Proposing A New Conceptual Model for Mentoring Veteran ELT Teachers

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Abstract

While mentoring programs in English Language Teaching (ELT) often focus on novice teachers, veteran ELT teachers—those with extensive classroom experience—also require structured support to maintain teaching motivation and continuous professional development. This paper proposes a conceptual mentoring model, diverging from novice-centered frameworks, designed to address the specific challenges faced by veteran ELT teachers. Rooted in Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Teacher Burnout and Resilience Theory, and Communities of Practice (CoP), the model comprises four core components: tailored mentoring to address individualized career and pedagogical needs; burnout prevention through wellbeing initiatives; motivation strategies including recognition, leadership opportunities, and professional development; and peer collaboration to grapple with professional isolation and foster knowledge-sharing. By emphasizing autonomy, competence, and relatedness, this conceptual framework offers a structured yet flexible mentoring approach to veteran ELT teachers, which enhances job satisfaction, teaching effectiveness, and retention among them. Actionable implications for schools, language centers, and universities are discussed, and institutional policies that adopt veteran ELT teachers' mentorship, reduce workloads, and encourage collaborative professional growth are advocated. This work bridges a critical gap in teacher development literature, redefining mentorship as a lifelong process rather than a novice-focused intervention.

Keywords: conceptual framework; mentoring; professional growth; teacher development; veteran ELT teachers

1. Introduction

Since the 1980s, mentoring has become a key part of induction programs for novice English language teaching (ELT) teachers. A substantial body of research has examined and documented the benefits of mentoring for novice ELT teachers, including fostering a sense of belonging, boosting confidence and self-esteem, promoting professional growth, enhancing class management, and improving problem-solving abilities (Kaufman & Moss, 2010). Despite the extensive literature on the benefits of mentoring novice ELT teachers, there is limited research on the effectiveness of mentoring for veteran ELT teachers—those with extensive

classroom experience—who continue to face evolving challenges, particularly in adapting to rapid technological advancements such as artificial intelligence. Like their novice counterparts, veteran ELT teachers need continuous professional development to update their teaching practices and stay relevant and motivated in the field.

Current mentoring models, including co-learning (Adams, 2012), professional partnership (Ragins, 2011), the lead teacher model (Murphy, 2012), and reverse mentoring (Kato, 2019), primarily focus on novice ELT teachers, addressing their needs and sustaining their professional development. This emphasis stems from the assumption that experienced ELT teachers no longer need professional support and could be self-sufficient (Hobson & Maxwell, 2020). However, veteran ELT teachers face unique challenges, including adapting to the ongoing pedagogical change (James & McCormick, 2019) and technological advancements such as artificial intelligence (Nash et al., 2023).

To this day, there is still a dearth of research on how mentoring could support veteran ELT teachers, maintaining their motivation and lowering their burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2016), thus improving teacher retention (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). This paper will propose a new conceptual model for mentoring veteran ELT teachers, with a focus on their motivation and continuous professional development. This study seeks to answer the following key questions:

1. How can mentoring improve the motivation of veteran ELT teachers?
2. In what ways can mentoring assist veteran ELT teachers in their continuous professional growth?
3. What mentoring approaches are best suited to address the unique needs of veteran ELT teachers?

By answering those questions, this paper aims to contribute to the continuous professional development of ELT teachers both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study expands the discourse on mentoring to include veteran ELT teachers, a much under-research subject area. Practically, this paper provides a conceptual framework for policy makers in the school setting, language centers, and universities to possibly consider and adopt to aid veteran ELT teachers' development, thus improving their teaching effectiveness and retention. Veteran ELT teachers are indispensable, and they have unique professional needs compared to novice teachers (Gama Fagundes, 2022). Mentoring has proven to be an effective tool for educating teachers and assisting them in growing professionally. Considering this, it is crucial to devise a mentoring model tailoring for the specific professional needs of veteran ELT teachers. This paper will first review the literature concerning mentoring in ELT, ELT teachers' motivation, mentoring for veteran ELT teachers' needs, and the existing mentoring models for veteran ELT teachers. Then, a new conceptual model for mentoring veteran ELT teachers will be proposed, followed by a discussion of the possible implications and limitations of the model.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to Mentoring in ELT

Although there is no agreed-upon definition of mentoring, it can be broadly described as a form of interpersonal relationship between mentors and mentees, which often takes the form of a senior teaching faculty assisting a junior or less experienced novice teacher (Rao, 2019). Though often viewed as an informal approach to teacher education (El Deen, 2023), mentoring has been widely acknowledged as a significant component of teaching and teacher professional development (PD) (El Deen, 2023; Rao, 2019; Aliaga-Salas, 2018; Banegas, 2022; Bao, 2021; Chan, 2020; Grassinger et al., 2010; Griffiths et al., 2020; Hobson et al., 2016; Lasater et al., 2021; Mullen, 2021).

Mentoring has been proven especially beneficial for novice English language teaching (ELT) teachers, as it assists them in resolving instructional difficulties and bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical classroom applications (T.R & L.U, 2009). Furthermore, mentoring can ease the transition of novice teachers, boosting their confidence, especially when they feel unprepared and inadequate for teaching (Wyatt & Dikilita, 2022). Despite the overwhelming focus on novice ELT teachers, little is known about how mentoring can support veteran ELT teachers in sustaining their professional growth, motivation, and adaptability in an evolving educational landscape (Perez Berbain e al., 2023).

2.2 ELT Teacher Motivation

A substantial body of research investigates the motivation of students and teachers in general; however, few studies have been done to explore factors impacting the motivation of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers (Kassabgy et al., 2001). Motivation plays a significant role in multiple aspects, including teaching quality, student learning outcomes, teacher retention, job satisfaction, and overall wellbeing (Ipek & Kanatlar, 2018). ELT teachers are expected to foster student motivation, a task that becomes challenging if they themselves experience professional demotivation (Bernaus et al., 2009). Motivation is generally categorized into two types: intrinsic motivation, which is powered by personal interest and enjoyment, and extrinsic motivation, which is influenced by external rewards or consequences (Ryan & Deci, 2000). A variety of factors influence intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Ipek & Kanatlar, 2018) , including: (for intrinsic motivation) feedback, communication, and rewards, and (for extrinsic motivation) professional development, collegial relations, cooperative relations and reactions, stress levels, and workloads.

Despite the similarities between ELT and other teaching contexts, Pennington (1995) indicates motivation in ELT cannot be over-generalized from other contexts. Oga-Baldwin and Praver (2007) discover that language teachers are prone to be influenced by intrinsic factors and are more likely to suffer from a lack of motivation. They also identify factors that could play a role in language teachers' motivation, which include autonomy, self-realization, positive feedback, and workloads (Oag-Baldwin & Praver, 2007). Additionally, Ipek and Kanatlar (2018) demonstrate another demotivating factor for language teachers: the workload, which might have resulted in potential teacher burnout, thus further lowering language teachers' motivation. While multiple studies have examined the effectiveness of mentoring on supporting novice language teachers and improving their motivation (Arora, 2016; Albakri et al., 2021; Sepiani et al., 2019; Daresh & Miller, 2003; Dikilitas et al., 2018; Hobson et al., 2009; Mann & Tang, 2012; Vikaraman et al., 2017), little research has explored how mentoring can sustain veteran ELT teachers' motivation and promote their professional development.

2.3 Veteran ELT Teachers' Needs

Veteran teachers are often defined as educators with more than five years of teaching experience, differentiating them from novice teachers (Gama Fagundes, 2022). While novice teachers may struggle with foundational pedagogical knowledge and systematic approaches to teaching, veteran teachers typically exhibit greater authority, deeper professional insights, and intuitive problem-solving abilities (Dreyfus et al., 1987). However, being experienced does not negate the need for continuous learning and growth. Teachers, in order to stay effective and relevant, need to continue learning, improving, growing, and transforming (Steffy & Wolfe, 2001). Professional development (PD) is constantly needed, which boosts teaching motivation. Despite this, veteran teachers often face unique challenges related to PD.

Veteran teachers, having accumulated years of experience, may develop a strong professional identity, which can sometimes influence their receptiveness to new learning opportunities

(Brody & Hadar, 2015). Another factor that hinders veteran teachers from fully embracing change is their fear of exposing weaknesses (TNTP, 2015) and losing their expertise and autonomy (Jacobs et al., 2018). Also, a veteran teacher's deep-rooted beliefs about change hinder them from changing. Factors including stress, inadequate and inappropriate training, and work relationships impact teacher retention (Howard & Johnson, 2004). Veteran teachers are invaluable resources to students, novice teachers, and schools. To improve veteran teacher retention, their unique needs should be addressed. Powell and Bodur (2019) conducted a comprehensive study investigating veteran teachers' unique needs. The study showed that professional development schemes should be customized to meet individual veteran teacher's needs, relevant to their teaching, and cooperative and collaborative in nature.

In the ELT context, these needs become even more pronounced due to rapid changes in language teaching methodologies, technological integrations, and the increasing diversity of learner needs. James and McCormick (2009) argue that the learning of experienced teachers is especially needed when teachers are confronted with innovations in educational practices. The study by Vermunt and Endedijk (2011) notes that many teachers struggle with implementing new instructional strategies and lack clarity on how to adapt their learning approaches.

The world is constantly changing, and so is the ELT teaching profession. Artificial Intelligence has transformed the teaching landscape drastically, forcing ELT teachers to not only update their repertoire of teaching methods but also change their way and platform of teaching (Nash et al., 2023). Many veteran ELT teachers who are accustomed to traditional in-person classroom teaching confront tremendous difficulty in adjusting to the sudden change of teaching venue or platform and its corresponding way of teaching, leaving them feeling powerless in front of the change and causing the potential decline of their teaching quality, which might indirectly influence the learning outcomes of students. Good quality teaching is defined as instruction that leads to effective learning of students (Felder & Brent, 1999). Mentoring is a way of supporting and orienting the work of others (Daresh & Miller, 2003). According to Burns and Richards (2009), mentoring is one-on-one, workplace-based, and offers personally appropriate support for the mentee. Through mentorship, mentors and mentees will form a close relationship professionally and personally. The mentoring model could help address veteran teachers' unique PD needs. However, a clear research gap does exist: though an extensive body of literature has been associated with mentoring novice teachers, there is a clear scarcity of studies on how mentoring could aid veteran teachers' PD, let alone ELT veterans.

2.4 Mentoring for Veteran ELT Teachers

Though extensive literature has dealt with the positive effects of mentoring on novice language teachers, several studies have been conducted to investigate the potential positive effects of mentoring on mentors (in-service experienced teachers). Lopez-Real and Kwan (2005) reported that mentors improve their teaching qualities through mentoring. Also, multiple studies demonstrate that mentoring provides mentors with the opportunity to renew their teaching, improve their self-esteem, and feel validated, thus enhancing their satisfaction (Odell, 1989; Steffy et al., 1999; Wollman-Bonilla, 1997). Though these studies report the positive influence of mentoring on mentors (in-service veteran teachers) in the language teaching profession, those results are the by-product of mentoring novice teachers.

Adams (2012) lists three key mentoring models:

4. Co-learning: both mentors and mentees play the role of reflective practitioners, fostering mutual growth.
5. Professional partnership: two experienced teachers collaborate, sharing insights and engaging in deep professional dialogues.
6. Lead teacher model: a group of teachers works collaboratively, guiding one another through shared expertise and mentorship.

On top of that, Ragins (2011) demonstrates that relational mentoring could motivate interdependence and mutual growth in the context of business. Last, Kato (2019) and Murphy (2012) raise reverse mentoring and explore its benefits. Reverse mentoring is considered an innovative approach to mentoring, originating from information-technology-related industries in the United States (Kato, 2019). In reverse mentoring, a junior or less experienced person functions as the mentor, helping the more experienced one to navigate the latest technologies (Kato, 2019).

Murphy (2012) investigates how reverse mentoring could potentially benefit junior mentors and senior mentees, including leadership development, organizational knowledge, personal learning for the mentors, and relational learning and the expansion of social capital for the mentees. However, the context of Murphy's study (2012) is in the business.

In 2019, Kato presented a qualitative study to examine the effect of reverse mentoring in an educational context. Her study reported four major results: raised awareness for the junior mentors, practical knowledge and skills for junior mentors, increased concern for junior mentors while enjoyment for senior mentees, and mutual learning. Kato's 2019 study mainly concentrated on mentor education, especially for juniors. While reverse mentoring empowers novices, this framework uniquely leverages veterans 'expertise while addressing their distinct vulnerability to burnout—a gap in co-learning scholarship. No studies focus solely on how mentoring could positively benefit veteran ELT teachers.

Though a plethora of existing literature investigated the benefits of mentoring for novice language teachers and, to a lesser extent, for mentors, these investigations primarily focus on possible positive (negative) effects of mentorship on novice language teachers and their professional development (Odell, 1989; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005; Kato, 2019). Models such as co-learning, professional partnerships, and reverse mentoring have demonstrated potential mutual growth, but their contexts are outside ELT, and their applications revolve around junior educators (Adams, 2012; Murphy, 2012; Ragins, 2011; Kato, 2019). Furthermore, studies that do center on experienced teachers often overlook the unique challenges faced by veteran ELT professionals, such as maintaining motivation, reducing burnout, adapting to the constantly evolving pedagogical trend filled with teaching technologies, and sustaining overall professional wellbeing. There is a clear scarcity of research on how mentoring could be designed and implemented to support continuous professional growth, motivation, and wellbeing and reduce burnout among veteran ELT teachers.

This gap highlights the need for a mentoring model that goes beyond the traditional frameworks to address the specific needs of ELT veterans. The present study aims to bridge this gap by proposing a conceptual model that focuses primarily on improving professional motivation and reducing the burnout of experienced ELT teachers.

3. The Conceptual Model for Mentoring Veteran ELT Teachers

3.1 Introduction to the Model

This paper proposes a structured yet flexible mentoring framework tailored to the unique professional and emotional needs of veteran ELT teachers. Unlike traditional mentoring programs that focus on novice ELT teachers, this structured yet flexible conceptual approach addresses the continuous professional and emotional support required by veteran ELT teachers. This conceptual mentoring model seeks to sustain their teaching motivation, enhance effectiveness, reduce burnout, and facilitate ongoing professional growth. By directly targeting these needs, it aims to provide targeted mentoring that directly addresses veteran ELT teachers' needs.

Most ELT mentoring models focus on helping novice ELT teachers transition into the profession through building pedagogical skills, navigating institutional policies, and improving classroom management. However, veteran ELT teachers face different challenges compared to novice teachers, including teacher burnout, declining motivation, and possible professional isolation. Without a tailored mentoring framework, those challenges can result in veteran ELT teacher disengagement and even attrition. As mentioned, challenges faced by veteran ELT teachers are distinct from novices. They benefit more from a mentoring model that prioritizes motivation, professional fulfillment, and overall wellbeing. Their unique needs require a more personalized and flexible approach to mentoring. This model is designed for real-world educational settings, including schools, language centers, and universities, where veteran ELT teachers may struggle with burnout and low motivation. This theoretical framework aims to create a mentoring structure that promotes veteran ELT teachers' professional engagement and fulfillment.
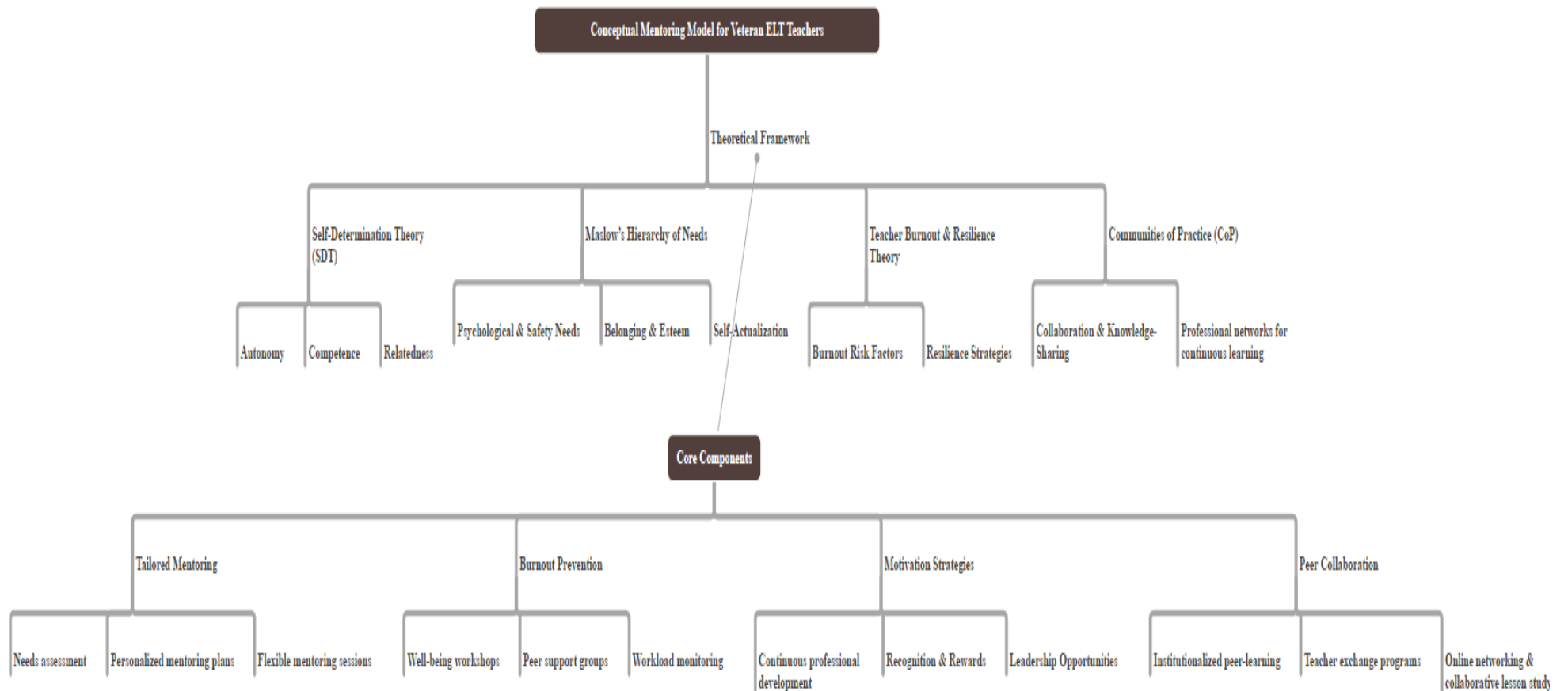
Figure 1. Conceptual Mentoring Model for Veteran ELT Teachers

3.2 Theoretical Framework for the Model

3.2.1 Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a motivational theory, emphasizing three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness, all of which play vital roles in promoting intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2017). Drawing from SDT, this conceptual mentoring model aims to support veteran ELT teachers by enhancing their autonomy through tailored mentoring, strengthening their competence via skill development and fostering relatedness by means of peer collaboration.

3.2.2 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a psychological theory that groups human motivation into five levels: psychological needs., safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Fabella, 2023). This framework has been widely applied in educational settings (McLeod, 2023). For veteran ELT teachers, meeting fundamental psychological and professional needs is a requisite for continuous professional growth and engagement. The conceptual mentoring model incorporates tailored support and peer collaboration to ensure that veteran ELT teachers feel emotionally supported and that their unique needs are effectively addressed.

3.2.3 Teacher Burnout and Resilience Theory

Teacher burnout is a gradual response to prolonged work-related difficulties, including emotional fatigue, depersonalization, and reduced personal achievement (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Educators face a particularly high risk of burnout, which is a major cause of teacher attrition (Gallant & Riley, 2014). Resilience, on the other hand, enables teachers to adapt to and manage professional challenges, thereby improving well-being (Wang et al., 2022). This conceptual mentoring model for veteran ELT teachers contains resilience-building strategies such as one-on-one consultations, stress management workshops, and peer support groups to help veteran ELT teachers cope with burnout, enhance resilience, and sustain motivation.

3.2.4 Communities of Practice

Communities of Practice (CoPs) refer to groups of people regularly interacting with each other to develop shared practice, resolve problems collaboratively, create new ideas, and learn from each other (Pyrko et al., 2017). Establishing such collaborative networks enables teachers to exchange knowledge and maintain motivation. This mentoring model encourages peer collaboration to foster a strong support network among veteran ELT teachers, reinforcing both professional engagement and wellbeing.

3.3 Core Components of the Model

3.3.1 Tailored Mentoring

Defined as educators who have been teaching for more than five years (Gama Fagundes, 2022), veteran ELT teachers have various professional backgrounds and needs. Effective mentoring for these experienced ELT teachers should be adaptive and differentiated, which ensures that support satisfies each teacher's unique professional needs including career stage, teaching context, and personal and professional challenges. Without tailored mentoring, veteran ELT teachers may risk stagnation, disengagement, and even attrition (Avalos, 2011; Hobson & Maxwell, 2020).

A structured needs assessment should be conducted early in the mentoring process, building in surveys, one-on-one interviews, and, when applicable, classroom observations to identify individual goals and challenges (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2009). Based on these findings, mentors and mentees co-devise individualized mentoring plans. Career-oriented mentoring could involve guidance on leadership roles, curriculum development, and professional networking, while emotional well-being mentoring integrates mindfulness-based techniques to help veteran ELT teachers manage stress (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Pedagogical mentoring, in contrast, introduces mentees to the latest methodologies through classroom observation, demonstration lessons, or resource sharing. Mentoring sessions could be biweekly or monthly, alternating between one-on-one meetings and collaborative discussions. This structure stimulates deeper engagement and supports autonomy, competence and relatedness—key components of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2017). By ensuring that mentoring is both structured and flexible, this model empowers veteran ELT teachers to maintain professional motivation and growth.

3.3.2 Burnout Prevention

Burnout is a pressing issue among veteran ELT teachers, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Workload stress, institutional constraints, and lack of professional appreciation amplify burnout, negatively impacting veteran ELT teachers' job performance and mental well-being (Ding et al., 2024). If unresolved, burnout leads to lower career satisfaction, reduced teaching effectiveness, and increased teacher attrition (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Burnout prevention strategies should combine individual resilience-building techniques with institutional support schemes.

This model incorporates structured well-being workshops, peer support groups, and workload monitoring plans. Institutions should organize quarterly wellbeing workshops which focus on mindfulness, stress management, and emotional resilience-building techniques (Schussler et al., 2016). These sessions provide teachers practical strategies such as guided meditation, cognitive reappraisal, and time-management tools. Furthermore, peer support groups offer safe spaces where teachers can share their challenges and coping mechanisms (Hakanen et al., 2006). Regular workload monitoring guarantees that teachers are not overburdened. Mentors conduct monthly check-ins to assess their mentees' stress levels and recommend adjustments in collaboration with school administrators. By embedding these strategies within Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Fabella, 2023) and Teacher Burnout and Resilience Theory (Wang et al., 2022), this model guards veteran ELT teachers' psychological wellbeing, professional engagement, and job satisfaction.

3.3.3 Motivation Strategies

As time passes, veteran ELT teachers may experience a decline in motivation, leading to disengagement and reduced job satisfaction (Özkan, 2013; Dörnyei, 2001). Multiple factors, including limited intellectual stimulation, autonomy, and lack of recognition influence motivation. Without intervention, these factors can diminish veteran ELT teachers' teaching enthusiasm, making it vital to incorporate long-term motivation strategies.

Continuous professional development (CPD) and conference engagement are key motivation strategies. Institutions should offer funding for veteran ELT teachers to participate in national and international conferences, attend academic workshops, and engage in collaborative research projects (Borg, 2010). Exposure to new research and teaching methodologies keeps teachers intellectually stimulated and professionally relevant. Additionally, recognition and reward systems play a significant role in maintaining motivation. Institutions can implement

monthly teacher appreciation programs, where contributions are acknowledged through peer-nominated awards or public recognition (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Expanding leadership opportunities also enhances motivation. Veteran ELT teachers should be encouraged to contribute to curriculum development and participate in institutional decision-making (Skedsmo & Huber, 2018). The creation of 'Teacher Voice' panels makes sure that veteran ELT teachers' voices are heard, strengthening their professional agency. These strategies align with the Self-Determination Theory **(**Deci & Ryan, 2017**)**, reinforcing long-term professional fulfillment.

3.3.4 Peer Collaboration

Professional isolation is another major concern for veteran ELT teachers, often resulting from limited collaboration opportunities (Pyrko et al., 2017). Many veteran ELT teachers express feeling under-appreciated and disconnected from teaching communities, which can lead to disengagement and attrition (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Addressing these challenges requires structured peer collaboration schemes, which promote knowledge-sharing, mutual support, and professional development.

Institutions should establish peer-learning communities to encourage peer collaboration. Monthly discussion forums can encourage veteran ELT teachers to exchange instructional strategies, discuss classroom challenges, and share professional insights (Vangrieken et al., 2015). The development of a 'Veteran ELT Teacher Exchange Program' empowers veteran teachers to observe, co-teach, and gain professional insights and inspiration from such interactions. Biweekly group mentoring sessions create spaces for collective problem-solving and teaching practice sharing, boosting professional engagement and social connectedness (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018). Additionally, online networking platforms allow veteran ELT teachers to continue collaborating beyond formal meetings, encouraging sustained engagement. Another practical approach is collaborative lesson study, where teachers co-design, observe, and refine instructional strategies. Institutions should provide funding and designated time for these initiatives, ensuring that teachers can fully participate. By fostering a shared professional identity and sustained motivation, this model prioritizes Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice Theory, emphasizing the role of social learning environments in professional growth (Pyrko et al., 2017).

Conclusion

This conceptual mentoring model offers a structured yet flexible approach to supporting veteran ELT teachers. By integrating tailored mentoring, burnout prevention, motivation strategies, and peer collaboration, it addresses key professional challenges faced by veteran ELT teachers. The incorporation of Self-Determination Theory, Burnout and Resilience Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and Communities of Practice Theory ensures that the framework is both theoretically sound and practically effective. Through this model, veteran ELT teachers receive recognition, support, and career advancement opportunities, sustaining their motivation, job satisfaction, and resilience while reducing burnout and professional isolation. This mentoring framework fosters a culture of lifelong learning, collaborative teaching, and sustained wellbeing, ensuring that veteran ELT teachers continue to thrive in their careers.

4. Discussion

Unlike traditional mentoring frameworks that focus on novice ELT teachers, this conceptual framework emphasizes wellbeing and professional growth of of veteran ELT teachers. By

integrating tailored mentoring, burnout prevention, motivation strategies, and peer collaboration, it aims to create a comprehensive, flexible, and sustainable support system. The literature review identified a significant research gap: while mentoring for novice ELT teachers is widely studied, little attention has been paid to the needs of veteran ELT teachers. This conceptual model aims to bridge this gap by emphasizing continuous, sustainable professional development, emotional support, and validation. Rooted in Communities of Practice (CoP) (Pyrko et al., 2017), Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2017), Teacher Resilience (Maslach & Leiter, 2016), and institutional support, this model not only helps reduce veteran ELT teachers' professional stress but also promotes long-term commitment to the profession. In doing so, it provides a more comprehensive approach that recognizes the unique needs and experiences of veteran ELT teachers and underscores their vital role in educational settings.

4.1 Implications for Practice

The proposed mentoring model offers valuable practical applications for educational institutions, professional development programs, and English Language Teaching (ELT) training initiatives. Given the unique challenges faced by veteran ELT teachers—like declining motivation, burnout, and professional isolation (Oga-Baldwin & Praver, 2007)—successfully implementing this model requires institutional support and organized mentoring frameworks.

Institutional Mentoring Programs

One practical application is through institutional mentoring programs. Many schools and language centers already have mentoring schemes, but these tend to focus on novice ELT teachers (Beutel et al., 2017). Expanding these programs to include veteran ELT teachers would create opportunities for them to collaborate, exchange strategies, and receive emotional and professional support.

A key strategy for enhancing professional development in schools is the creation of Communities of Practice (CoP) (Pyrko et al., 2017). These communities can act as mentoring groups where experienced English Language Teaching (ELT) teachers engage in reflective discussions, share classroom management strategies, and collaboratively tackle common challenges. CoPs can be established through monthly meetings, peer observations, or joint research projects, ensuring ongoing support rather than isolated interventions. Successful implementation of these initiatives requires strong administrative backing. Schools might need to adjust teacher workloads by acknowledging mentoring roles in contracts. For example, they could assign specific mentoring hours in weekly schedules or offer incentives like reduced teaching loads, professional development credits, or stipends to motivate participation. Without commitment from administration, mentoring programs may become additional burdens instead of effective professional development opportunities (Hobson et al., 2015).

Professional Development Programs

Professional development programs can also integrate mentoring model by extending beyond novice ELT teachers. While early-career support is crucial (T.R & L.U, 2009; Wyatt & Dikilitas, 2022), veteran ELT teachers require ongoing professional learning tailored to their specific needs, such as sustaining motivation, preventing burnout, and fostering peer collaboration. To address this, professional development providers—including government agencies, educational organizations, and teacher associations—could develop specialized training workshops for them. These workshops could focus on peer coaching strategies, resilience-building techniques, and teaching methodologies to help veteran ELT teachers navigate the evolving landscape of language education. An effective model for delivering this could involve a hybrid format, combining face-to-face mentoring circles with online

communities for asynchronous engagement. This approach offers flexibility and accessibility, especially for veteran ELT teachers in resource-limited institutions. Additionally, partnerships with educational authorities could link participation to career advancements, such as eligibility for leadership roles or professional certifications.

Teacher Training Initiatives

Teacher training initiatives can also incorporate this mentoring model by instilling mentorship preparation within certification programs, postgraduate ELT degrees, and in-service training courses. Many ELT programs currently emphasize pedagogical knowledge (Johnson, 2009) but lack structured components that prepare veteran ELT teachers for mentorship roles as they advance in their careers. For instance, postgraduate ELT programs could introduce mentorship modules that familiarize teachers with the skills needed to support peers. These modules could introduce mentoring strategies, leadership communication, and techniques for collaborative development. Institutions might also implement mentorship practicum experiences, where teachers in postgraduate programs engage in real-world mentoring activities with veteran educators, connecting theory with practice.

Additionally, embedding mentorship as a core competency in teacher education policies would help institutions identity the importance of peer mentoring. This could be reinforced through collaboration with certification boards. Veteran ELT teachers who take on mentorship roles receive professional recognition or advancement opportunities. By integrating this mentoring model into institutional mentoring programs, professional development frameworks, and teacher training curricula, educational institutions can create a more supportive environment for veteran ELT teachers. Through strategic implementation and administrative support, mentoring can become an integral part of sustaining motivation and engagement in the ELT profession.

4.2 Challenges and Limitations

While this conceptual mentoring model aims to enhance veteran ELT teachers' motivation and overall wellbeing, several challenges must be considered in order for this mentoring model to be effective in various educational contexts.

4.2.1 Resistance from veteran ELT teachers

A significant challenge is the potential resistance from veteran ELT teachers, who may perceive mentoring as unnecessary or as an imposition on their professional autonomy. Some veteran ELT teachers might question the benefits of mentoring. Additionally, the idea of being mentored by younger colleagues can lead to discomfort or resistance, as it may challenge traditional notions of seniority and expertise. Ponte and Twomey (2014) show that veteran teachers often have issues of power and vulnerability in mentoring relationships, which can influence their professional development.

Potential Solutions

Resistance often originates from threats to autonomy (SDT Principle 1). To reframe mentorship as self-determined growth, institutions might invite veterans to co-design program goals (e.g., choosing observation focus areas), thereby aligning support with SDT's autonomy-competence nexus. To reduce such resistance, this model places much emphasis on reciprocal learning rather than a hierarchical mentor-mentee structure. By viewing mentoring as a collaborative effort, where both parties contribute and gain, engagement may increase. Moreover, offering incentives like professional development credits or stipends can encourage participation in mentorship programs. Implementing pilot programs with voluntary participation can help establish trust and demonstrate the model's benefits before wider application (Fixsen et al.,

2005). Reimagining mentoring programs to incorporate these elements can enhance their verall effectiveness (Shanker Institute, 2022).

4.2.2 Resource Constraints

Implementing structured mentoring programs requires institutional support, which may be limited by budget constraints or administrative workload. Institutions with fewer resources may find it challenging to allocate time and funding for mentoring initiatives and keep such programs. The Shanker Institute (2022) discusses how inadequate time allocation and lack of resources can hinder the success of mentoring programs.

Potential Solutions

Cost-effective alternatives, such as peer mentoring networks and online mentoring platforms, can make implementation possible. One practical approach is to integrate mentoring activities into existing professional development sessions. Encouraging veteran ELT teachers to engage in informal mentoring within their communities may also be another practical starting point. These strategies align with findings that flexible mentoring structures can effectively support teacher development (Hobson et al., 2009). By utilizing community resource-sharing from CoP (Wenger, 1998), schools could collaborate across districts to pool training budgets for mentorship stipends, which would also help fulfill the relatedness need identified in Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Ponte and Twomey (2014) highlight the importance of adaptable mentoring strategies that can cater to varying capacities of different institutions.

4.3 Recommendations for Future Research

As a conceptual framework, this mentoring model has yet to be tested in practice. Without data-driven evidence, this mentoring model's long-term impact on veteran ELT teachers' motivation and wellbeing remains theoretical. Ambrosetti (2014) underscores the need for empirical studies to evaluate the effectiveness of mentoring programs in educational settings. Future research could be as follows:

4.3.1 Longitudinal Studies

Ambrosetti (2014) stresses the value of long-term studies in understanding mentoring outcomes. Longitudinal studies have been effective in evaluating the impact of mentoring on teacher retention and instructional practices (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004). To examine the impact of mentoring on veteran ELT teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, and well-being, future studies should consider longitudinal research designs. Tracking these factors over an extended period would shed light on the long-term effectiveness of mentoring programs for veteran ELT teachers.

4.3.2 Qualitative and Mix-Methods Research

Ponte and Twomey (2014) mention the complexities of mentoring relationships through qualitative analysis. For this conceptual mentoring framework, qualitative case studies or mixed-method approaches can provide valuable insights into how mentoring benefit veteran ELT educators. Detailed needs analyses showcase their needs. Interviews and classroom observations would reveal specific challenges they face and how mentoring can address them. Survey-based research across diverse ELT institutions could further test the applicability of this model in a wide array of teaching contexts. Such methodologies have been utilized to examine teachers 'experiences and the impact of mentoring on their professional development (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

4.3.3 Institutional and Policy-Level Influences

Future research should also investigate institutional and policy-level influences on mentoring programs for veteran ELT teachers. Examining factors such as administrative support, workload distribution, and professional development policies could uncover what enables or hinders the success of implementing this mentoring model. Understanding these factors is significant for creating supportive environments that facilitate effective mentoring. By addressing these areas, future research can contribute to a more comprehensive and systematic understanding of how mentoring sustains the motivation and prevents burnout of veteran ELT teachers, ensuring their continued professional engagement.

4.3.4 A Suggested Pilot Study

To provide immediate empirical support for the proposed conceptual mentoring model, a pilot study can be conducted to examine its effectiveness. This pilot study can function as a first step in empirically validating the model and also provide actionable feedback before large-scale application. This pilot study focuses on testing the model's effects on veteran ELT teachers' motivation, burnout, job satisfaction, and their continuous professional growth.

Table 1. The Pilot Study

Participants	A small scale of 5 to 10 veteran ELT teachers from a given institution or language training center will be chosen for the study. This group should represent the diversity of teaching contexts, career stages, and teaching challenges to make sure the model's broad applicability. Also, the sample should be selected based on their willingness to participate and engage with the mentoring process.
Data Collection Methods: a mixed-methods approach will be employed, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods.	
Surveys & Questionnaires	Both pre-and post-study surveys and questionnaires would be necessary to measure veteran ELT teachers' motivation, burnout, and job satisfaction levels. Those tools could identify intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors and evaluate any form of change which results from taking part in the mentoring model.
Interviews	Semi-structured interviews will be conducted. These interviews focus on aspects such as perceived support, challenges, and personal and professional growth throughout the mentoring process.
Classroom Observations	If applicable, classroom observations will be employed to assess changes in teaching effectiveness and engagement before and after ELT veteran teachers' participation in the model. Observers will look for improvements in teaching strategies, teacher-student interaction, and overall classroom dynamics.
Outcome Measures: this pilot study will concentrate on several key outcome measures, including:	
Teacher Motivation	Changes in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation through surveys and questionnaires
Burnout	Reduced burnout symptoms, including mental exhaustion, depersonalization, and decreased personal accomplishment, as measured by pre- and post-study surveys
Job Satisfaction	Changes in job satisfaction and perceived professional and personal growth from the mentoring experience
Teaching Effectiveness	Observational data on improvements in teaching practices and classroom management
Data Analysis	Qualitative data from interviews and classroom observations will be analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns pertaining to the impact of the mentoring model. As to quantitative data, they will be assessed using statistical methods such as paired t-tests to evaluate pre- and post-study changes in motivation, burnout, and job satisfaction levels.

5. Conclusion

Despite extensive research on mentoring in ELT, the focus has primarily been on novice teachers, leaving a clear gap for the mentorship for veteran ELT teachers. Existing models often assume that they are self-sufficient (Hobson & Maxwell, 2020). However, this assumption is problematic; it overlooks the needs of veteran ELT teachers, particularly in terms of well-being and long-term professional engagement. This paper addresses this gap by proposing a conceptual mentoring model that calls attention to ELT veterans' motivation, well-being, and professional fulfillment, recognizing that their sustained enthusiasm directly impacts teaching quality and student outcomes (Ipek & Kanatlar, 2018; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005). By integrating motivation-centered strategies, peer collaboration, and burnout prevention, this model provides a sustainable framework for veteran ELT teacher development. Unlike conventional approaches, which often adopt a hierarchical structure, this model motivates veteran ELT teachers to embrace reciprocal mentoring. Additionally, it acknowledges the emotional and psychological needs of veteran ELT teachers and advocate for institutional support. This approach not only motivates them but also enhances their overall stability.

By centering mentoring on improving motivation and reducing burnout, this model challenges the traditional narrative that veteran ELT teachers are self-sufficient (Hobson & Maxwell, 2020). As an exploratory model, its value lies in synthesizing disparate theories (SDT, CoP) into a coherent roadmap for future intervention studies. Pilot implementations could test correlations between mentorship structures (e.g., frequency of peer observations) and SDT metrics (autonomy, competence scores). Investing in veteran educators is not a mere act of professional courtesy, but a strategic move to strengthen the ELT field as a whole. If institutions and policymakers recognize and implement such mentoring frameworks, the long-term benefits could extend beyond individual teachers to create a more sustainable and motivational teaching workforce.

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