasting, the long-term dedication to education may be affected. In some cases, former students have frequently reported mental illness, frustration with jobs, or teacher burnouts including mental disease, work frustration, or teacher burnout in more extreme cases (Travers and Cooper, 1996; Macdonald, 1999). Moreover, the lesser absenteeism of the instructor could also have a milder effect (Travers and Cooper, 1996). For example, Indonesia is ranked 6th in absenteeism rates in the latest Transparency

International report Patrons (2013). Yes, it is not easy to get a job particularly as a state teacher in a developing country like Indonesia. Therefore, once they have been teachers of the state they might not think they should resign. The teacher also still goes to school anyway, even though they don't need to go to school.

Surprisingly enough, Nuri didn't perceive language skills as a stressful element. Nonetheless, I thought that a teacher who speaks non-native English would be more likely to stress due to a lack of linguistic ability or a lack of confidence. The majority of which reported participants complaining of this issue. The probability is that all MA students who studied at the United Kingdom Universities participated in Mousavi. Such teachers would thus be more conscious of the language skills of these students and equate their ability to their mother-tongues. In the meantime, the studying participant has little contact with English speakers and communicates only in English with their language-lower students (Mousavi, 2007).

Eventually, it was pointed out that the stress of Nuri stemmed primarily from the curriculum that left her with uncertainty and stakes of other plays rather than her student's condition who have low memory. She spoke of the incoherence in the curriculum and the futile work she had to do because of this amendment. While she often focused on their students and her housewife status, these issues did not seem to concern her so much as she modified her curriculum.

### **Main Resilience Aspects**

In the light of the circumstances, this study unveils three main topics that will enable the study participant to resist and survive under high pressures. Several key aspects of the interview are the institutional assistance, family support, possible character, and background of her studies. Though this study does not seem to be easy to connect between these factors and the main sources of teacher stress, Nuri still has an important role to play to avoid her helplessness. They helped lower Nuri's level of stress to prevent her accumulation of stress. For example, being part of an association between students and teachers helped Nuri to meet the one student who made her mood better. But instead of dwelling on the tension that the curriculum adjustment and the classroom load caused, the teacher could gain from cultivating these positive aspects.

### **Institutional Assistance**

Although certain studies show that there is a deficit in social support (Farrell, 2008; Hayes, 2008). Jones, et al (2013) said that special education teachers who will join a part of a larger teachers' professional community, maybe can make them persist in teaching and minimize stress. Nuri is lucky to be successful in her teaching career. In particular, it emphasizes the importance of teacher training that is initiated in certain districts either by developing and empowering kindergarten education and special education (PNBP). She remarks:

"By the fact that we can, among other things, ask questions together for the test (examination), this may minimize our burden by sharing some new knowledge of education and also new knowledge of a, for the material".

The PNB is a teachers' union, which is responsible for developing and improving education and special education for children, the members of which are classified following the subjects they teach. The organization's conference usually takes place about twice a year. It

is good because it can meet new scholars and connoisseurs and thus improve the drive for teaching, Nuri said. Additionally, this provides an opportunity for her to exchange ideas with her teachers.

For example indicates that, as part of this experience, the "teachers in planning and development work will be supported and may also increase satisfaction in the workplace, reduce stress and increase motivation." This experience is primarily demonstrated in previous studies. In addition, educational programs may also include training to reduce stress, not necessarily to develop professional skills.

### Family Support

The capacity in family support to assist Nuri is another interesting story of Nuri's career, she said:

"I often get support from my family, especially my husband who always advises me so that I am more patient and diligent in carrying out my obligation to teach children who are mentally disabled".

She noted that when she managed the difficult moments of her psychological history, she was supported by her mother. The following excerpt tells us that it is important to establish good ties with her mother. This does not only improve their professional skills, her inspiration allows her to develop psychological aspects.

"If I have some difficulties in this part of my teaching, then my mom always supports me in every single one let me tell so that my mom can, can inspire me, all right, can read this".

However, the findings of similar studies for example Howard and Johnson (2004) tend to be confirmed by this finding in the past. We note that strong social support from the family is a key element of teacher resilience. Strong support appears to help build a less stressful working environment. As a result, the teacher will benefit optimally from the surrounding people. In addition, the participation of speakers may mean that teachers receive immediate help in the problems they face. This is especially helpful since a build-up of stress can sometimes lead to an exploration that could harm Nuri's subjective well-being within the context of the analysis. This is particularly beneficial.

### Positive Character

The character of Nuri can not be taken for granted in terms of her work. The results show Nuri has a strong positive feeling. She acknowledged that her students were quite open to what they heard during the lecture. Because Nuri teaches a mentally disabled person who has a long time in memory, Nuri often tries to use certain media to make the environment of the classroom more comfortable, such as singing a song or showing videos so that his students relax and are not unable to learn. It is hoped that these media students will easily recall lessons.

"I will build my imagination if I just do, so I must be more imaginative, as I should put in singing, watching movies, just to inspire them if not, or else it is boring and depressing".

The result has shown that Nuri's experience has an understanding, of the principle of "width and building" (Fedrickson, 2004:1369) suggests that positive emotions allow the

instructor to "expand the momentary repertoires of thinking and behavior, extending the range of thoughts and activities in mind". Therefore, Nuri is not shocked to be able to "energize" her students using more alternatives. She is not trapped in a rigid program, and she can employ less dangerous activities like watching a movie with the students when appropriate. However, this positive emotion has established a shared bond between her and the students. As the classroom has come to life, she will learn from feeling her students' positive emotions. In short, it acts as a way to restore inspiration and to take pleasure from its teaching to maintain its long-standing dedication.

The important aspect of the story is the fact that the personality of Nuri had a significant influence on her. Her educational family unwittingly formed a seed of love for her teaching profession, for example.

"I'm a teacher too in my family, my parents teach, my sister teaches too, so let's say, I'm a teacher with plenty of passion and I like to teach students. And because my experience in education is a special educator, so I have to teach with all my heart because it has become my duty".

A feeling of love in her work and students is a key part of Nuri's positive emotion. It can increase her stress particularly when she works under disadvantaged circumstances. She has been made compassionate by her love of teaching and students and can understand the shortcomings of students. And, when its students fail to reach the goal, it isn't easily upset. In reality, she also plays a complementary role and becomes a parent of her students and loves them, and expresses concern about their prospects.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it is apparent that the curriculum adjustments are viewed as the key source of stress instead of the condition of students. The polemics about the program seem to have not been resolved yet in the case of the special school teacher in Indonesia. Fortunately, the instructor maintains her teaching happiness with several internal and external aspects. The key characteristics of its longevity are a welcoming body, a social network, and strong positive emotions as their power. The hope is that this article will have several benefits, especially for the other teaching sites that share similar issues in this report. Nonetheless, it should be noted that in this analysis the single case could not reflect the entire Indonesian teacher's population. The results of this study therefore merely serve as a starting point and a wider project should be undertaken in the future about special teacher's pressures and efforts to improve their resilience.

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