

Changes and Challenges in Language Teacher Education

Introducing CPD in Language Teacher Education in a South Asian context

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May 15, 2015

Overview

- **CPD - brief introduction**
- **Forms of CPD**
- **CPD in Bangladesh**
- **Challenges faced**
- **Forwarding an argument for a localized and sustainable version of CPD**

CPD in EDUCATION

CPD: Continuing (or Continuous) Professional Development

Two views – **narrow** and **broad**

Narrow View

Considers CPD as the imparting/ acquiring of **some specific sets of skills** and/or **knowledge** in order to deal with **some specific new requirements**.

e.g. training teachers to handle a new textbook,
using a new teaching aid,
introducing a new test format,
etc.

Broad View

Considers CPD as a much deeper, wider and longer term process.

Professionals:

- continuously enhance their knowledge and skills;
- enhance their thinking, understanding and maturity;
- grow not only as professionals, but also as persons;
- Their development is not restricted to their work roles, but may also extend to new roles and responsibilities, and their personal lives.

CPD

- Draws a **difference** between **staff development** (capacity building of the organization) and **professional development** (capacity building of the individual)
- Signifies broadly **the process of continuing growth of a professional** after joining the profession.
- Views **Professionals as life-long learners**

“CPD is a **planned, continuous and lifelong process** whereby teachers try to **develop their personal and professional qualities**, and to **improve their knowledge, skills and practice**, leading to their **empowerment**, the **improvement of their agency** and the **development of their organizations and their pupils**”.

(Padwad and Dixit 2011)

Salient Features of CPD

- Professional development as an **on-going process**
- **Throughout** their professional life
- nurtures teachers into becoming **reflective, analytic practitioners**
- Developing their **agency** rather than being subject to **deterministic** values and structures.

Forms of CPD

Hargreaves (2000):

Four historical phases in the development of teacher professionalism in many countries:

- the pre-professional age
- the age of the autonomous professional
- the age of the collegial professional
- the post professional or postmodern age.

Hargreaves argues that we are **entering the last phase** now, marked by a struggle between **'de-professionalizing'** and **'re-professionalizing'** forces.

Forms of CPD (cont)

Kennedy(2005):

Nine key models of CPD, over a wide spectrum from training through cascade to action research and transformation.

Classified in relation to their capacity for supporting professional autonomy and transformative practice.

Discusses the circumstances in which each model might be adopted, the form(s) of knowledge that can be developed through a model, the power relationships inherent in each model and the extent to which CPD is considered as an individual or as a collaborative endeavour.

CPD in Bangladesh: current status

- Relatively **little understood** or **explored**
- A wide-spread learning culture which favours **atomistic experiences**
- **In-service teacher training** - recurrent theme in policies/programmes of teacher education
- **Isolated teacher training events** focus on **short-term goals** of acquiring a set of skills and/ or some knowledge.
- **Rarely extends into the more comprehensive idea of CPD.**

Current status

- **Lack of recognition of CPD** in its own right as a life-long, continuous and largely voluntary process
- **Lack of understanding of the necessity** to develop CPD
- **Lack of support** to encourage this process

In short, a ***de-professionalizing*** approach
(Hargreaves 2000)

Reasons

- **Myopic state policies** regarding teacher development & professionalism
- Knock-on effect on **teachers attitudes and beliefs** of their roles and practices
- **Societal expectations** of teachers' roles
- The rampant presence of **private tutoring**
- The **constraints of an assessment system** that encourages memorization and therefore short-term goals of teaching to the test.

Coping Strategies

- Enabling teachers to clarify their perceptions and beliefs regarding professionalism
- Understanding the dynamics of change
- Adopting a socio-psychological-cultural perspective in order to steer the dynamics of change along a sustainable path

Understanding the dynamics of change

Fullan (2007) : speaks of **'re-culturing'** as the kind of **psychological acceptance required of users** when faced with new or changed modalities of delivery.

Weddel (2009) : this **same sense of 're-culturing'** needs to be undertaken by the **change agents** i.e. those bringing in change, clearly as a response to an understanding of the culture and the context.

Managing Innovation or change with sensitivity, sympathy and understanding.

Connecting to Teachers' Beliefs

- Enabling teachers to **clarify their prior perceptions**
- Helping teachers to **elaborate and develop their schema** about learning and teaching
- Providing teachers pathways of **linking own beliefs to current knowledge** regarding CPD.
- Allowing the development of **socially and culturally appropriate processes.**

Other Relevant Issues

- Encouraging **policy dialogues**
- Developing a **long-term strategy** for sustaining continuing teacher development
- Encouraging and facilitating research, including action research among teachers

Why Research?

- To find out more about both **academic and practical components of CPD**
- For policy makers who need to have **appropriate information about CPD theory and practice**
- For **teachers /student teachers** who are seeking to develop themselves
- For **teacher education managers** who are looking for ways of establishing more effective systems for teacher development in their specific contexts.

A Localised Version of CPD

- Exploring areas where there are difficulties, introducing changes gradually, with caution and with plenty of support
- Culturally appropriate
- Appealing to teachers' own belief systems and linking them to best practices
- Supported by policy initiatives
- Societal recognition
- Appreciation (reward?) by the administration

'Re-Professionalising' Strategies

- Encouraging professionals to go beyond a short-term goal
- Developing knowledge-seeking processes among professionals (e.g. action research)
- Extending professional orientation e.g. through institutional and peer support)
- Developing emotional/cognitive states (e.g. promoting reflection)
- Developing the idea of collaboration e.g. in partnered activities
- Promoting mentoring e.g. through partnership with institutions
- Networking through Teachers Clubs and Associations

TALKING POINTS

- In your context, to what extent is CPD recognized and practised?
- What are the positive features?
- Any challenges?
- Any example of some best practice?
- Questions/Comments

Thank you

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