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From teacher to trainer: What changes? Or does it?

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Abstract

Time on the job does not ensure professional growth and successful teachers are those who continue to develop throughout their professional lives (Ur, 1991). The little research on the characteristics and competencies of successful trainers who guide teachers through their professional growth conclude that the knowledge and competencies of effective trainers are similar to those of effective teachers (Leach, 1996).

This study investigates (1) whether the qualities, skills and knowledge systems that effective teacher educators possess are similar to those attributed to successful teachers, (2) whether experience impacts trainers' perceptions of the qualities, skills and knowledge that effective teacher educators have, and (3) whether these perceptions relate to the expectations of teachers as regards trainer qualities and competencies.

Data were collected through a survey in which trainers were asked to list the qualities, skills and knowledge domains of effective teacher trainers, and to choose the top 10 most important in each category. The responses were collated to determine frequency and importance, and examined statistically to see whether experience played a significant role in choice and rating. The qualities, skills and knowledge domains that emerged from the survey were compiled to form a questionnaire and administered to teachers with varying levels of experience. The findings from this questionnaire were compared with findings from the survey. The results yielded implications for both the selection of potential teacher trainers as well as the content of trainer training programs.

Keywords: teacher trainer; qualities; skills; knowledge domains

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1. Introduction

There is growing interest in continuous professional development and training opportunities for the workforce. Lynch (1998) determines the amount spent annually on such activities in the US to be $60-70 billion dollars, while Allan (2002) claims that companies in Australia spend $5 billion on employee empowerment (cited in Gauld and Miller, 2004, p. 8). The case is not very different in education. Corcoran (1996) maintains that the federal government is making a significant amount of contribution – that is $369 million dollars – to teacher professional development programs in the US. A similar trend can also be observed in the English programs of universities in Turkey as it now widely accepted that sheer time on the job does not ensure fruitful experience or professional progress and that successful teachers are those who continue to develop throughout their professional lives (Ur, 1991). More and more institutions are setting up centers for continuous professional development or are seeking ways of attaining help from established teacher trainers as it is what teachers think and do at the classroom level that eventually determines what learners learn in the classroom, which makes teachers the key and professional growth a top priority (Richards and Renandya, 2002).

1.1. Background to the study

True teachers, as Richards and Renandya (ibid) have stated, continuously upgrade their knowledge and develop their skills, and as they progress, they seek out different professional development activities, which vary from conducting research to working with colleagues through in-service programs with teacher trainers. However, despite extensive research conducted to identify the personal qualities, skills and knowledge systems that render teachers effective, there seems to be relatively little research on the characteristics and competencies of successful teacher trainers, and studies that have actually been conducted on this issue have mostly concluded that the knowledge and competencies of effective trainers are actually very similar to those of effective teachers, particularly those of teachers teaching adults (Leach, 1996).

The personal qualities that effective language teachers possess have been defined and refined over the last few decades. Leadership, enthusiasm, fairness, flexibility, organizational ability, communication, interactive skills, a positive and encouraging attitude, the ability to motivate, energy, emotional intelligence, respect for learners, a sense of humor, strong speaking and listening skills as well as reflective practice have been listed among the many attributes of an effective teacher (Stronge, 2007; Wotruba and Wright, 1975; Leach 1996). Having a student-centered and humanistic orientation, creating an environment conducive to learning, determining learning outcomes through an analysis of learner needs and facilitating the learning process (Schneider and Kemp, 1982 cited in Leach, 1996) have also been identified as common traits of effective teachers.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Shulman, 1986), and more recently Pedagogical Technological Content Knowledge (TPCK) (Mishra and Koehler, 2006), is also required to render a teacher effective. Therefore, it is recognized that for a teacher to be effective, the teacher must simultaneously have good command of the subject matter, which in the case of language teaching is phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics and discourse, pedagogical knowledge that enables him or her to have a clear understanding of learning processes and effective teaching methodologies, pedagogical content knowledge that enables the teacher to select strategies and techniques that will enhance learning of the particular content, and technological pedagogical knowledge that enables the teacher not only to use technology effectively but to select technology appropriate to boost learning.

To determine whether the qualities, skills and knowledge systems that effective teacher educators possess are, in fact, similar to those attributed to successful teachers, to identify the qualities, skills and knowledge systems that teacher trainers attribute to effective teacher educators, and to investigate to what extent these match teachers' perceptions of effectual teacher trainers, the following piece of research was conducted.

2. Purpose of the study

The study was conducted to find answers to the following research questions in an attempt to guide the selection and training process of teacher trainers and to establish the nature of training sessions that are considered effective by teachers of varying level of experience.

1. Are the qualities, skills and knowledge systems that effective teacher educators possess similar to those attributed to successful teachers?
2. What are teacher trainers' perceptions of the qualities, skills and knowledge that effective teacher educators have? Do these vary depending on experience?
3. How do these relate to the perceptions of teachers as regards of the qualities, skills and knowledge of effective teacher educators? Does experience impact teachers' perceptions?

3. Method

3.1. Data collection

To determine teacher trainers' perception of the qualities, skills and knowledge that contribute to the effectiveness of a teacher trainer, a survey was specifically prepared and piloted on two teacher trainers to ensure the clarity of the task before it was implemented on a larger group of teacher trainers. The task was designed so that the teacher trainers would set aside 30 minutes to list the qualities, skills and knowledge systems that first came to mind, and then highlight the top 10 qualities, skills and knowledge domains in their lists.

145 T-PLUS members (a national organization of teacher trainers in Turkey whose acronym stands for Trainers' Professional Learning and Unlimited Sharing) were contacted and invited to complete the survey. 18 teacher trainers with one to four, five to nine, 10 to 14 and over 15 years of experience responded. (Table 1)

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to designation and experience (n=48).

Designation	1 to 4 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	≥15 years
Teacher trainer	7	2	2	7
Teacher	5	9	7	9

The qualities, skills and knowledge domains collected from all of the trainers, regardless of years of experience, were tabulated in Microsoft Excel 2010 to determine the frequency of the items and the ranking of each as assigned by the individual trainers. Redundancies in expression were cleared in individual trainer's responses and incorrect categorizations were amended first individually by each researcher and then mutually following discussion and negotiation. Items that came to one effect but were expressed differently were also standardized. The specific knowledge domains listed by the trainers were also grouped and categorized under broader systems. Thereafter, the qualities, skills and knowledge systems in the list were ranked according to frequency.

The items that received a frequency of at least three, i.e., mentioned by at least three independent teacher trainers constituted the items of the questionnaire administered to 30 teachers of varying years of experience (Table 1), who were asked to tick the top 10 most important skills, the top 10 most important skills and the top 10 most important knowledge domains that they expected effective teachers to have.

3.2. Data analysis

To determine whether experience impacted teacher trainers' perceptions of the qualities and skills that effective teacher educators have, the responses of the trainers were tabulated according to years of experience. Accordingly, the responses were treated in four groups, namely, the responses of those with over 15 years of experience, those with 10 to 14 years of experience, those with five to nine years of experience and those with four or less years of experience. The items listed as important qualities and skills by the various groups of trainers were collated and compared to examine whether there were similar patterns within and across the groups. As for the knowledge areas, which had previously been grouped under broader knowledge systems, the frequency of the responses was determined according to the number of times an area under a domain was mentioned. Therefore, it was possible that one domain was referred to more than once by one trainer.

The questionnaires completed by 30 teachers of varying levels of experience were also categorized as one to four years, five to nine years, 10 to 15 years and more than 10 years of experience. The frequency distribution of the qualities, skills and knowledge systems marked as top 10 by the teachers was in the four groups were charted to determine whether there was any consistency in the responses given by teachers within the same group of experience as well as across the four groups. In the event of equal frequency, the qualities, skills and knowledge domains that had received the same frequency as the 10th item in the list were also taken into consideration.

4. Results

4.1. Results of the survey administered to teacher trainers

The analysis of the trainer surveys revealed that 66.66% of teacher trainers thought that 'creativity' is the most significant quality a trainer should have. Following this, 'confidence' was ranked the second (55.55%). Half of the trainers placed importance on the qualities of being 'empathic' and 'humorous'. 'Enthusiasm', 'friendliness', 'respectfulness', and 'motivation' followed with 33.33%. (Table 2)

Table 2. Trainers' overall perception of the top 10 ranking qualities of trainers and these according to experience (n= 18).

Qualities	Total	%	1 to 4 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	≥15 years
Creative	12	66.66	7	2	1	2
Confident	10	55.55	3	1	2	4
Empathic	9	50.00	1	1	1	6
Humorous	9	50.00	5	0	1	3
Encouraging	8	44.44	4	0	0	4
Flexible	8	44.44	3	1	1	3
Fair	7	38.88	4	0	0	3
Patient	7	38.88	4	0	1	2
Professionalism	7	38.88	4	1	0	2
Enthusiastic	6	33.33	3	0	2	1
Friendly	6	33.33	3	1	0	2
Respectful	6	33.33	3	0	1	2
Motivated	6	33.33	4	0	1	1

A detailed analysis of the survey indicated that all trainers, regardless of years of experience, included being 'creative' as a quality a trainer should have. Similarly, being 'confident' and 'flexible' were also qualities mentioned as highly important by all the trainers. Nevertheless, while trainers with one to four, 10 to 14 and 15 and more years of experience mentioned 'humorous' as a significant quality, trainers with five to nine years of experience did not. A similar tendency was observed for 'patient', 'respectful', and 'motivated'. Moreover, all trainers, except with those with 10 to 14 years of experience, placed importance on the quality of being 'friendly'. In the same pattern, 'professionalism' was observed as a quality stated by all trainers except by trainers with 10 to 14 years of experience. Furthermore, 'respectful' and 'motivated' were mentioned by trainers with one to four, 10 to 14 and 15 or more years of experience, but not by those with five to nine years of experience. (Table 2)

One important finding was that 'creative' had been stated as one of the highest-ranking qualities for all trainers. 'Confident' was similarly ranked among the most significant qualities by trainers with more than five years of experience. The quality was, however, of less importance to trainers with one four years of experience. One other noteworthy finding was that 'collaborative' was only stated by trainers with five to nine years of experience. A similar tendency was observed for 'social'. (Table 3)

Table 3. Top 10 ranking qualities of a teacher trainer according to years of experience.

1-4 years (n=7)	n	%	5- 9 years (n=2)	n	%	10-14 years (n=2)	n	%	≥15 years (n=7)	n	%
Creative	7	100	Creative	2	100	Confident	2	100	Empathic	6	85.71
Fair	4	57.14	Collaborative	1	50.00	Eager to learn	2	100	Confident	4	57.14
Motivated	4	57.14	Committed	1	50.00	Enthusiastic	2	100	Considerate	4	57.14
Professional	4	57.14	Confident	1	50.00	Creative	1	50.00	Constructive	4	57.14
Enthusiastic	3	42.85	Empathic	1	50.00	Determined	1	50.00	Caring	4	57.14
Friendly	3	42.85	Flexible	1	50.00	Empathic	1	50.00	Approachable	3	42.85
Humorous	3	42.85	Friendly	1	50.00	Experienced	1	50.00	Fair	3	42.85
Open-minded	3	42.85	Organized	1	50.00	Flexible	1	50.00	Humorous	3	42.85
Patient	3	42.85	Responsible	1	50.00	Humorous	1	50.00	Creative	2	28.57
Confident	3	42.85	Social	1	50.00	Kind	1	50.00	Energetic	2	28.57
Respectful	3	42.85				Motivated	1	50.00	Experienced	2	28.57
Flexible	3	42.85				Respectful	1	50.00	Friendly	2	28.57
						Patient	1	50.00	Humanistic	2	28.57
						Positive	1	50.00			

Concerning the skills that effective teacher trainers should have, the data revealed that 'counseling / mentoring / coaching skills' was considered the most significant skill regardless of the years of experience. Unlike trainers with five to nine years of experience, trainers with one to four, 10 to 14, 15 and more years of experience also stated that 'communication' was a significant skill. A similar tendency was observed with 'leadership skills', 'listening skills', 'organizational skills', 'presentation skills', 'teaching skills', 'problem-solving skills' and 'language skills'. (Table 4)

Table 4. Trainers' overall perception of the top 10 ranking skills of trainers and these according to experience (n= 18).

Skills	Total	%	1 to 4 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	≥15 years
Counseling	12	66.66	1	2	2	7
Communication	9	55.55	5	0	2	2
Leadership	6	33.33	4	0	1	1
Listening Skills	6	33.33	2	0	1	3
Organizational Skills	6	33.33	3	0	1	2
Presentation Skills	6	33.33	2	0	2	2
Teaching Skills	6	33.33	3	0	0	3
Problem-solving Skills	6	33.33	2	0	2	2
Time Management	6	33.33	4	1	1	0
Language Skills	6	33.33	3	0	0	3
Planning Skills	6	33.33	0	2	1	3

A comparison of the survey results indicated that qualities related to interpersonal relationships such as 'communication' and 'counseling' were prioritized by all trainers. 'Computer skills' was noted as important only by

trainers with experience of less than five years. Trainers with more experience did not state this skill as significant. One other finding revealed that 'time management' was of more importance to trainers with less than 15 years of experience. Trainers with 15 years and more years of experience did not attach importance to this skill. Moreover, trainers with more than five years of experience noted 'planning' as a significant skill whereas trainers with less than five years of experience did not note this skill as necessary. This skill was actually ranked number one by trainers with five to nine years of experience. Another noteworthy finding is that 42.85 % of the trainers with one to four years and 15 and more years of experience stated that 'teaching skills' were important for trainers. (Table 5)

Table 5. Top 10 ranking skills of a teacher trainer according to years of experience.

1-4 years (n=7)	n	%	5- 9 years (n=2)	n	%	10-14 years (n=2)	n	%	≥15 years (n=7)	n	%
Communication	5	71.42	Planning	2	100	Communication	2	100	Counseling	7	100
Computer	5	71.42	Counseling	2	100	Presentation	2	100	Language	3	42.85
Conceptualization	4	57.14	Analysis	1	50.00	Problem-solving	2	100	Active listening	3	42.85
Conflict management	4	57.14	Feedback	1	50.00	Counseling	1	50.00	Management	3	42.85
Leadership	4	57.14	Observation	1	50.00	Leadership	1	50.00	Planning	3	42.85
Time management	4	57.14	Speaking	1	50.00	Active listening	1	50.00	Teaching	3	42.85
Organization	3	42.85	Time management	1	50.00	Management	1	50.00	Analysis	2	28.57
Art	3	42.85				Organization	1	50.00	Assessment (needs & interest)	2	28.57
Teaching	3	42.85									
Critical thinking	3	42.85				Planning	1	50.00	Communication	2	28.57
Active listening	2	28.57							Exploration	2	28.57
Presentation	2	28.57				Stress Management	1	50.00	Feedback	2	28.57
Stress management	2	28.57				Time Management	1	50.00	Interpersonal	2	28.57
Problem-solving	2								Organizational	2	28.57
									Presentation	2	28.57
									Organizational	2	28.57
									Problem-solving	2	28.57

The analysis of the surveys to determine teacher trainers' perception of the knowledge domains that contribute to the effectiveness of a trainer required the categorization of the areas mentioned as the trainers had provided an array of areas which they believed a trainer should be knowledgeable in. Specific areas such as metacognition, motivation, cognition and psychology of learning were placed under 'educational and cognitive psychology whereas areas like academic research, investigation, action research, classroom research, exploration and research paradigm were gathered under the domain 'research and inquiry'. As trainers had included in their list of knowledge domains various aspects of one single domain, each was treated as a reference to the overall domain. Thus, the frequency of each knowledge domain exceeds the total number of teacher trainer respondents.

Upon the survey results, all knowledge domain areas have been categorized into 21 knowledge systems. Thus, the assessment of the data related to the knowledge domains has been analyzed within this categorization in significance to frequency of the knowledge system rather than the number of participants.

The results revealed that trainers considered knowledge of teaching approaches, methods and techniques to be the most significant knowledge domain to render a trainer effective. 'Content knowledge', 'theories of acquisition & learning', and 'educational & cognitive psychology' were mentioned by all trainers regardless of years of

experience. Another important finding was that the most experienced trainers gave the most importance to 'literature on current trends'. On the other hand, the youngest trainers attached the greatest importance to 'educational technology'. (Table 6)

Table 6 Trainers' overall perception of the top 10 ranking knowledge domain.

Knowledge Domain	Total	1 to 4 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	≥15 years
Teaching approaches, methods & techniques	21	7	0	4	10
Content knowledge	14	6	1	2	5
Theories of acquisition & learning	13	6	1	2	4
Educational & cognitive psychology	11	4	1	2	4
Pedagogy	8	5	1	0	2
Literature on current trends	7	2	0	0	5
Classroom management & interaction	6	5	0	0	1
Testing, evaluation &assessment	6	3	0	0	3
Curriculum & syllabus design	6	5	0	0	1
Approaches in teacher training	5	1	0	1	3
Classroom observation &feedback	5	2	0	2	1
Academic research & inquiry	5	1	0	1	3
Educational systems, organizations & management	5	3	0	0	2
Educational technology	5	4	1	0	0
Materials, resources & material design	5	3	0	1	1
Teacher values, beliefs & needs	5	0	1	0	4

The data revealed that trainers with one to four, ten to fourteen and fifteen and more years of experience have all placed 'teaching approaches, methods & techniques' as the most significant knowledge system. One interesting finding was that only trainers with ten to fourteen years of experience mentioned 'reflective practice'. Nevertheless, other trainers did not list this as a necessary knowledge system. Interestingly, 'pedagogy' was emphasized in the top ten by younger trainers with nine years and less experience. The data revealed that trainers at both ends of experience seem to agree more on what they want in terms of knowledge domain. Thus, trainers with one to years of experience and trainers with more than fifteen years of experience placed importance on all the mentioned domains (Table 7) except for 'educational technology'. Moreover, these two participant groups were the only who agreed on 'literature on current trends', 'testing, evaluation and assessment', and 'curriculum and syllabus design'. (Table 7)

Table 7. Top 10 ranking knowledge systems of a teacher trainer according to years of experience.

1-4 years	n	5- 9 years	n	10-14 years	n	≥15 years	n
Teaching approaches, methods &techniques	7	Content knowledge	1	Teaching approaches, methods & techniques	4	Teaching approaches, methods & techniques	10
Content knowledge	6	Theories of acquisition & learning	1	Content knowledge	2	Content knowledge	5
Theories of acquisition & learning	6	Pedagogy	1	Educational & cognitive psychology	2	Literature on current trends	5
Classroom management & interaction	5	Educational & cognitive psychology	1	Theories of acquisition & learning	2	Teacher values, beliefs & needs	4
Pedagogy	5	Teacher values, beliefs & needs	1	Classroom observation & feedback	2	Educational & cognitive psychology	4

Curriculum & syllabus design	5	Educational technology	1	Academic research & inquiry	1	Theories of acquisition & learning	4
Educational & cognitive psychology	4			Materials, resources & materials design	1	Testing, evaluation & assessment	3
Educational technology	4			Reflective practice	1	Culture of target language	3
Testing, evaluation & assessment	3			Teacher training techniques & procedures	1	Academic research & inquiry	3
Educational Systems, Organizations& Management	3			Approaches in teacher training	1	Teacher training methodologies	3
Materials, resources & materials design	3			Theories of teaching	1		

4.2. Results of questionnaire administered to teachers

The analysis of the teacher questionnaires revealed that although the top 10 qualities of teacher trainers as determined by the teachers included qualities related to the expertise of the teacher trainer such as 'knowledgeable', and 'experienced', they also comprised such qualities as being 'professional', 'supportive', 'approachable" and 'respectful', which were more closely associated with the attitude of the trainers. (Table 8)

Table 8 Teachers' overall perception of the top 10 ranking qualities of a teacher trainer and these according to experience (n=30).

Qualities	Total	%	1 to 4 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	≥15 years
Professional	24	80.00	5	9	6	4
Knowledgeable	22	73.33	4	7	6	5
Inspiring	19	63.33	4	5	5	5
Experienced	17	56.67	3	3	6	5
Creative	16	53.33	3	5	4	4
Supportive	16	53.33	1	6	4	5
Approachable	13	43.33	2	4	2	5
Open-minded	13	43.33	2	4	2	5
Organized	13	43.33	1	4	3	5
Respectful	13	43.33	1	3	3	6

All teachers regardless of age included 'professional', 'knowledgeable', 'inspiring' and 'creative' among the top 10 qualities that a teacher trainer should have. 'Supportive' and 'organized' were selected as important qualities by teachers with five years and more experience but not by those with less experience. While teachers with over 10 years of experience considered 'experience' and 'respect' to be qualities of essence, those with fewer than 10 years of experience found these to be insignificant. As for 'approachable' and 'open-minded', while the former was considered essential by teachers with five to 9 and over 15 years of experience, the latter was deemed significant by teacher with one to nine and ≥ 15 years of experience.

One interesting finding was that 'empathy' was deemed important by teachers with one to four years of experience and by those with more than 15. The quality, however, was not considered of central by teachers with five to 14 years of experience. Another noteworthy finding was that trainers' 'motivation' was mentioned by all teachers with less than 15 years of experience but not by those with over 15 years. (Table 9)

Table 9. Top 10 ranking qualities of a teacher trainer according to years of experience.

1-4 years (n=5)	n	%	5- 9 years (n=9)	n	%	10-14 years (n=7)	n	%	≥15 years (n=9)	n	%
Professional	5	100	Professional	9	100	Experienced	6	85.71	Positive	6	73.33
Inspiring	4	80	Knowledgeable	7	77.78	Professional	6	85.71	Respectful	6	73.33
Knowledgeable	4	80	Supportive	6	66.67	Knowledgeable	6	85.71	Experienced	5	55.56
Creative	3	60	Approachable	5	55.56	Inspiring	5	71.43	Inspiring	5	55.56
Experienced	3	60	Creative	5	55.56	Creative	4	57.14	Knowledgeable	5	55.56
Willing to learn	3	60	Encouraging	5	55.56	Motivated	4	57.14	Open-minded	5	55.56
Approachable	2	40	Inspiring	5	55.56	Positive	4	57.14	Organized	5	55.56
Empathic	2	40	Energetic	4	44.44	Supportive	4	57.14	Supportive	5	55.56
Encouraging	2	40	Motivated	4	44.44	Trustworthy	4	57.14	Approachable	4	44.44
Motivated	2	40	Open-minded	4	44.44	Good listener	3	42.86	Creative	4	44.44
Open-minded	2	40	Organized	4	44.44	Organized	3	42.86	Empathic	4	44.44
Patient	2	40				Respectful	3	42.86	Encouraging	4	44.44
						Willing to learn	3	42.86	Fair	4	44.44
									Professional	4	44.44
									Willing to learn	4	44.44

As for the skills that teachers thought were important for an effective teacher trainer to have, 'communication' and 'feedback' emerged as the two most significant skills, which seems to imply that teachers are more concerned about the way they receive feedback to their practices and the manner in which they interact with the trainers. Nevertheless, 'presentation skills' and other skills that contribute to effective presentation, such as 'assessment of needs and interests', 'critical thinking and reflection', 'planning' and 'time management' are also considered of essence. (Table 10)

Table 10. Teachers' overall perception of the top 10 ranking skills of a teacher trainer and these according to experience (n=30).

Skills	Total	%	1 to 4 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	≥15 years
Communication	27	90.00	4	8	7	8
Feedback	27	90.00	5	9	6	7
Presentation	26	86.67	4	8	6	8
Critical thinking / reflection	22	73.33	4	6	5	6
Assessment (needs & interests)	20	66.67	4	6	4	6
Collaboration	17	56.67	2	4	5	6
Problem-solving	17	56.67	2	6	3	6
Planning	15	50.00	3	5	3	4
Teaching	15	50.00	2	7	6	0
Time management	13	43.33	4	4	0	5

A more comparative analysis of the results based on years of experience revealed that while 'feedback', 'presentation', 'assessment', 'collaboration and 'planning' were considered important regardless of level of experience, 'problem-solving skills' were deemed significant only by teachers with more than 10 years of experience and 'time management' only by those with one to nine years in the service. Interestingly, 'communication skills' were of less important for teachers with nine to 14 years of experience. Teachers with one to

four years of experience, on the other hand, attached little significance to 'critical thinking and reflection skills' and no importance to 'teaching skills'.

Leadership and management skills, which did not make to the top 10 overall list, were considered central by teachers with five to nine and by those with over 15 years of experience but not by teachers who belonged to the other two groups. Similarly, interpersonal skills, also not among the overall top 10 skills, were deemed essential by teachers with over 10 years of experience but not so by teachers with fewer years of experience. (Table 11)

Table 11. Top 10 ranking skills of a teacher trainer according to years of experience.

1-4 years (n=5)	n	%	5- 9 years (n=9)	n	%	10-14 years (n=7)	n	%	≥15 years (n=9)	n	%
Feedback	5	100	Feedback	9	100	Communication	7	100	Communication	8	88.89
Communication	4	80.00	Communication	8	88.89	Feedback	6	85.71	Presentation	8	88.89
Critical thinking / reflection	4	80.00	Presentation	8	88.89	Presentation	6	85.71	Critical thinking / reflection	7	77.78
Assessment (needs & interests)	4	80.00	Teaching	7	77.78	Teaching	6	85.71	Feedback	7	77.78
Presentation	4	80.00	Assessment (needs and interests)	6	66.67	Collaboration	5	71.43	Assessment (needs & interests)	6	73.33
Time management	4	80.00	Critical thinking / reflection	6	66.67	Critical thinking / reflection	5	71.43	Collaboration	6	73.33
Organization	3	60.00	Problem-solving	6	66.67	Spoken language	5	71.43	Problem-solving	6	73.33
Planning	3	60.00	Planning	5	55.56	Assessment (needs & interests)	4	57.14	Exploration & analysis	5	55.56
Teaching	3	60.00	Collaboration	4	44.44	Organization	4	57.14	Interpersonal	5	55.56
Collaboration	2	40.00	Leadership	4	44.44	Exploration & analysis	3	42.86	Leadership	4	44.44
Exploration & analysis	2	40.00	Management	4	44.44	Interpersonal	3	42.86	Management	4	44.44
			Time management	4	44.44	Planning	3	42.86	Organization	4	44.44
						Problem-solving	3	42.86	Planning	4	44.44

As regards the 21 knowledge systems that were included in the questionnaire, all were selected as one of the top 10 systems that an effective teacher educator should have although some with more frequency than others. Not surprisingly, knowledge of teacher training techniques, knowledge of teaching approaches, methods and techniques, knowledge of teacher training methodology, knowledge of approaches in teacher training and knowledge of teacher values, belief and needs emerged among the top five domains with 73.33%, 66.67%, 63.33% and 60% of the teachers choosing these systems. Interestingly however, only a little over 50% of the teachers selected knowledge of reflective practice and classroom observation and feedback as knowledge domains central to teacher education. This was not much different from the amount of importance attached to knowledge of educational technology and materials design. (Table 12)

Table 12. Teachers' overall perception of the top 10 ranking knowledge domains of a teacher trainer and these according to experience (n=30).

Skills	Total	%	1 to 4 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	≥15 years
Teacher training techniques	22	73.33	3	7	5	7
Teaching approaches, methods & techniques	20	66.67	3	7	3	7
Teacher training methodology	19	63.33	3	7	3	6
Approaches in teacher training	18	60.00	3	5	6	4
Teacher values, beliefs & needs	18	60.00	3	5	6	4
Reflective practice	17	56.67	4	4	5	4
Classroom observation & feedback	17	56.67	3	3	5	6
Educational technology	16	53.33	3	6	4	3
Classroom management & interaction	15	50.00	3	4	2	6
Materials & resources design	15	50.00	0	5	4	6

When teachers' perceptions of the top 10 knowledge domains required for effective teacher training were compared to determine whether years of experience impacted views, it was observed that, regardless of level of experience, knowledge of approaches in teacher training, knowledge of teacher training techniques and procedures, reflective practice and knowledge of teacher values, beliefs and needs had all been included among the top 10 knowledge systems. Knowledge of teacher training methodology was also deemed essential by all teachers except for those with 10 to 15 years of experience.

On the other hand, while teachers with one to four years of experience were the only ones to mark knowledge of educational and cognitive psychology as an important knowledge base, teachers with over 15 years of experience were the only group to state content knowledge, knowledge of testing and assessment and knowledge of acquisition and learning as a requisite for effective training. Teachers with five to nine years of experience were the only ones to mention knowledge of pedagogy and knowledge of curriculum and syllabus design, just as teachers with 10 to 14 years of experience were the only ones to mention knowledge of literature on current trends. Although knowledge of classroom management and interaction were important to teachers at both ends of the experience range, they were not so for teachers with five to 14 years of experience. Similarly, knowledge of classroom observation and feedback as well as knowledge of educational technologies were considered significant by teachers with one to four and 10 to 15 years of experience but insignificant by the teachers in the other two groups. Knowledge of procedures necessary for academic research and inquiry was indicated as an important knowledge domain by teachers with five to 14 years of experience but not by the others. Knowledge of educational systems, organizations and management as well as knowledge of materials and resources design, on the other hand, were indicated as significant knowledge domains by solely teachers with 10 or more years of experience. (Table 13)

Table 13. Top 10 ranking knowledge domains of a teacher trainer according to years of experience.

1-4 years (n=5)	n	%	5- 9 years (n=9)	n	%	10-14 years (n=7)	n	%	≥15 years (n=9)	n	%
Educational & cognitive psychology	5	100	Teacher training methodology	7	77.78	Approaches in teacher training	6	85.71	Teacher training techniques & procedures	7	77.78
Reflective practice	4	80.00	Teacher training techniques & procedures	7	77.78	Classroom observation & feedback	5	71.43	Teacher values, beliefs & needs	7	77.78
Approaches in teacher training	3	60.00	Teaching approaches,	7	77.78	Literature on current trends &	5	71.43	Teaching approaches,	7	77.78

			methods & techniques			research			methods & techniques		
Classroom management & interaction	3	60.00	Academic research & inquiry	6	66.67	Reflective practice	5	71.43	Classroom management & interaction	6	73.33
Classroom observation & feedback	3	60.00	Curriculum & syllabus design	6	66.67	Teacher training techniques & procedures	5	71.43	Classroom observation & feedback	6	73.33
Educational technology	3	60.00	Educational technology	6	66.67	Academic research & inquiry	4	57.14	Educational systems, organizations & management	6	73.33
Teacher training methodology	3	60.00	Approaches in teacher training	5	55.56	Educational systems, organizations & management	4	57.14	Materials & resources design	6	73.33
Teacher training techniques & procedures	3	60.00	Literature on current trends & research	5	55.56	Educational technology	4	57.14	Teacher training methodology	6	73.33
Teacher values, beliefs & needs	3	60.00	Materials & resources design	5	55.56	Materials & resources design	4	57.14	Testing, evaluation & assessment	5	55.56
Teaching approaches, methods & techniques	3	60.00	Classroom management & interaction	4	44.44	Teacher values, beliefs & needs	4	57.14	Approaches in teacher training	4	44.44
			Pedagogy	4	44.44		3	42.86	Content knowledge	4	44.44
			Reflective practice	4	44.44		3	42.86	Reflective practice	4	44.44
			Teacher values, beliefs & needs	4	44.44		3	42.86	Theories of acquisition & learning	4	44.44

4.3. Comparative analysis

A comparison of trainers' and teachers' perception of the top 10 qualities of an effective teacher trainer yielded some thought-provoking results. One result was that teachers seemed to be more in agreement than trainers as regards the personal traits of a trainer. While the majority of the teachers were in agreement as regards the top five qualities of effective teacher trainers, this level of agreement was only seen with 'creativity' among teacher trainers. Another interesting result was that the two groups – teachers and trainers – seemed to be largely in disagreement as regards the qualities of an effective trainer. 'Creativity', 'professionalism' and 'respectfulness' were the only three qualities that both groups, regardless of years of experience, believed an effective teacher trainer should have. On the other hand, 'humor' and 'flexibility' that trainers believed were important came at the very end of teachers' list of trainer qualities. However, a more careful analysis revealed that trainers were actually largely in agreement with the teachers at either ends of the experience scale. Trainers and teachers with one to four and 15 and more years of experience all indicated that being 'creative', 'empathic', 'encouraging', 'fair' and 'professional' were important personal qualities required of effective teacher trainers. Teachers with five to nine years of experience also agreed that being 'encouraging' was an important quality, while teachers with 10 to 14 years of experience joined the more senior group of teachers in revering respectfulness as a significant quality. (Table 14)

Table 14. Trainers' and teachers' overall perception of the top 10 ranking qualities of a teacher trainer.

Trainers	n (out of 18)	%	Teachers	n (out of 30)	%
Creative	12	66.67	Professional	24	80.00
Confident	10	55.56	Knowledgeable	22	73.33
Empathic	9	50.00	Inspiring	19	63.33
Humorous	9	50.00	Experienced	17	56.67
Encouraging	8	44.44	Creative	16	53.33
Flexible	8	44.44	Supportive	16	53.33
Fair	7	38.89	Approachable	13	43.33
Patient	7	38.89	Open-minded	13	43.33
Professional	7	38.89	Organized	13	43.33
Enthusiastic	6	33.33	Respectful	13	43.33
Friendly	6	33.33			
Motivated	6	33.33			
Respectful	6	33.33			

As for trainers' and teachers' overall perception of the top 10 ranking skills of a teacher trainer, once again teachers seemed to be more in agreement than trainers. The majority of the teachers showed agreement in the top seven skills. Trainers, on the other hand, were able to show such agreement in only two skills. There seemed to be more consensus between trainers and teachers as regards the skills effective trainers have, these being communication, presentation, teaching time management and problem-solving skills. A closer analysis also revealed that both trainers and teachers, regardless of years of experience, all highlighted 'communication' and 'presentation' as vital skills for effective teacher training. 'Time management', on the other hand, was a skill mentioned by teacher trainers and teacher with less than 10 years of experience. 'Leadership', ranking fourth in the list of skills offered by trainers was also among the top 10 skills selected by teachers five to nine years of experience and those listed by teachers with over 15 years of service. Organizational skills, also among the top 10 skills put forward by trainers, was also among the top 10 skills of teachers with the exception of those with five to nine years of experience. Interestingly, assessment skills to assess teacher needs and interests, critical thinking and reflection, and reflection received more emphasis from teachers than they did from trainers. (Table 15)

Table 15. Trainers' and teachers' overall perception of the top 10 ranking skills of a teacher trainer.

Trainers	n (out of 18)	%	Teachers	n (out of 30)	%
Guidance / counseling / mentoring / coaching	12	66.67	Communication	27	90.00
Communication	9	50.00	Feedback	27	90.00
Active listening	6	33.33	Presentation	26	86.67
Leadership	6	33.33	Critical thinking / reflection	22	73.33
Organization	6	33.33	Assessment (needs & interests)	20	66.67
Language	6	33.33	Collaboration	17	56.67
Planning	6	33.33	Problem-solving	17	56.67
Presentation	6	33.33	Planning	15	50.00
Problem solving	6	33.33	Teaching	15	50.00
Teaching	6	33.33	Time management	13	43.33
Time management	6	33.33			

A close look at trainers' and teachers' perception of the top knowledge domains of effective trainers revealed that trainers appeared to attach greater importance to domains related to the classroom and teaching while teachers assigned greater significance to knowledge systems related directly to teacher education, which was the opposite of what the researchers had been expecting. Both groups emphasized knowledge of teaching approaches, methods and techniques, knowledge of classroom management techniques and interaction patterns as well as and knowledge of approaches in teacher training as important systems. (Table 16)

Table 16 Trainers' and teachers' overall perception of the top 10 ranking knowledge domains of a teacher trainer.

Trainers	n (out of 18)	Teachers	n (out of 30)
Teaching approaches, methods & techniques	21	Teacher training techniques	22
Content knowledge	14	Teaching approaches, methods & techniques	20
Theories of acquisition & Learning	13	Teacher training methodology	19
Educational & cognitive psychology	11	Approaches in teacher training	18
Pedagogy	8	Teacher values, beliefs & needs	18
Literature on current trends	7	Reflective practice	17
Classroom management &interaction	6	Classroom observation & feedback	17
Testing, evaluation & assessment	6	Educational technology	16
Curriculum and syllabus design	6	Classroom management & interaction	15
Approaches in teacher Training	5	Materials & resources design	15
Classroom observation and feedback	5		

5. Conclusions and implications

The results of this study support the claim that the qualities, skills and knowledge domains of successful trainers are very similar to the characteristics and competencies of effective teachers (Leach, 1996). Like effective language teachers, effective teacher trainers, it seems, need to be creative, enthusiastic, fair, flexible, energetic, motivating, positive, encouraging, respectful and humorous. They need to have strong leadership skills, natural organizational ability, effective communication and interaction skills, high emotional intelligence and strong speaking and listening skills (Stronge, 2007; Wotruba and Wright, 1975; Leach, ibid). Additionally, they need to possess content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986) and technological pedagogical knowledge; in other words, pedagogical technological content knowledge (TPCK) (Mishra and Koehler, 2006). Thus, it appears that the transformation from teacher to trainer changes very little in terms of the qualities and skills required. It necessitates knowledge of new domains related to teacher education.

The outcome of the study also indicates that, with the exception of 'creativity' and 'confidence', which most thought was an important trait, teacher trainers seem to have diverse views as regards the top 10 qualities that effective teacher educators should have. Thus, experience could be a variable affecting trainers' perception of fundamental qualities in teacher trainers. Trainers' and teachers' perceptions of important qualities, however, show some parallelism with 'creativity', 'professionalism' and 'respect' being deemed important by both groups although the level of importance attached to these show some variation. Teachers also demonstrate diversity in their perception of important qualities, showing agreement in only four qualities, that of being 'professional', 'knowledgeable', 'inspiring' and 'creative' Therefore, experience appears also to have some impact on teachers' perceptions but less than that observed with teacher educators.

Teacher educators display even more diversity in their perception of the top 10 skills required of effective teacher educators. No skill has been indicated as important by all four groups simultaneously, which points to experience as a possible factor impacting trainers' perception. However, more consistency is observed between trainers' and teachers' perception of the skills that an effective trainer should have with 'communication', 'presentation',

'teaching', 'problem-solving', 'time management' and 'organizational skills' being deemed significant skills by both groups. As for the role of experience in shaping teachers' perception of important trainer skills, experience seems to play a small role in determining teachers expectations in this regard since teachers, regardless of years of experience, showed 70% agreement in the skills required of effective trainers, though with varying levels of importance attached to some.

Teacher educators seem also to disagree on the top 10 knowledge systems essential for effective teacher education. The only domains they all agree upon regardless of years of experience seem to be 'content knowledge', 'theories of acquisition and learning' and 'educational and cognitive psychology'. Thus, experience could quite possibly be a factor influencing teacher educators' perception. Teachers, on the other hand, are more consistent as regards their views in this aspect. With the exception of knowledge of 'materials and resources design', they show agreement in the top 10 knowledge domains, which implies that experience plays a little role in determining teachers' perception of key knowledge systems. There seems also to be some agreement between teacher educators and teachers in this respect with 'teaching approaches, methods and techniques', 'approaches in teacher training', 'classroom management and interaction' and 'classroom observation and feedback' being domains both groups have in common.

These results present certain implications for the selection of teachers to be trained as teacher trainers as well as the content of trainer training courses. Creativity, professionalism and respectfulness, which are qualities that both trainers and teachers believe are crucial characteristics of effective trainers, should be sought in potential teacher trainers. The candidates should also clearly send the message that they have the knowledge and experience required of a teacher trainer; thus, confidence appears to be an important quality to look for. Other qualities that are of significance and need to be considered during selection are open-mindedness, supportiveness, approachability and the ability to inspire and empathize. Candidates' ability to communicate with colleagues and students, their teaching and presentation skills, their ability to meet deadlines, keep up with the pacing, organize and use time effectively need also to be reviewed before selection as is their ability to tackle and solve problems.

As can be inferred from the results of this study, trainer training courses and programs, which mostly focus on teacher training approaches, methods, techniques, principles of reflective teaching, observation techniques, the language of feedback, teacher resistance and so forth – probably with the assumption that teachers being trained to become teacher trainers already have the underlying ELT-related knowledge basis required for teacher training obtained from previous teacher training courses and programs – need to assign equal emphasis to teaching methodologies, techniques and procedures to update and/or refresh candidates' knowledge of language education and ELT. This will equip potential trainers with the pedagogical, pedagogical content and pedagogical technological content knowledge that trainers believe are required not only for the delivery of fruitful sessions but also for the effective guidance, coaching and mentoring of teachers.

The results of the study also have implications for the design of teacher development opportunities. The primary aim of all development opportunities should be to inspire the teachers. Thus, teachers should be offered a range of development opportunities and be allowed to choose those that will inspire them the most. While working with a trainer on a research project may inspire some, team teaching with a trainer may inspire others. Session design and delivery may also serve as inspiration to teachers. Such sessions, it seems, need to be tailored according to the needs and interests of the teachers and reflect creativity, careful planning, critical analysis of the content, as well as expertise. The delivery needs to be effective in terms of presentation techniques and timing.

The results also point to the need to vary the teacher training approach being used according to the teacher's level of experience. Teachers who are new in the profession seem to be looking for trainers who are mainly creative, fair, motivated and professional with strong communication and computer skills. They see an effective trainer as a leader who can conceptualize, manage conflict and use time effectively. Teachers with five to nine years of experience, on the other hand, look mainly for creativity. However, they also want motivated and dedicated counselors who are responsible and organized yet flexible and empathic. For these teachers friendliness, being social and collaboration are important, which is perhaps why they attach importance to analysis, feedback and speaking. Teachers with 10 to 14 years of experience place greater emphasis on qualities that will have a positive impact on the trainer as a professional like experience, confidence, openness to learn and creativity; yet humanistic qualities that teachers with over 15 years of experience are more concerned with such as empathy and humor, are also important. It seems that

trainers' humanistic skills are deemed most important at the early stage of a teacher's career and then again after 15 years of teaching. These might be stages in a teacher's career where she or he may be questioning his or her effectiveness.

One final conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that trainers with one to 4 and those with 15 or more years of experience appear to be more cooperative when it comes to contributing to a research study than trainers with five to 14 years in the service. There could, however, be other explanations for this. It could be that the majority of teacher trainers fall into these two categories and that there is only a very limited number of trainers with five to 14 years of experience. It could also be that institutions opt to close professional development units after a few years due to lack of interest from teachers and trainers lose touch with teacher training.

6. Limitations of the study and recommendations for further research

During the design of this study, the researchers were aiming for a minimum number of 40 teacher trainers as participants, which they, unfortunately, could not attain. The study will yield more reliable and generalizable results if conducted with a more representative sample of teacher educators. A larger sample will also yield data that can be statistically analysis to determine whether there is a significant correlation between trainers' and teachers' perceptions of the qualities and skills of effective teacher trainers as well as a correlation in terms of perceptions according to experience.

During data collection, teacher educators were given an open-ended survey which they completed without any influence. The teachers, on the other hand, were given questionnaires made up of items based on the outcomes of the surveys. Thus, they were somewhat directed. It could be that teacher educators failed to mention a quality, skill or knowledge domain, not because they found it insignificant, but merely because they did not recall it at the time. In future studies, both groups could be given pre-set items to choose from for more comparable results. Some of the data collected from teacher educators had to be discarded as they were vague or had to be interpreted by the researchers. Future studies could be designed to include interviews to confirm understanding of what is meant. Also, the data from teachers were collected from within one institution. Gathering data from teachers of diverse institutions could yield different and more generalizable results.

Future studies may also include a comparative analysis of trainers' and teachers' perceptions of teacher needs. Other variables that could be added are gender, nationality, type of training – pre- versus in-service – and cultural background, i.e., native speaker of English versus non-native speaker. Future studies could also investigate undesirable qualities and behavioral patterns of teacher educators to validate finding and perhaps shed light on factors that contribute to teacher resistance.

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