

The Importance of CPD of in-service EFL Teachers in Indonesia: Suggestions for
Collaborative Professional Development

Asri Purnamasari

International Journal of English Learning and Teaching Skills

The Christian University of Indonesia

UKI Jakarta



Abstract

This essay aims to explore the need of in-service teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia to pursue Continuing Professional Development (CPD) by explaining what this means for the teachers and including some perspectives, types, and implementation of CPD. Based on some explorations of related literature reviews, my reflections on teaching practice, and some recent issues concerning Teacher Development (TD) in Indonesia, some suggestions for collaborative Professional Development (PD) is offered. As the result, this essay outlines the advantages of implementing collaborative PD to fulfil the needs of in-service TEFL in Indonesia, which could be acquired through mentoring as one way to pursue CPD. Based on related literature review, this essay will give suggestions on applying collaborative PD through mentoring which, it will be argued, can generate positive impacts for in-service TEFL in Indonesia. By mentoring, teachers may have opportunities to do self-reflection, appreciate their achievements, have some correction on their practices, and learn from others' practices as well as help one another. It is hoped that this essay may give useful information and knowledge for teachers, teacher educators, trainers, and governments about the needs of CPD and why implementation of collaborative PD through mentoring in Indonesia is recommended. For further research, this essay may contribute to some extension of related studies or suggestions from other teachers or researchers based on their experiences and perspectives of pursuing CPD through collaborative PD.

Keywords: CPD, in-service TEFL, collaborative PD, teacher development, mentoring.

The Importance of CPD of in-service EFL Teachers in Indonesia: Suggestions for
Collaborative Professional Development

Introduction

In the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching area – as in Indonesia, the role of teachers in finding appropriate way of helping learners ‘learning how to learn’ is very important. This might become a challenging process to achieve as teachers face various learner groups with different levels of background knowledge, different approaches to learn as well as differing levels of motivation. All of these subsequent challenges for the teachers may well strengthen the need to pursue CPD throughout their career path in order to face innovation and changes which are necessary parts of teacher development (Bailey 1992; Willis & Willis 1996).

Through engagement with CPD, effective approaches to teaching can be pursued– with reflection on teaching practices – in order to find the best solutions for obstacles encountered in classrooms and schools. Teachers might need CPD for some different reasons; some might need fresh and new inspiration about EFL teaching and learning since they have been teaching for many years in the same school or in some different schools. Others may need CPD as they are novice teachers who are fresh with their understanding and knowledge about English and teaching, but they need to find out some ways of putting their knowledge into real practice. For some teachers who teach business English, updating knowledge about recent advancement and issues in English Language Teaching (ELT) may be necessary. Additionally, for some teachers, teaching skills may become the most significant in their job and they want to continuously improving their skills and knowledge. Other teachers may

THE IMPORTANCE OF CPD IN INDONESIA

4

experience a new career path in ELT such as from teaching adults to teaching young learners, or from teaching primary to secondary, or even tertiary level of education, so that they would need some new knowledge and skills. Based on these conditions, by having CPD, teachers may find some solutions for their problems as well as improve their network among teachers and other professionals in their field.

This essay aims to explore the needs for CPD of in-service TEFL and find out the advantages of collaborative Professional Development (PD) as one way to develop teachers' CPD in Indonesia. As teachers frequently have experience of collaboration, discussion, and cooperation with many other EFL teachers in the same or different schools, these experiences could represent a plausible means for finding out which collaborative PD might be effectively implemented to develop teachers' CPD in Indonesia. This collaborative PD might also help teachers improve language awareness as well as development as teachers.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

There are several key terms used to determine how teachers process their knowledge and skills to improve their teaching practice as core of development. The terms which are used might be Teacher Development (TD), Professional Development (PD), or Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Even though there are some slight differences amongst these terms, in this essay, the term Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is applied as the needs for in-service TEFL in Indonesia and will combine the nature of the terms since the focus of all of these terms is on the development.

Within all of these terms, self-development is increasingly prioritised in EFL teacher development. Self-direction is defined as ‘characteristics of an individual that predispose one toward taking primary responsibility for personal learning endeavours (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991, p. 29)’. Head and Taylor (1997, p.1) further define teacher development as teachers’ inner resource for change which centres on personal awareness and self-reflective process. In pursuing professional development, reflective teaching becomes the most important process to be done by in-service EFL teachers, and this reflective teaching requires self-awareness and self-observation. This view is also strengthened by Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan (2001, p. 22) who state ‘self-awareness and self-observation are the cornerstones of all professional development’. Finally, as Nunan & Lamb (1996) stated, in teacher development of language learning, self-direction is key..

As effective teachers take responsibility for their professional development, their heart and mind of teaching may improve their practice based on self-reflection and this is good for their career path. Rhodes et al. (2004, p. 2) states that ‘professional development has been associated with improving classroom performance, engaging with opportunities created by change initiatives, preparing teachers for specialist roles within the organisation, preparing teachers for roles in management and leadership, and enabling the sharing of good practices through networking arrangements’. Thus the benefits of being exposed to these opportunities—to explore change and expand inner resources—are undeniable.

By encouraging self-development, teacher development as an on-going process of teachers’ professional and personal growth based on CPD characteristics can be activated. It is certainly useful to identify and analyse the strands which may constitute effective CPD. The characteristics of CPD according to Keith Harding (in *Modern English Teacher* Volume 18, Number 3, July 2009) are; (1) CPD is continuous which leads professionals to the needs of

THE IMPORTANCE OF CPD IN INDONESIA

6

dealing with new challenges and improve performances, (2) in CPD, it is teachers' responsibility to identify their needs and find out the way to meet the needs, (3) CPD uses evaluation rather than description to help teachers clearly understand the impacts of the activities, (4) CPD become an essential component of professional life. Although these appear to be higher-order skills which are challenging to achieve and maintain— particularly if not all aspects were duly emphasised at pre-service level—they could perhaps be seen as something to strive for with teachers constantly working to improve their effectiveness in these four areas. As Lange (1990, p. 250) explains, professional development is clearly desirable as continued growth for both before and throughout teaching career as teachers 'continue to evolve in the use, adaptation, and application of their art and craft ...teacher development is a term used in the literature to describe a process of continual intellectual, experiential, and attitudinal growth of teachers.' Complimentary to this perspective with perhaps further insights on how to put into practice Harding's (2009) characteristics of CPD, Sugrue (2002) suggests a continuum of CPD as (1) knowledge for practice which is based on teachers' engagement with instruction, (2) knowledge in practice which generates teachers' best practice implying reflective practice, and (3) knowledge of practice which correlate own learning and collaboration to construct new insights – based on the work of Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999).

Considering CPD through their career path, teachers may have faced challenges due to rapid change. They are offered many kinds of PD forms which, in some instances, may not meet their real needs. In these circumstances, the illustration of the principles for good quality PD delivered by Campbell et al. (2004 p. 17) may add further insights including the following: Teachers as models of lifelong learning for their students, integration of content and pedagogical knowledge with teachers' personal, professional, and moral purposes and active

learning styles which encourage ownership and participation. If teachers are able to enhance these practices through CPD, importantly they are more likely to be successful in encouraging these positive characteristics in their students.

Types of continuing professional development

Professional development can also be classified into ‘personal in nature, joint effort, and collaborative in nature of CPD’ as per Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan’s (2001) explanation. The personal or individual CPD consists of self-awareness and self-observation, reflective teaching, teaching journals, and teaching portfolios. The joint effort CPD could be doing action research, using cases, language learning experience, and using video. Then, collaborative CPD includes peer observations, team teaching, mentoring and coaching. Jake Richards (1990, p. 118) states that self-observation is ‘a systematic approach to the observation, evaluation, and management of one’s own behaviour for the purposes of achieving a better understanding and control over one’s own behaviour.’ Self-observation or self-monitoring could help teachers gather feedback for their teaching practices from learners, peers, or supervisors to gain professional growth. Then, it can help teachers to have critical reflection to improve their teaching practice and bridge what they actually do and what they think they do.

Richards (1990, p. 129-130) suggests that ‘the steps of doing self-observation consist of: (1) deciding teaching aspects that teachers are interested in learning more about or wish to

improve; (2) narrow to choice to the most important aspect; (3) develop an action plan to address the specific-identified-area; and (4) decide a timeframe for carrying out the goals.’ These steps are recommended for teachers to increase their awareness by having cognitive steps as the way to reach their professional development.

By having self-awareness and self-observation, teachers could bring their reflections and experiences to collaborative PD, and in this essay, the suggested way is through mentoring for in-service TEFL in Indonesia. There are some concerns of why mentoring is one way to pursuing CPD for in-service TEFL in Indonesia. Many novice teachers start their practice in government or private schools in every period. After finishing their teacher training programs, they bring new skills, current knowledge base, and various hopes of becoming good teachers in their early careers. By implementing mentoring as the way to pursue CPD, in-service TEFL in Indonesia could gain mutual advantages – on the one hand novice teachers as mentees can bring about fresh knowledge and up-to-date strategies and skills, they can lack the experience of implementing ideas into real practice. On the other hand, experienced teachers as mentors may have a greater wealth of reflections and stories of their teaching practices, but may need to reflect their practice with up-to date-knowledge and skills in ELT practice. Thus, mentoring may become a recommended way for novice and experienced teachers to transfer their knowledge in order to help each other. The experienced teachers and the novice teachers may also have other mentors who are teacher educators or teacher trainers in a more formal context.

Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan (2001, p. 206) elaborate further on the rationale, benefits and process: ‘Mentoring approach is designed to provide non-evaluative, nonthreatening sources of support and development options to practicing teachers’. They add ‘in language teacher development, a mentoring relationship can develop naturally between two people with an affinity and shared

professional interests. Schools and programs have also established formal mentoring programs for novice teachers in the induction years, who are assigned to work with more experienced teachers (p. 207)'. Formal mentoring may contribute positive input both for novice and experienced teachers, since they could build long-established way of imparting knowledge, skills, and understanding which last for many years until both mentor and mentee could see the growth of their professional development.

Although the teachers are not at the equal level or power, mentoring is not supervisory in nature of evaluation on behalf of the management of a school or program. Indeed, mentoring leads to teachers' CPD through interpersonal, on going, situated, supportive, and informative professional relationship between two or more individuals, one becoming the mentor should have more experience in the profession, craft, or skills, and knowledge. As Eisenman & Thornton (1999, pp. 80-81) state, nowadays the term mentor is applied to a 'situation in which a knowledgeable person aids a less knowledgeable person.'

The implementation of CPD

As collaboration in CPD is highly recommended, the need for this CPD approach for in-service TEFL seemed relevant also to the Indonesian context. Through collaboration, the conscious engagement with teacher development is an individual moral commitment (Pettis 2002 & Johnston 2003). Edge explains how CPD contributes differently at levels of self-development perspectives including individual or group development, the management perspectives including institutions, and the professional body perspectives including teachers, trainers, and educators (2002b). Despite the fact that teacher development and CPD have the

same nature as they are independent, this development is much better with ‘support from the organisation, school or system’ (Underhill, 1999, p. 2).

Becoming an EFL teacher in Indonesia in some ways is not an easy thing to do. There are some requirements to be fulfilled by teacher candidates. First of all, the candidates have to graduate from English teacher training and education study program in some accredited universities and most schools demand high achievement from teacher candidates. In these teacher training programs, pre-service teachers familiarise themselves with some ELT methodological terms and concepts, so that they are able to demonstrate some relevant strategies and techniques, for example for implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) completed with the knowledge to be taught. However, the knowledge and skills which are acquired by pre-service teachers in their teacher training programs may not be enough to become real in-service teachers. They also need some awareness of being teachers and their attitude towards ELT context might also require further development.

As Freeman (1989, p. 27) argued, in teacher training programs, teacher candidates acquainted themselves with trainable knowledge and skills, but not for the awareness and attitude which are context-based of which specific strategy or technique is appropriate for learners in a particular area. Teaching strategy and technique required by effective ELT context in Java Island is different with Moluccas and Borneo context; however, the core of professional development within ELT teachers should be continuously developed as they keep reflecting and share meanings of their practices.

From my perspective, when I was doing teacher training degree, I had a valuable opportunity to become an English teacher for some institutions as well as doing my teaching practice in formal school. This experience really helped me to gain an understanding of the real condition of ELT context and then reflect on it with the knowledge that I had learned. However, as a

novice teacher, I found so many challenges related to different teaching and learning quality. While, I finished my study with a high standard, I became actually aware of a mismatch between the target achievement level and the actual context. Sometimes English was not always fully relevant to students in the context. Increasing this relevance is an on- going CPD challenge for myself as well as other EFL practitioners in the context.

In another case, Indonesia has tried their best to pursue CPD for in-service teachers by having some teacher training programs, professional working groups such as KKG (primary teachers' working group), MGMP (secondary school subject teachers' working group), KKKS (primary school principles' working group), MKKS (secondary school principles' working group), KKPS (school working groups) and MKPS (supervisors' working group) and some other training program and certifications. However, these forums are not yet effectively improving teachers' quality related to their competence and skills in subject matter and pedagogy (USAID/ Indonesia, 2009). Therefore, nowadays, Indonesia Ministry of Education is trying to find and apply a new pattern of CPD for in-service teachers in Indonesia such as the certification program.

Why Collaborative PD is suggested to be implemented in Indonesia?

One of the main aims of teacher development is an increased awareness which is possibly gained through collaboration (Roberts, 1998). By having collaborative PD, CPD might be facilitated by collaborative and cooperative relationships. Since teacher development or PD include a process of increasing knowledge and awareness through reflective practice, by having collaborative PD teachers could be supported by others. Prabhu (2003) explains on-

going engagement with teaching experience and other teachers' version of experiences develops teacher's sense of plausibility. By having collaborative PD, teachers may create interaction within their practice and see new perspectives.

There are some types of collaborative PD which include observation and feedback, partnerships between external specialists and teachers, building on existing knowledge and practice, and peer support. By having collaborative PD in ELT context, teachers may find some advantages which could improve their practice as well as develop learners' achievements.

Teachers may have greater confidence, such as, in taking risks as they carefully reflect on their practice and have support from some colleagues who might have the same concern and problems. Related to teacher beliefs, teacher could enhance their beliefs in their power to make a difference to their practice since they the chance to discuss their reflection with peers and receive some comments to help them develop their professionalism. By having collaborative PD, teachers could develop enthusiasm for collaborative working, notwithstanding initial anxieties about being observed and received feedback. They could gain a greater commitment to changing practice and willingness to try new things as well enhancing knowledge and practice. Since teachers are able to target specific areas of their teaching practice, improvements can be noticed which may subsequently lead to positive impacts for learners' achievements.

Learners could enhance their motivation to learn as their teachers implement various methods and techniques to help learners acquiring knowledge based on recent issues and up- to-date learning demands. Learners may well also improve their performances including improved test result, greater ability in decoding, and enhanced reading fluency, as the result of high motivation in learning and specific techniques targeted by teachers. As teachers show more

positive attitude towards teaching context, the learners could also gain more positive responses to specific subjects. This positive improvement of EFL teaching and learning process could lead learners to get better organisation of work and they could use collaboration of learning strategy in achieving their learning goals. When teachers are professional in encouraging learners to constructively acquiring knowledge, the learners could increase their sophistication in responses to questions and develop a wider range of learning activities in class as learning strategies which are offered are also more various and effective for the learners.

Subsequently, implementing collaborative PD through peer observations, team teaching, mentoring and coaching would generate a positive impact on teachers' CPD as well as learners' achievements. Through all of types of applying collaborative PD, mentoring seems to be an appropriate way to help teachers pursuing their CPD. Mentoring is based on a simple belief that teachers need friends to share ideas and teachers should help each other to become more professional and create teaching quality as per Dewey's (1933, 1938) three essential teaching qualities – 'open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness'.

Why Mentoring would suit CPD for in-service TEFL in Indonesia?

It has so far been argued that mentoring is widely acknowledged as good practice in EFL and also seems to suit how teachers in Indonesia could pursue their CPD in a collaborative way. Through mentoring, which could be applied in ELT area, teachers may do the 'Craft Model' as a way to have student teacher and master teacher relationship. Michael Wallace (1991, p. 6) notes that through the craft model, 'the young trainee learns by imitating the expert's techniques, and following the expert's instructions and advices'. In order to make

this model successful, the mentors who are experienced teachers have to keep up their CPD, so that they could mentor the novice teacher with present and up-to-date model of teaching. Mentoring could also be applied in an informal mentoring relationship whereby the teacher meets his/her professional mentor in some experiences of professional development programs, such as in teacher education, research, or training programs. Additionally, mentoring could be implemented through situational leadership, whereas what Andrea Osburne has written in an article titled 'Situational Leadership and Teacher Education' (1989). Based on Osburne's literature review, there are two components of leadership behaviour, they are task behaviour as how leaders 'organise and define the roles of members of the group (followers)' related to 'what activities to do, and when, where and how the tasks are accomplished'. Then, relationship behaviour is how leaders 'maintain personal relationships between themselves and members of their group (followers) by opening up channels of communication [and] providing socio-emotional support' (Hersey and Blanchard, 1982, p. 96). Thus, mentoring could be formally embedded as an integral feature of a school's approach to management. If there is also scope for those involved negotiate the basis of this agreement informally and take ownership, success may then be more sustainable.

The needs for CPD of in-service TEFL in Indonesia is significantly improved, since The Ministry of Education is trying to find the appropriate patterns of pursuing professional development for in-service teachers in Indonesia. In this case, mentoring could influence many aspects of professional development in Indonesia so as to maintain the balance of educational teaching quality in all parts of Indonesia by having qualified teachers. In ELT context, mentoring can be implemented as one way to help teachers meet more professional teachers, trainers, or teacher educators within the same school, different schools, different areas, or even abroad, to develop their professionalism in teaching practice. As EFL teacher in Indonesia, I

could reflect my needs of pursuing CPD based on my teaching experiences, including having cooperation, communication, and collaboration with other ELT teachers.

Randall and Thornton (2001, p. 13) describe the roles of mentor related to personal development are ‘motivating the teacher, confidence boosting, counselling – listening to problems; helping to reduce feelings of anxiety, helping the teacher settle into the school, and problem-solving’. Fullerton and Malderez (1998) in Malderez & Bodoczky (1999, p. 4) provide additional analysis of the mentor role:

‘(1) model – to inspire and demonstrate, (2) acculturator – to show mentee the ropes and help mentee get used to the particular professional culture, (3) sponsor – to open doors, introduce mentee to the right people, and use their power (ability to make things happen) in the service of the mentee, (4) support – to be there, provide safe opportunities for the mentee to let off steam / release emotion, and act as a sounding board – for cathartic reason, (5) educator – to act as sounding board – for articulation of ideas, consciously create appropriate opportunities for the mentee, achieve professional learning objectives’.

Taking a look at these roles, in-service TEFL in Indonesia could find some positive outcomes of collaborative CPD which can be gained through mentoring. Teachers within schools or institutions could use external expertise linked to school-based activity, so that the focus of CPD could really relate the needs of the teachers in certain schools or institutions. Teachers may gain opportunities to identify their own CPD focus so they could focus on issues which were important to them. They might also process to encourage, extend, and structure professional dialogue with some other mentor from the same schools, other schools, teacher trainers or teacher educators to develop and enlarge their knowledge as well as their skills and experiences. By doing collaborative CPD through mentoring, teachers could scope to identify their own starting point and learning needs and finding out peer support. The mentoring also

let teachers do observation, particularly teachers observing each other and learning from each other, giving and getting feedback, refining reflective processes – particularly through debriefing Higher Education Institution (HEI) supports, and processing for sustaining the CPD over time to enable teachers to embed the practices in their own classroom setting.

Conclusion

This essay has attempted to identify the EFL teachers' CPD needs in Indonesia to pursue CPD based on some related literature and my personal experiences and reflections. The critical understanding of CPD in collaborative PD has been explored from some views and related studies. Even though in Indonesia, collaborative PD has been implemented, the effectiveness of CPD is not yet achieved. Based on these issues and in regards to the advantages of implementing collaborative PD, this essay suggests one way of doing collaborative PD, which is through mentoring. By doing mentoring, teachers could become 'reflective practitioner' and share their reflections to reach professional development. Further studies on developing effective mentor and mentee relationships and studies which show their impact on education in Indonesia would be useful.

References

- Bailey, K. (1992). The processes of innovation in language teacher development: what, why and how teachers change. In Flowerdew et al. (eds.), 253–282.
- Bailey, K., A. Curtis & D. Nunan (2001). *Pursuing professional development: the self as source*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Brockett, R. G. & R. Hiemstra (1991). *Self-direction in adult learning: perspectives on theory, research, and practice*. New York: Routledge.
- Campbell, A., McNamara, O., & Golroy, P. (2004) *Practitioner Research and Professional Development in Education*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Cochran-Smith, M. & Lytle, S. (1999) Teacher Learning in Communities, *Review of Research in Education*, 24, 249-306.
- Edge, J. (ed.) (2002b). *Continuing professional development*. Whitstable, UK: International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL).
- Eisenman, G. & Thornton, H. (1999). Telementoring: Helping new teachers through the first year. *T.H.E. Journal* 26 (9): 79-82.
- Freeman, D. (1989). Teaching training, development, and decision making: a model of teaching and related strategies for language teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly* 23, 27–45.
- Harsey, P. & Blanchard, K. H. (1982). *Management of organisational behaviour: Utilising human resources* (4th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Head, K. & Taylor, P. (1997) *Readings in Teacher Development*. Oxford: Macmillan Publishers Limited.

- Johnston, B. (2003). *Values in English language teaching*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Lange, Dale E. (1990). A blueprint for teacher development. In Jack C. Richards and David Nunan (eds.), *Second Language Teacher Education*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 245-268.
- Nunan, D. & C. Lamb (1996). *The self-directed teacher: managing the learning process*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Keith Harding (in Modern English Teacher Volume 18 Number 3, July 2009).
- Osborne, A. G. (1989). Situational leadership and teacher education. *System* 17 (3): 409-420
- Pettis, J. (2002). Developing our professional competence. In Richards & Renandya (eds.), 388–392.
- Prabhu, N. S. (2003). An interview with Alan Maley. *The Language Teacher* 27, 3–7.
- Randall, M., & Thornton, B. (2001) *Advising and Supporting Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rhodes, C., Stokes, M., & Hampton, G. (2004) *A Practical Guide to Mentoring, Coaching and Peer-networking: Teacher professional development in schools and colleges*. London: RoutledgeFalmer
- Richards, J. C. (1990). The teacher as self-observer: Self-monitoring in teacher development. In Jack C. Richards, *The Language Teaching Matrix*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 118-143.
- Roberts, J. (1998). *Language teacher education*. London: Arnold.
- Surgue, C. (2002) Irish Teachers' Experiences of Professional Learning: implications for policy and practice, *Journal of In-Service Education*, 28(2), 311-338
- Underhill, A. (1999). Continuous teacher development. *IATEFL Issues* 149, 14–18.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CPD IN INDONESIA

19

USAID/Indonesia. *Teacher Education and Professional Development in Indonesia: A Gap Analysis*. Jakarta: August 2009.

Wallace, M. (1991). *Training foreign language teachers: a reflective approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Willis, J. & D. Willis (eds.) (1996). *Challenge and change in language teaching*. Oxford: Heinemann.

