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The impact of continuing professional development on EFL teachers employed in federal universities in the United Arab Emirates

Submitted by

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To

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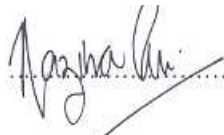
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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this thesis is to explore the continuing professional development (CPD) of expatriate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers employed in the foundation English programme of federal universities in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In order to understand the phenomenon of CPD from the perspective of experienced teachers in the context this study explores their perceptions about CPD; along with their choice of CPD initiatives and the reasons and factors which impact on their choice. It also explores teachers' suggestions about improving CPD in their context. It is expected that the results of this thesis will create awareness of these aspects among experienced EFL teachers, their institutions, local CPD organisations and as well as the community of experienced expatriate tertiary teachers of EFL. It is also expected that the study will raise implications to consider for improving the CPD experience of teachers in the context.

Data was obtained using face to face individual and focus group interviews with volunteers who were foundation EFL teachers with a minimum of five years teaching experience in the context. Results revealed that participants in the study valued CPD as lifelong professional evolution that resulted in evident change. High preference emerged for participation in learning through participation in activities that provided opportunities for dialogue and collaboration. However, participants experienced less empowered and without a voice in the implementation of the institutional CPD agenda. Similarly disillusionment was experienced with CPD organisations' standardized initial teacher education focused CPD.

The study highlights how when teachers feel less empowered in their existing professional and occupational communities, they exercise their agency in finding alternative means of professional development. One result of this situation is the emergence of teacher initiated communities where learning takes place in an environment of mutual shared understandings. This also illuminates the existence of untapped expertise in the context which if exploited can benefit federal institutions; their teachers, CPD providers and subsequently others in the context. The main implication arising from this study is for federal universities, teachers and CPD providers to work in tandem and attempt to establish teacher learning communities of practice within the institution for situated learning within the context of practice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABP	Academic Bridge Programme
CELTA	Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults
CEPA	Common English Proficiency Assessment
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DELTA	Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults
DVD	Digital Video Disc
EdD	Doctor of Education
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
GED	General Education Division
HCT	Higher Colleges of Technology
IATEFL	International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
ICDL	International Computer Driving License
IELTS	International English Language Testing Systems
ILA	Independent Learning Activities
INSET	In Service Education and Training
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
LTE	Language Teacher Education
MERC	Magrudy's Educational Resource Centre
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOHESR	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
PD	Professional Development
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
PLC	Professional Learning Communities
SIG	Special Interest Group
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TESOL Arabia	Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages in Arabia
TESOL	Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAEU	United Arab Emirates University
UCPN	University City Professionals' Network
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
ZU	Zayed University

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1   Background to the study

Teacher development is a never ending cycle of teacher learning that begins with initial teacher training and continues for as long as a teacher remains in the profession. The fact that teaching is a public profession places teachers in the spotlight of societal expectations of continually finding ways to improve student learning. The way to make this possible is by enabling teachers to 'continue to evolve in the use, adaptation and application of their art and craft' (Lange, 1990:250). Hence, the term continuing professional development (CPD) implies, 'all the activities in which teachers engage in during the course of a career which are designed to enhance their work' (Day & Sachs, 2004:3). Such activities are intended to result in on-going teacher learning, a process by which teachers move towards expertise (Kelly, 2006).

The terms professional development (PD) and CPD, are often used in a broad sense to refer to all forms of formal and less formal learning undertaken by experienced teachers during the course of their career (Craft, 2000). Teachers undertake learning during their careers not because they lack knowledge but because there is an obvious need for teaching professionals to cater to the needs of a continually and rapidly changing world. Furthermore, considering that learning is socially situated, teacher development cannot be separated from their professional social experiences (Roberts, 1998) which are part of their work context. While the two terms PD and CPD are used to refer to the same thing − on-going teacher development − in my thesis I have used the term CPD as it is more commonly used at an institutional level (Mann, 2005) as well as in the field of TESOL in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) which is the context of my investigation.

The educational system and teacher education system in the UAE have been undergoing a review for a few years now. The Ministry of Education (MOE), which oversees school education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHESR), which is responsible for higher education of UAE nationals, are both focused on developing teachers in their respective areas of education. The ultimate aim of the MOHESR is to bring public higher education in the UAE into parity with international

educational standards, and in order to do so they encourage federal institutions to develop the teachers they employ.

A subsequent aim of the MOHESR is also to achieve international accreditation for federal universities of higher education in the UAE. As a result, the MOHESR has issued directives for federal universities to encourage CPD among teachers as a mandatory requirement. Despite the emphasis on higher education teacher development and despite the considerable developmental activity that exists among teachers; their development remains a relatively unexplored field. The purpose of my thesis is then to investigate the CPD of English language teachers employed in federal universities in the UAE, with focus on the contextual aspects that affect their development process. My specific focus is on experienced foundation English teachers in my study, the rationale for which appears in the following section.

1.1   Rationale for the study

My interest in exploring the subject of CPD in federal universities relates to my interest in the development of experienced teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). In part this reflects my work in federal universities in the UAE for ten years now, which has made me aware of the significant role CPD plays in the lives of teachers employed in these institutions. I am also familiar with the role of context and some of the factors that affect the CPD activities of these teachers. Such factors include concerns among experienced teachers that they are not getting opportunities to utilize their versatile experience to its full capacity.

One reason why such a concern exists among teachers is linked to the MOHESR providing institutions with frameworks within which teachers are expected to engage in CPD. In order to realise the MOHESR directives, institutions organise in-house development events and make teachers aware of the requirement to engage in on going development as part of measuring individual performance development. Institutional CPD provisions may not necessarily match the needs of experienced teachers which may vary from those of teachers with less experience. This seemingly has an effect on the way experienced teachers choose to develop, the types of opportunities that they seek and whether they choose to develop in-house or outside their institutions.

My interest in exploring CPD of EFL teachers employed in federal universities also relates to my involvement with an organisation called TESOL Arabia (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), which is the largest CPD provider for English language teachers in the UAE and the Middle East. Between 2001 and 2006, I worked as a volunteer organiser with TESOL Arabia. My role involved organising CPD events such as workshops, presentation sessions, conferences and symposiums for English language teachers in the UAE. Through the feedback gained on the CPD events organised and through personal interactions with experienced teachers from federal universities who were either participants or presenters, I obtained useful feedback about the varying CPD trends, and the needs and interests of experienced teachers that differ from those of less experienced teachers.

It is apparent that federal universities in the UAE provide numerous CPD opportunities within the institutions. I will discuss these opportunities in detail along with the roles and responsibilities of teachers employed in federal universities in chapter two. However, there are numerous CPD activities going on outside the institutions as well and, interestingly, several experienced teachers who work for federal universities are actively involved in these external CPD initiatives. Indeed, through my experiences of working in federal universities and through my involvement with TESOL Arabia, I noticed that there appeared to be a general disregard for institutional CPD activities and instead teachers seemed to have a preference for involvement in non-institutional CPD.

It appears that part of this lack of uptake of development opportunities offered by institutions has to do with the way that experienced teachers feel undervalued, unheard and unempowered within their workplaces. It also seems to suggest that while they may feel that they can make a contribution to teacher development within their institution, they might either not get the opportunity to do so or may not be motivated enough to do so. This may be partly the reason why they might either completely reject institutional CPD opportunities or they might be looking to utilise their professional experiences outside the institution.

This situation of teachers' experiences and interests intrigued me and made me interested in exploring the reasons behind these. With this in mind my aims in this study were therefore to become aware of their CPD experiences and understand what teachers

think about CPD. I also wanted to find out more about the development choices that experienced teachers were generally making and why. More importantly, I was keen to hear their voices pertaining to the contributions that they think they could make or were already making toward CPD (institutional or external), and how they perceived CPD within their contexts could be enriched to make it equally useful to both experienced and less experienced teachers.

My interest in specifically exploring the CPD of mid to late career EFL teacher stems from another reason. Most EFL teachers working in federal universities are employed to teach in the foundation English programme. Typically, they are either Western or European expatriates with considerable experience in terms of teaching years. Generally, foundation EFL teachers are also well travelled and come to the UAE after having worked in a variety of cultural settings. Many of them are contributing in a variety of ways to enrich both language learner development and EFL teacher development in their institutions. However, the precise nature of their contribution is unclear. In addition, while most research on teacher development is often carried out by experienced teachers from federal universities, research on their own development remains an unexplored area.

In other words, in the UAE research on different aspects of EFL teaching and learning forms a major part of federal teachers' work and development. However, research carried out within the context is mostly focused on either beginner teachers or language learners. To the best of my knowledge there has been little research carried out or literature produced on the CPD of experienced EFL teachers in federal universities in the UAE. As a result there is minimal or no insight into the development of these mid to late career teachers working in federal universities in the UAE. Hence, the purpose of my study is to investigate in-depth the phenomenon of CPD from the perspective of experienced EFL teachers employed in one particular programme, the foundation English programme, of federal universities in the UAE. Through an exploration of their experiences, I expect to develop a better understanding of how EFL teachers can be supported in their CPD efforts both within their institutions and outside.

1.2   The aims and objectives of the study

Through my investigation I intend to illuminate insiders' views of the numerous aspects associated with CPD and, as a result, provide a comprehensive picture of these teachers' development in the context. My research will seek to address the following aims:

1) To explore the CPD experiences of EFL teachers and their understanding about CPD

2) To gain awareness of the kind of CPD initiatives that they undertake and the reasons and factors which impact on their choice

3) To provide teachers with the opportunity to voice their views on how CPD can be enhanced/improved in their context

4) To create an awareness of the above among teachers, their institutions, CPD providers as well as the local community of tertiary level EFL teachers; and to consider the implications of the study for improving the CPD experience of experienced EFL teachers.

1.3   Significance of the study

I expect that my investigation will be able to provide insight into the CPD experiences of teachers employed in federal universities in the UAE, the types of CPD options open to them, the factors which influence their choice of CPD, the benefits and critical issues pertaining to CPD and the lessons that can be learnt from experienced teachers in terms of pursuing and planning CPD. The results of the study are expected to be significant in better understanding the local CPD situation from the perspectives of insiders (foundation EFL teachers) by gaining insight into their experiences. I also expect my study to draw attention to the significant amount of untapped expertise that exists within the researched context and the lack of shared dissemination of this within the federal universities among teachers.

Through these insights I intend to firstly highlight the CPD of tertiary teachers in a particular socio-cultural setting (the Gulf region) which presumably and to the best of my knowledge has not received much in-depth analysis to date. This may deepen an

understanding of the interplay between CPD and socio-cultural settings. Secondly, in looking at experienced teachers in tertiary institutions; I intend to contribute to the field of TESOL teacher CPD as a whole, as this too presumably and to the best of my knowledge has not received much attention in research or in the literature. My objective is thus to contribute to existing knowledge and research relating to CPD of experienced tertiary teachers through recognition of teachers' voices and to stimulate interest in further investigation into specific aspects associated with teachers' development in different socio-cultural settings.

1.4   Organisation of the study

Following this introduction chapter, the second chapter provides detailed information about the background of the context within which I carried out my investigation. Chapter three is a review of the literature and the conceptual framework that guides my research. Chapter four presents the detailed research design and methodology that influenced my research. It also includes details of data collection and analyses followed by a discussion of research quality issues. In chapter five I have presented the findings along with a descriptive analysis of data. A discussion of the interpreted findings in relation to the research questions appears in chapter six of the thesis. The thesis finally ends with chapter seven which comprises conclusions and implications of the findings for CPD of experienced EFL teachers in the context, as well as for future research in the subject.

CHAPTER TWO
CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

2   Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the context in which my investigation occurs. It begins with a brief insight into the set up and operation of federal higher education universities in the UAE; the significance of English language education in the UAE; and the role of EFL teachers employed in federal universities. I will also discuss the nature and significance of continuing professional development (CPD) for EFL teachers, the forms of CPD available to them and the role of professional development providers in EFL teacher development in the UAE. The chapter subsequently concludes by drawing on insights about teacher engagement with CPD that were obtained from a preliminary survey undertaken before the actual data collection.

2.1   Federal universities of higher education in the United Arab Emirates

The UAE is comprised of a confederation of seven emirates; Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah. Each emirate has its own government that reports to the government of UAE resident in the capital city of Abu Dhabi. State education, however, is a field that is governed by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in schools, and by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHESR) in universities. The MOE and MOHESR are responsible for decision making and implementation in schools and colleges respectively, all over the UAE.

Since the interest of my study lies in the context of higher education, I will limit this chapter to describing higher educational universities in the UAE that are meant for educating UAE national men and women. These universities, referred to as federal universities, are funded by the government and are governed by the MOHESR. At the time of my study the federal higher education network comprised three establishments - The Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT), the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU), and, the Zayed University (ZU). The universities are governed by His Highness Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mabarak Al Nahyan, the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research of UAE; and the chancellor of the three establishments who takes great pride in the responsibility for their progress.

The HCT are a nationwide network of sixteen colleges that offer Diploma, Higher Diploma and Bachelor's degree programmes, as well as a vocational certificate programme. The UAEU and ZU also offer undergraduate and graduate degree programmes in several disciplines (See figure 2.1 in appendix 1 for more information on federal universities). While all federal universities have separate campuses for men and women, as is the norm for educational establishments in the UAE, the ZU is an exception in that it caters to the higher education of female students only. However, at the time of writing this thesis, plans were underway for setting up a men's campus in Abu Dhabi.

2.2   English language education for UAE nationals

A majority of UAE nationals undergo fourteen years of schooling in state schools, beginning from two years in kindergarten to grade twelve. The medium of instruction in these schools is Arabic, which is the native language of UAE nationals. This means that all subjects are taught in the Arabic language and English is studied as a subject only. As a result, UAE nationals graduating from state high schools struggle to cope with education in federal universities where the official language of instruction and administration is English. In contrast, nationals who can afford to attend private schools often graduate with a competitive command of English Language and are quite successful in university education.

In order to help the vast majority of nationals educated in state schools, federal universities offer freshman students a foundation programme to bridge English language skills deficiencies that may hinder their successful uptake of a higher degree in an English medium institution. According to Subha Al Shamisi, Director of National Admissions and Placements Office (NAPO) in the MOHESR, the primary focus of the foundation bridging programme is 'to facilitate participation in university education, and enhance their (UAE national students'), ability to communicate their ideas and articulate about their aspirations in English throughout their lives' (Khaleej Times, October 2005).

Student enrolment in different levels of the foundation English programme is decided based on their results from the Common English Proficiency Assessment (CEPA), a mandatory post-secondary national exam that 'aims at accurately gauging English

language capabilities of students in government educational institutions in the country' (Khaleej Times, October 2005). The number of high school graduates that score low on the CEPA significantly outnumber those who score high enough to be directly enrolled in undergraduate programmes in federal universities. For example, in April 2010, only 977 students out of nearly 15,000 scored enough to qualify for admission into the foundation course (The National, 25th May 2010) where they will spend the next 18 months before being accepted into a degree or diploma programme.

The influx of students into the foundation English programme every year requires a significant number of EFL teachers to teach them. Hence, while some English language teachers work as subject teachers in various undergraduate departments, the majority of EFL teachers are employed in the foundation programme where they teach foundation EFL skills to the vast numbers of students aspiring to study in the undergraduate degree programmes at the respective universities.

2.2.1   The foundation English language programmes

At the time of this study the HCT foundation department was referred to as the General Education Division (GED), the UAEU foundation programme was called the University General requirements Unit (UGRU) and, the ZU foundation programme was referred to as the Academic Bridge Programme (ABP). The GED in the HCT offers two one-year foundation programmes that prepare students for the Diploma and the Higher Diploma programmes before entering the bachelor's programme. Each foundation programme comprises different levels of intensive English language courses integrated with core subjects like numeracy, computing skills, and a set of personal and professional development courses which help develop effective study skills for the English medium degree programmes offered by HCT. The GED also offers a Work Readiness Certificate programme which involves practical assessment of work experience and developing higher levels of professional skills and capabilities.

At the UAEU, the UGRU offers a four level foundations programme covering communication skills in English. It culminates in a final International English Language Testing Systems (IELTS) assessment to certify students' eligibility for the degree programmes offered at the university. The English language course is integrated with Math, Information Technology, Islamic Thought, UAE Society courses and Arabic skills. Students can also study customised English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses

before enrolling in degree programmes. These semester long courses focus specifically on helping students develop the language, study and research skills required for studying a particular degree at the university.

The ABP at ZU comprises eight levels of intensive English courses. Students placed in a course level must successfully complete the remaining levels before they can exit level eight of the programme. Successful students are placed on a year long Colloquy on Integrated Learning programme before they can enter the Baccalaureate programme. This again includes a professional English Language course. More details on the subjects taught as part of the foundation programmes offered by federal universities appear in figure 2.2 in appendix 1.

2.3   The role of EFL teachers in the foundation programme

Federal universities in the UAE are known for recruiting experienced and highly qualified international teachers who excel in their experience of modern teaching methods. As such, teachers are expected to be strongly committed to student success and excellence in learning and teaching. The universities share a common commitment to student oriented learning and developing freshman students as lifelong autonomous learners, based on a set of essential learning outcomes. Beginning with the foundation programme, the learning outcomes are incorporated into the curriculum and include facilitating development of the following:

- Effective communication skills in English
- Information technology skills to enhance productivity
- Critical thinking and quantitative reasoning for problem solving and informed opinion development
- Information literacy skills to be able to find, evaluate and use information from multiple sources
- Global awareness and cultural tolerance
- Leadership skills

(Adapted from 2007-2008 online catalogues of the federal universities in UAE)

An important responsibility of foundation teachers in any institution is to incorporate the learning outcomes established by their university into the course work. This is accomplished through learning activities both inside and outside the classroom that provide freshman students with a foundation and framework for all their university studies thereafter.

Foundation teachers are thus engaged in class preparation, course materials development, teaching, continuous evaluation of students' academic progress and assisting them in meeting the foundation goals using a variety of creative learning approaches. They are also engaged in continually designing, reviewing, evaluating and updating the integrated curriculum to ensure that the programme conforms to international standards. In addition, they act as student advisors during office hours and after by appointment. Their overall responsibility toward freshman students hence includes not only teaching academic and personal success skills but also helping them adjust and develop in university education and life.

Other essential responsibilities of foundation teachers include the following:

Providing learning support services

It is the responsibility of foundation teachers to familiarize freshman students with learning resources in the institutional learning centres. This includes training them to effectively use interactive educational software, learning games, graded readers, educational DVDs (Digital Video Discs), board games that enhance learning and other types of print based material that aids independent practice of English language communication skills.

They support students through individual or group tutorials on using the learning centre resources, organise language skills workshops and also help them with completing project assignments, reviewing course materials and finding additional EFL practice materials. Each institution has separate learning centres in the men's and women's campuses and these are known by a variety of names, such as Independent Learning Centres, Learning Resource Centres, English Language Centres, Student Success Centres or Learning Enhancement Centres.

Supervising independent learning activities

The Independent Learning Activities period (ILA) is either a one or two hour self study period that forms a significant aspect of student learning and development in the foundation programme. It provides opportunities for students to review and consolidate study material, engage in reading and to remediate any areas of weakness through guided self-study using texts, Internet resources and learning centre facilities. Teachers help students assume increased responsibility for self-directed learning under supervision.

Organizing peer tutoring

Peer tutoring is a way for students to get one-on-one help from fellow students and reinforce learning that occurs in the classroom. Teachers identify academically competent students, pair them with students facing problems with academic work, and help organize a regular meeting schedule. Students who express interest in peer tutoring are trained, guided and continually supported by the teachers responsible. They are encouraged through incentives such as being paid or receiving professional development certificates for their services. Teachers' responsibility includes ensuring that both tutors and tutees benefit from the programme by improving knowledge, creativity, experimentation and problem solving skills.

Facilitating laptop learning

Students in federal universities receive personal laptops to encourage development of independent learning skills through effective use of information technology. It is part of their teachers' responsibility to ensure that freshman students are familiarized with appropriate usage and care of equipment, to make learning via technology creative and to ensure that students understand how the optimal use of technology can enhance their learning and development.

Furnishing learning resources

Teachers are responsible for continually providing language learning resources in the form of both paper based and online materials. This is done either by faculty involved in the programme development committees creating resources for the curriculum during that year, or by individual teachers creating learning resources for the learning centres or even for the groups of students that they are personally responsible for.

In addition to the above mentioned responsibilities, teachers are expected to accompany students in their activity club sessions or on field trips, assist them in preparing class presentations, organise guest speakers for students, assign and monitor project work, and prepare students for specific college events and formal work experience. The ZU ABP places great emphasis on students creating E-portfolios (electronic portfolios), starting in the freshman year. Teachers and advisors help students develop the portfolio, review the content with students, and prepare them for internship. Besides the two semesters of five months each (twenty weeks), a number of teachers also teach on the ten week summer semester which is aimed at students who need extra study practice. In addition, they are often voluntarily (paid) involved in developing, customizing and teaching both part time and full time language courses.

Considering the profound involvement of EFL teachers in the core programme, it is not surprising that institutions expect them to continually enhance their teaching quality and professional capabilities. An important impetus for this is the MOHESR requirement to promote CPD so as to maintain a high quality EFL workforce in the federal universities which will ultimately make the universities eligible for international accreditation. The role of institutions is to make EFL teachers aware of the MOHESR requirements, provide them with a framework of CPD within the institution and encourage teachers through various means and incentives to partake of the opportunities provided. Having said that, the responsibility for individual CPD is generally left with the teachers themselves, along with an understanding that evident lack of development will feature prominently in their annual performance appraisals or affect their annual increment.

The next section provides insight into the nature of CPD as it exists and is available to teachers employed in federal universities and in the UAE.

2.4   Forms of CPD available to EFL teachers

Under the direction of the MOHESR, teachers are expected to actively engage in best teaching practices that are subject to continual improvement. This is expected to be done through the various forms of CPD available either within the institution that faculty are employed in or through other forms of external activities organised by PD providers or by teachers themselves. In this section I will first describe the various

forms of institutional CPD and then go on to describe the types of external CPD available to EFL teachers in the UAE.

2.4.1 Forms of institutional CPD

In order to make it possible for teachers to fulfil MOHESR and institutional requirements pertaining to CPD, the federal universities have dedicated 'faculty development units' committed to the CPD of their teachers. The faculty development units consist of professional development committees headed by coordinators who are expected to collaborate with teachers to support, stimulate and enhance professional career growth in line with organizational aims and interests. Thus faculty development units are actively engaged in providing both formal and informal training and development opportunities with the aim of encouraging teachers to reflect on and critique their own practice, develop new insights into pedagogy, explore new understandings of content resources and to explore advanced uses of technology enhanced learning.

However, whether they avail themselves of the opportunities or not during the year is left up to teachers themselves. Nevertheless, as mentioned in the previous section, teachers are required to account for their participation in CPD through institutional appraisal mechanisms at the end of the year. Among the opportunities or incentives that institutions provide are the following:

Learning technologies

With universities in UAE moving toward wireless classrooms and online delivery, there is a strong focus on developing teachers in modern teaching methods using the latest technology sources in creative ways. Consequently, teacher development is driven not only by the need to acquire skills in the use of appropriate software but also to enable application of current and relevant methodologies. To this effect all federal institutions encourage their faculty to acquire the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) to certify computer literacy skills. The institutional learning centres also facilitate teacher development in using modern technology as a teaching/learning tool.

These centres not only provide consultation in web design and E-learning development but also assist faculty with Blackboard Learning Management System, and the SharePoint portal support. In addition, learning centres host WebCT online courses and

tutorials for on-line programme delivery through blended learning. They also provide access to self-training manuals for software, continually update their E-resources data bank with latest E-books and E-journals, provide access to useful links for teaching resources, research and on-line magazines, as well as organize workshops to help teachers upgrade their technology skills.

In-house events

Faculty development units regularly organize forums, workshops, seminars and annual in-house themed conferences, in order to provide a platform for practitioners to communicate research in education. They also collaborate with learning centres to arrange PD workshops in areas like online pedagogy, effective learning using technology, and, the use of educational technology to support learning issues and outcomes.

Recently, for example, in June 2008, faculty at the Dubai Men's HCT participated in an international Virtual Blended Learning Conference at Hertfordshire University in the United Kingdom through live web telecasts to Dubai. The ZU too, regularly hosts an annual E-learning conference open to all teachers in the UAE.

Funding

Teachers are expected to engage in research, attend or present at institutional conferences. This is encouraged through annual allocation of funds by department. Financial incentives are also made available to host conferences and guest speakers as well as to encourage participation in external CPD events (regional and international).

CPD days

Some institutions allocate monthly professional development days for teachers to attend in-house development workshops, forums, seminars, courses and organize group meetings to exchange and share experiences, ideas and expertise.

Educational publications

Federal universities publish their own educational journals and other publications with contributions from teachers as a way of communicating research and ideas. Classroom Connections, an education journal published by the HCT twice a year, is aimed at supporting new teachers with articles on challenges facing teachers in the classroom,

constructive classroom behaviour and effective learning strategies (Gulf News, 14 May 2005). It was initiated with the intent of fostering shared best practices and networking among educators in the UAE, and is available both online and in print. The HCT press has also published volumes of Teacher Education Series consisting of papers and academic research studies by teachers.

Online news

All federal universities publish their own online newsletters regularly with news of events, milestones and developments. Archives of research papers presented by teachers are often hosted on the respective faculty development unit's website in each institution along with news of upcoming CPD events within the institution.

Higher educational degrees

Considering that research forms a strong base for teacher development, all institutions encourage and expect their teachers to study for higher degrees in their own time. This initiative aligns with the MOHESR requirements of all teachers teaching in higher educational institutions in the UAE to possess at least a Masters degree in their area of specialisation in addition to certification of their qualified teacher status.

2.4.2   Forms of external CPD in the UAE

In the last few years several CPD bodies have been established in the UAE. These include both teacher initiated CPD providers such as TESOL Arabia (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) and independent external providers such as Magrudy's Educational Resource Centre, or the British Council which furnish off-site/external (outside the institutions) opportunities for EFL teachers to learn from a wider network of practitioners and researchers. Often teachers may opt for external CPD because the incentive of funding is available or because with years of experience within their own institution, there may be some amount of dissatisfaction with the in-house CPD opportunities available as these may not serve their development needs anymore. Experienced teachers (in my experience) may often be at a stage in their careers where there is usually a stronger desire to understand what is going on beyond their workplace environment in the wider external context of TEFL research and education.

A brief insight into the activities of each of these CPD providers appears on the following pages.

TESOL Arabia

TESOL Arabia has been the most popular not-for-profit CPD organization in the UAE since 1993. Founded by a group of EFL teachers from the UAEU, it is run by volunteer members and has representation in all emirates in the UAE. It is committed to providing opportunities for networking and CPD to its members, who are mostly UAE-based English language teaching professionals. TESOL Arabia is established on a similar pattern as the IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language), which, like TESOL Arabia, is also an affiliate of TESOL International. Apart from representation in different emirates, TESOL Arabia has six Special Interest Groups (SIGs). The activity level of the organization is enormous, with regular events being organized in each emirate, in addition to an annual international conference that is open to local and international TESOL/EFL practitioners.

Some of the benefits that paid members of TESOL Arabia enjoy appear as follows;

- Free of cost quarterly publications
- Free attendance and the chance to present at regional events
- Travel grants to attend international conferences
- Study grants to benefit from training courses
- The opportunity to publish research articles in any of the TESOL Arabia publications

(TESOL Arabia website 'Membership Benefits', 2008)

Magrudy's Educational Resource Centre

Magrudy's Educational Resource Centre (MERC) is the academic support unit of Magrudy's Enterprises, a popular network of bookshops across the UAE. The MERC is located in Dubai, where it hosts regular three half-day workshops and training programmes that are open to any EFL educator from the Gulf region. Specialist speakers are usually invited from the University Of Cambridge Faculty Of Education.

Often publishing companies also approach the centre to launch new books, and new schemes of work like the use of whiteboard and ICT education. At the time of this study, the MERC also facilitated a PGCE (Post Graduate Certificate in Education) teacher training course in association with the University of Sunderland in the United Kingdom. In addition, it houses a library of educational resources, periodicals and journals in its purpose-built facility, and is equally popular with federal and non-federal teachers.

The British Council

The British Council is an international organization representing the United Kingdom in order to promote educational opportunities and cultural relations in UAE. It organises regular teacher training workshops for English language teachers and runs courses like the Cambridge Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults (DELTA) distance programme; the Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA); along with other short courses tailored to specific institutions' needs. In addition, they host online resources to help English language teaching professionals in the classroom.

In addition to external teacher-directed initiatives such as TESOL Arabia and independent external CPD providers such as MERC and the British Council, teachers from federal universities are also involved in other self-directed informal initiatives. These may be either individual or in collaboration with other teachers from either their own or other federal institutions in UAE. The next sub-section describes one such increasingly favoured self-directed CPD initiative in the UAE.

Professional communities

Professional communities in the UAE currently exist at two levels; face to face and online. Face to face communities may be institutional or external, while online communities operate both locally and globally. In this section I will briefly discuss each of the kinds of communities mentioned.

a) Face to face communities

Often individuals or groups of teachers in the same institution may spontaneously get together to set up face to face professional discussion or learning communities. One such example is that of the UGRU English Educational Technology Committee in the

UAEU. This committee encourages small group meetings of UGRU EFL faculty to share knowledge. It also offers training and assistance in teaching tasks and projects.

Alternatively, teachers from different institutions may also come together to set up external professional communities for general exchange of ideas and for discussing and solving learning/teaching issues. An example is that of the University City Professionals' Network (UCPN) that was established by Sharjah HCT teachers in 1999. It comprised EFL teachers from Sharjah HCT and other non-federal universities like the American University of Sharjah, the University of Sharjah and the Sharjah Police Sciences Academy – all of which are located in the University City, Sharjah.

It appears that institutional communities such as the UGRU English Educational Technology Committee have a tendency to be more permanent in comparison to external communities such as the UCPN, which phased out quite quickly. For example, the last recorded event of the UCPN was held in 2005 and since then it has gradually become inactive. I will avoid discussing the reasons and factors associated with the growth or phasing out of professional communities as this is beyond the scope of my current study. However, it is worth mentioning here that the formation and growth of situated professional communities as a form of CPD may form an interesting area of further research.

b) Local online discussion communities

Another type of professional communities that are fast becoming popular is online discussion groups or virtual communities. Within the UAE, individual teachers with subject area expertise are collaborating with colleagues who have the technical knowledge to form themed online discussion groups. Two such very active discussion lists are the 'Distance Learning Issues' list and the 'Learner Independence' list. These discussion lists, formed using popular web services like Yahoo_groups or Google_groups, are focused on different areas in ELT (English Language Teaching) to encourage active exchange of ideas and problem solving.

The 'Learner Independence' group also has their own wiki page at <http://www.tailearn.pbwiki.com> which focuses on issues related to the promotion of independent learning, such as, materials, strategies, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), internet, Ed-tech, current research, learning centres, learning styles,

and student-centred tasks. The 'Distance Learning issues' list on the other hand, explores and debates issues relevant to EFL teachers involved in any mode of distance learning as students, managers or course designers. The group as well has its own page at <http://groups.google.com/group/distancelearningissues>

c) Global online communities

In addition to local discussion lists, numerous EFL teachers are also members of global virtual communities such as those belonging o the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL). One such group is the IATEFL Business English Special Interest Group's (BESIG) 'Ning' network which can be found at <http://iatefl-besig.ning.com>. This network was formed prior to the IATEFL 2010 conference by IATEFL BESIG to give members the chance to meet and network online prior to attending events organised by the SIG. Following the conference the group is still active with over sixty-five members who are interested in teaching 'Business English' and who are located in various countries around the world.

A recent initiative by TESOL Arabia (2010) following on similar lines as IATEFL has been the setup of an online conference portal <http://taconference.org> that is accessible to members worldwide. As a result, the TESOL Arabia annual 2010 conference reached out to the global community of EFL teachers just as the IATEFL annual conference has been accessible to EFL teachers worldwide through the IATEFL online portal for the past few years. Another popular initiative by the EFL community worldwide is the use of Second Life, a virtual environment that allows users to set up virtual avatars, classrooms and to even host virtual conferences which are attended by EFL teachers worldwide using their virtual avatars in Second Life. The Dubai HCT are currently using Second Life to teach EFL.

Hence, joining and participating in online professional communities enables faculty to not only discuss issues and concerns of mutual interest in TEFL with colleagues outside of the UAE in other countries; it also enables building global networks of mutual professional interests. While federal institutions may not directly facilitate virtual communities as forms of CPD, they certainly make the technology required available as there is an emphasis on using modern technology in the teaching environment. They thus indirectly facilitate building online communities and being part of these too.

To summarize then, CPD in the UAE and among EFL teachers in federal universities exists at three levels; within institutions, outside the institutions and globally. Within institutions, it is the faculty development units that organize CPD events, whereas externally CPD providers such as TESOL Arabia, MERC and the British Council organise CPD events. There also exist teacher-initiated local online discussion lists and communities as well as global virtual communities.

Through my own experiences of being employed at federal universities in the UAE, I noticed that an increasing number of TEFL professionals are turning towards participating in local and global virtual communities as a form of CPD. The massive proliferation of professional learning communities among EFL teachers in the UAE appears to indicate a growing interest in professional dialogue and discourse as a form of CPD. It also appears to suggest that EFL teachers find local online discussion lists, blogs or communities as effective opportunities for hearing the voices of colleagues and for making their own voices heard in areas of mutual professional interests.

2.5   Teachers' engagement with CPD opportunities

I have indicated previously (in chapter 1) and again in section 2.4 of this chapter that my interest in investigating the CPD of EFL faculty in UAE federal universities arises from my own professional involvement with that context both as a teacher and as a volunteer CPD events organiser working with TESOL Arabia. In this section I will describe what I currently know about teacher engagement with CPD opportunities from undertaking a preliminary survey before initiating actual data collection for the study.

My intention in undertaking the preliminary survey was to gather data that would generate a deeper sense of issues and factors pertaining to CPD. I also expected the survey to confirm my understanding of CPD in the context and provide a sense of teachers' understanding of CPD. I also expected that the preliminary survey would generate a framework for my study relating to existing CPD trends and underlying reasons, some emerging issues related to CPD and whether or how teachers perceive the possibility of making contributions to their CPD context.

Hence, I disseminated a brief electronic survey to the entire population of EFL teachers employed in federal universities all over the UAE (See appendix 2 for survey

questionnaire). The self-completion survey thus enabled me to gather a small amount of data from a relatively large number of individuals. Out of the 112 surveys that were e-mailed, I received 105 that were complete, 5 incomplete and 2 that were never accessed. Specific details of findings from the questionnaire appear in appendix 3 (figures 2.1 to 2.9).

Information obtained from the survey has been organised into five sections as follows:

Demographic information

Firstly, the survey findings confirmed my sense of the fact that most EFL teachers in federal universities are mid-career professionals aged between 40-49 years, have between 10-20 years of EFL teaching experience and have lived in the UAE for up to five years.

As I was also already aware this group mostly comprises Western expatriates who lead a 'nomadic' lifestyle that involves residing and working in several countries for specific periods of time during their TEFL career span. They have usually worked elsewhere (outside their native countries) for a few years before arriving in UAE with an understanding that they will stay and work here for a few years learning about the language learning context and local culture before moving to work and live in a new geographic location.

Understanding of CPD

Secondly, findings from the survey gave me a sense of what respondents think CPD is. They largely viewed CPD as ongoing professional growth that involved upgrading one's formal professional qualifications and resulted in refined teaching skills, and enhanced knowledge and competencies in areas of specialization. It was also viewed as leading to increased awareness of the teaching context and its requirements and as a result empowering teachers to improvise practice and help students learn more effectively.

Current PD trends and associated reasons

A third interesting issue that my preliminary survey revealed was the existing trends of preferred CPD activities among mid-career teachers. It emerged that EFL teachers all over the UAE had a general preference for attending TESOL conferences (TACON and

other international events) as part of their CPD. This also indicated a greater preference for participating in local events organised by TESOL Arabia as compared to the other CPD providers such as MERC and the British Council (see section 2.4.2)

Prevalent among individual self-directed professional learning activities were reading in ELT areas of interest followed by either presenting at conferences or studying for formal qualifications. Respondents were specifically interested in acquiring or developing newer techniques for continually motivating students to learn English.

It is interesting to note that the reason they chose to participate in such events was indicated as personal CPD agendas. Part of this agenda included specialised training to develop specific skills that are crucial to their work as teachers of EFL. Nevertheless, CPD was not seen to replace or make up for lack of formal teacher training in any way.

Issues pertaining to CPD

The survey also confirmed for me a sense of some issues pertaining to CPD that I was already aware of through my own professional experiences described in the previous section. The concerns that emerged can be classified into three areas, namely, lack of voice, lack of release time and lack of appropriate support to engage in CPD.

Firstly, respondents confirmed that they had little input into the kind of CPD activities that were planned for them in-house. I have already mentioned in section 2.4.1 how faculty development units in institutions plan CPD events for EFL teachers. The survey findings clarified that while faculty development units are understood to organise CPD events in collaboration with teachers, respondents do not necessarily see this happening and as a result perceive that they are not in a position to decide on their own CPD needs.

Secondly, respondents felt that institutions were unsupportive of individual teacher development needs especially because individual CPD needs and interests varied greatly from what the faculty development units planned for EFL teacher development. As I have already mentioned most EFL teachers are well experienced and well-travelled which naturally makes their CPD needs quite varied and focused on different aspects as compared to what institutions may have to offer. As well as that, respondents perceived funding for external CPD activities as being insufficient and in-house CPD being

heavily focused on technology training which reduced focus on other aspects of language learning.

A third issue that emerged from survey findings was the lack of release time from work to participate in CPD events or to engage with other forms of CPD. Some teachers teach overtime especially when there are large numbers of students enrolled in the foundation programme and extra classes have to be held. This leaves them with little energy to think about or engage in CPD regardless of whether it is mandatory or not. Besides, I have already mentioned that lunch hour CPD sessions are not favoured because this is the only major break that teachers can have during a working day. In addition, the survey revealed other aspects pertaining to external CPD, such as personal commitments and the disinclination to travel long distances between emirates taking precedence over participating in weekend CPD events.

Improving the CPD experience

In addition to the concerns that emerged, the survey findings also gave me a sense of awareness among respondents about what could possibly make their own CPD experience more optimal. Firstly, most respondents expressed the need for being allowed autonomy in choosing, organising and managing their own CPD. They also indicated the need for institutions to increase funding for external CPD support and also allowing teachers the release time to engage in CPD. It was felt that having institutional policies that sustained formal CPD programmes over a period of time and including events that focused on specific aspects in TEFL that took into consideration the interests of teachers who had moved beyond the novice/beginner stage would be more conducive to the CPD of experienced teachers.

Hence, findings from the preliminary survey questionnaire revealed useful information about the large number of mid to late career EFL teachers resident and employed in the UAE. The survey results provided information about who the respondents were, what they thought about CPD, and how and why they pursued their own development as well as the associated tensions and issues involved in pursuing CPD when employed with federal universities. These findings provide a useful overview of the CPD situations as its exists in the UAE and serve as a springboard for the more in depth analysis of the situation which I am undertaking in this study through the use of in-depth interviews (see chapter four for research methods)

2.6   Summary

In this chapter I have provided a comprehensive picture of the context in which I intend to conduct my research for the Doctor of Education (EdD) thesis. The structure of the higher educational context in UAE and the status of English language in universities have been outlined, together with the provisions made by federal universities to bridge the gap for students between secondary school and university study. I have also discussed the role of foundation EFL teachers and their employers' expectations regarding CPD. This is followed by an overview of the kind of CPD activities that are available to federal teachers both within their institutions and externally. The chapter concludes with a description of teachers' engagement with CPD based on findings from the preliminary survey that I carried out in order to inform my understanding of the existing teacher development situation in federal universities. In the following chapter, I will provide a review of the relevant literature in the field of continuing professional development.

3   Introduction

This chapter is focused on continuing professional development (CPD) which is the main focus/subject of this thesis. It seeks to understand the notion of CPD and the distinction between CPD and professional development (PD) in the literature. The chapter also discusses the nature and role of professional knowledge in TESOL followed by the various ways in which professional knowledge is acquired and imparted. Following this, I discuss the various perspectives on teacher learning that influence teacher development in TESOL and the different approaches to CPD that appear in the literature. Towards the end of the chapter, I discuss the various societal, institutional, contextual and cultural factors that impact on the actualization of CPD. The chapter concludes with insight into some recent research on teachers' experiences of CPD.

3.1   Continuing Professional Development

The term continuing professional development refers to 'all the activities in which teachers engage during the course of a career which are designed to enhance their work' (Day & Sachs, 2004:3). CPD is often described in the literature using terms such as INSET, staff development, career development, human resource development, continuing education and lifelong learning. The term is also widely used interchangeably with the term professional development.

Mann (2005) distinguishes between PD and CPD referring to the latter as teachers' personal development. PD is career oriented and has a narrower; more instrumental and utilitarian remit; whereas CPD includes dimensions of values, morals and ethics (ibid.), the consciousness of which is related to decision making in teaching (Johnston, 2003)(ibid.). In this thesis, as already mentioned in chapter two, the term CPD is used to refer to ongoing teacher development in the UAE.

Prior to considering the different sources and approaches to CPD, it is important to interrogate our understanding of CPD. This is possible through first understanding the fact that TESOL is a profession with a professional knowledge base that is perceived in

various ways by those in the field; and that these various views of professional knowledge have implications for the CPD of teachers in the field.

3.2 Professional knowledge in TESOL

Implicit in the idea of CPD is the idea of professionalism and the idea that TESOL is a profession. However, as Mann (2005) indicates, the term 'professional' carries with it the still open-to-question claim of teaching as a proper profession. Not everyone involved in TESOL is wholly convinced that it is, indeed, a profession: for example, Johnston (1997) (ibid.) in his study of Polish and expatriate teachers working in Poland, reveals that not all teachers tend to see themselves as having 'careers' or working within a 'profession'

Professionals in any field claim to prioritise clients' needs and hold themselves accountable to standards of competence and morality (Schön, 1983). Another indication of the degree of professionalization of a field is the extent to which the methods and procedures employed by members of the profession are based on a body of theoretical knowledge and research (Carr & Kemmis, 1983 in Richards & Nunan, 1990). The field of TESOL in its aspirations to be a profession claims responsibility for learner needs and development based on which TESOL professionals are interested to engage with the notion of professional knowledge for/in TESOL.

3.2.1 The nature of professional knowledge in TESOL

Professional knowledge depends on how it is learned, the learning context and how it is used (Richards & Nunan, 1990). The field of TESOL has over the years moved towards producing its own theoretical knowledge base, paradigms and research agenda, so much so that it can arguably be claimed that a substantial degree of professionalization has taken place.

The literature that has been produced over time reflects the way TESOL professionals think about and engage in teaching methods/procedures and the underlying theoretical knowledge and accompanying research all of which make up the knowledge base of the profession. In order to understand the knowledge base of TESOL that informs the CPD strategies and processes employed for teacher development it is necessary to firstly understand how that knowledge is acquired and secondly how it is imparted or the

implications the existing views of knowledge acquisition have for the development of teachers in the field.

Professional knowledge in TESOL literature is identified by various types. I will discuss here propositional, individual, practical and local knowledge, which, according to my understanding, have an impact on CPD.

Received or propositional knowledge

In engaging with the notion of professional knowledge the field of TESOL identifies received knowledge that is important to the field. Received knowledge, also referred to as propositional knowledge (Stuart et al., 2009), is usually public and often written down as statements about facts, principles, theories and research findings by experts. It generally involves knowing about things (Malderez & Wedell, 2007), such as subject content (Lavender, 2002; Adger, Snow & Christian, 2002; Cray, 2003) (in Mann, 2005), language awareness (Wright, 2002; Larsen-Freeman, 2004) (ibid.), pedagogy and pedagogic content, curriculum, learners and educational contexts, aims and values (Shulman, 1987; Wallace, 1991) (in Malderez & Wedell, 2007). Such formal knowledge produced (mainly) by university researchers (Hoban, 2002) generally originates from academic institutions and policy makers (Kennedy, 2002). It is thus mainly taught and, as Wallace (1991) claims, is frequently accepted uncritically.

Since propositional knowledge plays an important role in the developing teachers' knowledge base (Bartels, 2005) (in Mann, 2005), it is perceived to have a higher status than the practical knowledge generated by teachers in their teaching contexts (Cochran-Smith & Lyle, 1993; Cochran-Smith, 1994) (in Hoban, 2002). Knowledge is however, quite complicated and received knowledge is just one kind of knowledge among the various types of knowledge. There are others such as individual knowledge, practical (experiential) and local (situational) knowledge, all of which are equally important in the individual teacher's development. Knowledge acquisition thus involves the learners as individuals, their personal existing knowledge, their practical experiences on the job and their knowledge of the context that they have been working in.

Individual knowledge

Individual knowledge is the result of moving away from solely received/propositional knowledge to greater consideration of various types of teacher knowledge such as focus

on learners, the context, personal knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987) (in Mann, 2005), practical or experiential knowledge (Golombek, 1998; Wallace, 1991) and local knowledge (Allwright, 2003).

It is the result of moving away from what Fanselow (1988) (in Mann, 2005) refers to as the transmission view of knowledge towards a view of teacher education as ongoing engagement between propositional knowledge and practical (experiential) knowledge (Wallace, 1991) as well as the local (contextual) knowledge. Teacher education is thus focused on processes of individual development which characterize 'teachers as legitimate knowers, producers of legitimate knowledge, and as capable of constructing and sustaining their own professional practice over time' (Johnson & Golombek, 2003:3).

Thus, the complex interplay between a teacher's individual beliefs, assumptions and knowledge (Woods, 1996) (in Mann, 2005) makes it necessary to simultaneously acknowledge the 'complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict' of constantly changing work settings and to assimilate propositional knowledge with both practical and local knowledge.

Practical knowledge

This is largely 'experiential' because it is developed through personal practical experience enabling teachers to develop insights about their work that go beyond simply applying the prescribed rules and strategies of teaching. Over time they begin to intuitively and instantaneously use what they know at just the right moment and in just the right way to support learning (Malderez & Wedell, 2007).

Teachers' experiential knowledge is thus derived from the way teachers make sense of their life experiences as people, learners and teachers and informs their reactions in subsequent classrooms. This 'practical know-how' (Eraut,1994:15) about teaching which is present in the action of teaching itself is a combination of what one *knows*, *does* and learns from *doing*. It is not first learned (as received knowledge) and then used. Rather, learning takes place during use and results in transformation of knowledge into a situationally appropriate form which is different from knowledge before use (ibid.).

Much practical knowledge is thus 'situational' or contextual as it has been acquired through day-to-day experiences in a particular institution or a particular class, and through interactions with particular individuals and the way they are likely to behave. Such situational knowledge develops from and depends on how teachers read a situation in which they find themselves and then interact with it.

Local knowledge

As mentioned earlier, individual personal knowledge is significantly shaped by the context in which it has been acquired and is intended to be used. Ideas learned to be used in one specific context are thus not transferrable to another as the process requires further learning through practical experience and in the process the idea itself is transformed (Eraut, 1994). Hence, local knowledge or knowledge about the context is situated and socially negotiated. It has a reflexive relationship with existing practical or experiential knowledge, thus making obvious the complex nature of teacher knowledge (Canagarajah, 2005) (in Mann, 2005).

Individual teachers constantly reshape knowledge through the complex interplay between declarative knowledge and received knowledge, on the one hand, and personal, experiential and local knowledge, on the other hand. Through the process of teaching and reacting to local influences (Freeman & Johnson, 1998) (ibid.), teachers draw contextually relevant information from their existing knowledge base which is liable to change over time (McMeniman et al., 2003) (ibid.). New understanding thus emerges through this 'process of reshaping existing knowledge, beliefs, and practices' (Johnson & Golombek, 2003:2).

This process of constantly reshaping knowledge takes place in the cognitive space between three spheres: the external propositional knowledge (received and declarative knowledge respectively); the teaching context (local and situated knowledge); and the individual (personal and practical knowledge). Teacher knowledge is thus complex (Freeman, 2002, 2004) as it is built on the teacher's experience as a learner and teacher, understanding of theory and research, ongoing reflection and action. The various types of knowledge cumulatively fall under what an individual teacher has to have in order to be a professional and this is an indication of professionalism in the field.

However, further research is still needed into how teachers develop and build knowledge bases, including the influences and sources of these knowledge bases over a number of years (Mann, 2005). Stuart et al. (2009) highlight the varying emphases given to different types of knowledge in different contexts. Whereas some countries give impetus to subject knowledge to train teachers with strong background knowledge of the subject they intend to teach, others are more focused on practical or local aspects of knowledge. As well as the context, different priorities are also given to different types of knowledge depending on whether the individual teacher is early in her/his career or mid-career or later.

3.2.2   Acquiring professional knowledge in TESOL

It is by now apparent that, in the teaching profession, knowledge is not in any simple way transferred from educators to teachers. While some of it is propositional and is imparted as theory, knowledge is also partly constructed through engagement with experience, reflection and collaboration within the working contexts. As teaching requires teachers to continually adapt their knowledge to the rapidly changing institutional and classroom contexts that they work in, teachers necessarily have to draw on knowledge from different sources which include the self, others and the context.

Teacher knowledge thus being complex and multi-faceted in nature arises from both practice and theory and is perceived to inform both language teachers' learning and practice. An understanding of how teachers acquire and use the various types of knowledge is useful in deciding what should be included in the teacher education curriculum (Stuart et al., 2009). It is also useful in supporting and sustaining learning and knowledge development by determining how knowledge can be imparted and what models of learning can be employed to successfully impart that knowledge for teachers to professionally develop.

A propositional view of knowledge that believes knowledge to be about receiving external theories would suggest a direct transmission model and is likely to result in adopting a training approach to teacher education. It may involve forms of learning where knowledge is merely received, such as attending lectures or being told how to do things. An individual view of knowledge, on the other hand, believes knowledge to emerge as a result of individuals making personal cognitive connections between knowing (received knowledge) and doing (practical knowledge) and adapting those

cognitions to their workplace context (local knowledge). It is focused on the idea of knowledge within the individual and is likely to involve reflecting on the links between the various understandings to either assimilate or accommodate new understandings. Such complex learning may involve individuals engaging in either private or collaborative/shared sense-making of events through reflective processes such as teaching journal writing or shared discussions.

On a closer look it becomes apparent then that professional knowledge in TESOL is the result of a combination of various models and approaches of acquiring and imparting learning. Propositional knowledge such as pedagogical content, general pedagogy or curriculum is not really wholly received or taught. Some of it may be received from a training course while some of it is likely to come from an individual teacher's *experience* in the classroom (for example, knowledge of learners and educational contexts). It may also be learnt on the job as tacit knowledge or learnt from experiences within the work context as local knowledge. A teacher's knowledge of teaching is thus likely to be a combination of their local knowledge, experiential/practical knowledge and their received knowledge, all of which together makes up their individual knowledge base and identifies teachers in the field as professionals.

3.2.3   Imparting knowledge in TESOL

The strategies employed by individuals or institutions to acquire/impart professional learning or CPD are thus influenced by their respective conceptions of knowledge, the ability of individual teachers to manage their own learning, as well as the context in which such learning occurs (Moon, 2004), and the respective stages of their teaching careers that teachers are at.

When knowledge is perceived as something which is received from others, it emerges as a separate body of propositional knowledge that can be purely taught (such as teaching skills or classroom management skills. When knowledge is perceived as something which evolves within the individual, then received knowledge emerges as one of the various types of knowledge - skills, cognition and personal construction, social construction and accompanying reflection - all of which are about individual development and all of which intersect to lead to the whole teacher's development.

Hence, the approach taken by institutions or individuals to impart/acquire knowledge depends on their respective views of knowledge and on whether the purpose of learning is to train teachers in specific skills or whether it is to enable teachers to engage in whole person development. Nevertheless, it must be noted that training and development are both part of the same continuum and both can be focused on whole person development. Institutions or teacher educators are likely to employ learning models ranging from an extreme transmission view of learning that is imparted through training to the other end of the continuum where learning is viewed as purely reflective, involving personal and social construction. Interestingly, it is generally assumed that teachers early in their careers are more in need of formal propositional input involving taught /received knowledge as compared to those later in their careers. The term 'development' is therefore usually associated with the later stage of teachers' careers whereas the term 'training' is more often associated with early career stages. A detailed discussion of the two terms follows.

Traditional views on training and development

Traditionally, language teacher education (LTE) is perceived as comprising two broad goals - training and development (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Training has long been considered as part of formal initial teacher education (ITE) that prepares teachers for induction into a first full-time teaching position (Stuart et al., 2009). It is perceived to involve understanding basic concepts and principles (propositional knowledge), demonstrating these in the classroom under supervision and receiving feedback (Richards & Farrell, 2005). It is also perceived to introduce teachers to the methodological choices, models and techniques available, and familiarize them with terms and concepts that are the 'common currency' of language teachers (Mann, 2005). As part of LTE, training is often seen as an externally directed, top-down process that is time, context and agenda bound (Spratt, 1994).

Development on the other hand, has traditionally been associated with in-service education and training (INSET) much later in a teacher's career. This perspective arises from the idea that since ITE cannot cover everything that a teacher needs to know in a rapidly and continually changing educational scene (Kennedy, 1995) there is always the need for on-the-job follow-up support through in-service courses that focus on practical training based on the realities of the classroom. The notion of development thus

presupposes competence in basic skills and knowledge (gained through ITE) and is perceived to be a continuing process that is either fully or partly individualised, flexible, usually bottom-up and not focused on a specific job (Spratt, 1994; James, 2001). In addition, development is perceived to serve the longer term goals of facilitating teachers' understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers (Richards & Farrell, 2005) over the course of their careers.

The dichotomy between training and development arose as a reaction to the over dominance of training in ITE. It has resulted in perceptions of training as non-developmental and bearing negative connotations such as to 'instil habits or skills' (Edge, 2003:7) (in Mann, 2005), that may lead to mechanical copying and repetition rendering teachers unable to cope with changes in their contexts. Hence, the term 'teacher preparation' has been increasingly adopted to allow a greater recognition that education, training and development can be part of ITE as well.

Public understanding of education and teaching today is continuously developing and changing as it is being shaped by teachers' backgrounds, experiences and cultures as well as the fact that teachers may now travel across the globe to work in a variety of cultural contexts. This has resulted in increased understanding in the field of TESOL about the necessity of both training and development. As Steadman et al. (1995:6) (in Stuart et al., 2009) state, while 'education helps you decide what to do...training helps you to do what is necessary more consistently, effectively and efficiently'. Together the two thus enable teachers to make sensible decisions about choosing between different approaches, methods, tasks or priorities, and also to *implement their decision* effectively (ibid.).

The notion of teacher development is, however, multi-faceted and is likely to also vary according to the context in which teachers work and live. For instance, as Mann (2005) highlights, teacher development in North America is viewed as something that is usually presented to teachers by a teacher educator (in the form of received knowledge and through the process of transmission). In contrast, the European perspective of teacher development tends to be associated with the idea of a teacher as a professional and independent problem solver who takes responsibility for personal and professional development (Roberts, 1998). As part of this, there is a widespread view that it is healthy for professionals to have an active role in their own development processes

(Bailey et al., 2001; Hill, 2000; Stuart & Thurlow, 2000; Crookes & Chandler, 2001) (in Mann, 2005).

The reality is that teacher development is a very complex process that is both self-directed and other directed, encompasses both formal training and less formal ways of learning, and happens in stages over many years with teachers continually adapting to change. Thus, irrespective of whether learning is short or long term, pre- or in-service, or externally or internally directed, both training and development are parts of an overall teacher development continuum. This is especially evident in the context of my study where expatriate teachers teaching in federal universities are engaged in a continuous process of LTE comprising several long term and short term training initiatives that are at times self-directed and often institution-directed. All learning is viewed as part of ongoing teacher development and referred to as CPD which is the term that I use throughout the thesis.

3.3 Perspectives on teacher learning that influence/underpin teacher development

Underlying the various ways in which teacher learning and development is approached are a number of learning perspectives held by those whose role is to support developmental processes. These perceptions are discernable in the literature and have an influence on LTE development and design.

3.3.1 Teacher learning as skills learning

The behaviourist perspective of learning views teacher learning as the development of a range of new behaviours (Roberts, 1998) comprising teaching skills or competencies (Richards & Farrell, 2005) that are associated with effective teaching. The focus is on teachers' classroom behaviour rather than on the reasoning behind it (Stuart et al., 2009).

Developing new behaviours is aspired through training which involves being presented with models of discrete skills one at a time (transmission of knowledge), imitating the models and being provided with the opportunities to master the skills following reinforcement through feedback. The practised skills are then expected to be transferred to the more complex settings of the classroom (Wallace, 1991). Developing a command

of these skills (perceived as competencies) is deemed as a characteristic of effective teachers (Medley, 1979 in Richards & Nunan, 1990).

Solely skills-based LTE, however, appears prescriptive in that it recommends a single set of good teaching practices (Roberts, 1998), that do not necessarily equip teachers to deal with circumstances beyond those which have been observed under supervision. It fails to take into account the subject matter knowledge (Malderez & Wedell, 2007), and the provisional nature of knowledge that varies with changing time, conceptual understandings and work contexts (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992). It also tends to exclude reference to human cognitive processes and social direction.

Skills learning in LTE must necessarily be complemented by activities that develop self-awareness as well as cognitive skills like self monitoring and self evaluation (Pennington, 1990; Wright, 1990), and that enable critical reflection and informed and conscious decision making (Malderez & Wedell, 2007). Along with received subject knowledge, teacher development must also include observation and analysis of different models for developing expertise of classroom management, knowing how to teach mixed ability classes, increasing proficiency in new teaching strategies, (Medley, 1997) (in Richard & Nunan, 1990), and simultaneously allowing the emergence of difference in individual perceptions. These additional aspects of teacher development are, however, more apparent in perceptions of teacher learning as a cognitive process.

3.3.2   Teacher learning as an individual process

Learning through personal cognition and learning through personal construction are both facets of teacher thinking that are focused on the individual teacher as a thinking being who is autonomous and who can make their own sense of learning.

Teacher learning as a cognitive process

Teacher learning as a cognitive process stands as a reaction to the skills learning model. It emphasizes self-agency or the capability of individual teachers to 'self-direct' or determine personal growth (Williams & Burden, 1997; Roberts, 1998) because they possess an innate potential for development and are aware of their own development needs. Teaching is thus seen as a complex cognitive activity that is focused on the individual teachers exploring their own beliefs through personal processes like self-

monitoring, journal writing or critical incident analysis, and reflecting on how their beliefs (and values) influence their teaching and thinking (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

The cognitive perspective highlights the importance of teachers' prior knowledge as a major influence on interpreting new learning (Hoban, 2002). It views the process of learning as involving continual reworking of new knowledge either by assimilating it with existing knowledge or by accommodating new knowledge (Piaget, 1950) (ibid.). In doing so, the cognitive perspective values teacher individuality and autonomy. However, inner resources may not always suffice as a guide for learning because individual teachers may need support through non-directive interventions like formal supervision (Roberts, 1998), counselling or informal feedback from peers to facilitate self-directed development. This implies that teacher development cannot be abstracted from the social and cultural settings where teachers work (Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Bell & Gilbert, 1996).

Teacher learning as personal construction

Another way that the idea of teachers as thinking beings appears in the literature is with reference to the personal constructivist view of learning which perceives learning as an ongoing process involving thought and action (Stuart et al., 2009). Instead of being passive recipients of knowledge (Richards & Farrell, 2005), teachers actively 'make their own sense of the ideas and theories with which they are presented in ways that are personal to them' (Williams & Burden, 1997:2). They construct their own reality by drawing on a wide variety of knowledge and experiences from their own life-histories, formal training courses, teaching contexts and the wider social and cultural context in which they live. Learning is thus seen as involving continual relearning, reorganization and reconstruction of prior and new knowledge. Development is expected to occur when new information is related to prior practices and beliefs to be either confirmed or challenged depending on individual perceptions and behaviours.

By encouraging personal interpretations of experiences the personal constructivist view of learning highlights the need for LTE programmes to 'start where teachers are' (Roberts, 1998:28), by taking a conscious review of (reflection on) 'the existing knowledge, experiences, opinions and values of the teachers' (Bell & Gilbert, 1996:58). Hence, while individual sense-making in LTE is significant, it is also essential to

recognise that 'learners make their own sense of the world, but they do so within a social context and through social interactions' (Williams & Burden, 1997:28).

Thus, both cognitive and constructivist perspectives of LTE have a common concern with the internal thinking processes of individuals, suggesting that individuals learn through the interaction between thought and experience: that both doing and thinking are essential for learning (Stuart et al., 2009:31). LTE must, therefore, take into account that teachers develop through processes of exchange between personal theories and self-concept and the demands of their occupational social context.

3.3.3 Teacher learning as situated and social construction

Individual teacher development necessarily occurs through a constant exchange with social circumstances, immediate working relationships, institutional climate and the wider social forces that affect it. As Roberts (1998) explains, this is the social landscape within which a teacher works and within which teacher growth occurs. Hence, teachers can learn effectively from procedures drawn from different learning philosophies through mastery of specific skills, through their own cognitive processes, through personal constructions, and through critical reflections on action. However, all of this occurs through meaningful social exchanges within their social environment (Stuart et al., 2009).

The social constructivist view of LTE recognises the interdependence of the personal, social and situated dimensions of teacher development. Putnam & Borko (1997 in Hoban, 2002) contend that teachers learn a great deal from the social interactions of 'discourse communities' in which they share experiences and also learn in context as they experiment with practice in classrooms. As such, the social constructivist view recognises the significance of collaboration and communication using a shared language. It is mainly through talk that we clarify our ideas, receive feedback from others and interact with experts or peers. All of this navigation between teachers' personal and professional lives occurs within the social landscape (Roberts, 1998) that they work in. As their landscapes differ continually, so will the course and nature of teachers' professional development. LTE is thus an active and ongoing process rather than a finite one-time process of accumulating knowledge about teaching. This implies the need for continuity in the development of teachers.

As well as active and ongoing, learning is also located within the parameters of a particular setting and therefore best understood as situated within that setting. The focus in situated learning is on the 'individual-in-social-action' (Minick, 1989) (in Hoban, 2002). Lave and Wenger (1991:43) describe all learning in community as different from cognitive learning. Such learning is situated because the emphasis is on 'learning as participation in the social world', and on moving from the cognitive process to 'the more encompassing view of social practice' (in Hoban, 2002:54). Learning is thus perceived as situated in practice, and communities of practice play a significant role. Authentic communities of practice provide the context in which teachers participate to socially construct knowledge and to learn through sharing of the knowledge that individuals bring to the group they interact in. The personal and social thus co-exist in a dynamic relationship situated within the community of teachers' practice.

3.3.4   The role of reflection in LTE

There is an assumption in LTE that teachers learn from experience through focused reflection on the nature and meaning of teaching experiences (Schön, 1983; Wallace, 1991; Richards & Lockhart, 1994). As a key practice underlying all forms of development, reflection involves critically examining one's experiences to enable a better understanding of one's teaching practices and routines (Richards & Farrell, 2005). However, as Day (1999) argues, reflection by itself is insufficient for PD to occur, and requires teachers to collaboratively engage in a variety of activities including dialogue with others in their field. The process of inner dialogues with one-self (Prawat, 1991) and in collaboration with others is reflexive in that it results in developing language teachers' awareness of practice.

As reflective practitioners teachers tend to reflect 'in' and 'on' action (Schön, 1983), as well as 'about' action (Day, 1999). Reflection-in-action is the process whereby teachers are actively engaged in identifying issues as they arise followed by problem-solving during teaching practice. On the other hand, reflection-on-action occurs before and after the action which is the subject of reflection; this makes it a more systematic, considered process of deliberation and analysis to plan for further teaching and learning (ibid.). It can be carried out collaboratively, which opens up possibilities for discussions/discourse about teaching and collective planning of activities. The third type of reflection, about-action, involves teachers exercising responsibility and

accountability for the decisions they make in teaching. It also involves teachers maintaining broader understandings of interrelationships between teaching purposes and practices.

Reflection thus recognises the whole person involved in consideration of their past and current practical experiences (and their knowledge) in order to create a deeper personal understanding of the experiences (Andersen et al., 2000) (in Moon, 2004). While practical or experiential learning is accompanied by different meanings according to context of use and involves external learning experiences (ibid.), reflective learning involves individuals working with internal experiences followed by expression or representation of that learning through collaborative processes (Eisner, 1982, 1991) (in Moon, 2004). This is recognised as a further source of learning.

The significance of reflection in LTE has led to the notion of teachers as reflective practitioners engaged in (research) collecting information about their own teaching with the aim of understanding themselves better as teachers in order to improve their teaching (Day, 1999). Experienced teachers benefit from reflection because it raises their critical awareness of personal theories, values and beliefs (through dialogue), and makes them aware of established routines and the effectiveness of these routines. It also provides them with the opportunities to test and interpret consistency between classroom events and educational theories. Reflective practice makes teachers more aware of the social, political and institutional significance of their work (Roberts, 1998) leading to a stronger sense of professional self, professional efficacy and the ability to cope with change (Demulder & Rigsby, 2003).

3.3.5 Collaboration in development

For a long time now social constructivist and collaborative notions of learning have been the dominant paradigm for understanding development. Collaboration in reflection, for instance, allows teachers to examine difficult working situations and discuss these with others to form new understandings of where the challenge lies and how they can approach similar situations in more effective ways. Both reflective and experiential learning are a part of self-managed CPD that increases learning, knowledge and understanding, results in some kind of critical review and action, and helps teachers build theory from practice ether individually or collaboratively. It also encourages informed decision-making, problem solving and empowers teachers as reflective

practitioners (Moon, 2004), who are engaged in the process of researching their own practice.

Institutions which recognize the importance of enquiry and reflection in institutional improvement find it easier to sustain improvements (Hopkins, 2002) and monitor the effectiveness of their policies toward student learning. Reflection and research are in fact part of the same continuum (Mann, 2005) with reflection being the 'normal reflective practice of many teachers' (Wallace, 1991:56) and research being the more rigorous and structured form that includes action research. Where action research is not possible, teachers engage in exploratory research or more privately in narrative inquiry. Reflection is thus a pre-requisite of development and research then becomes a desirable option for development.

I have attempted to illustrate in figure 1.1 below my understanding of collaborative teacher development as a result of the interplay between the various perspectives that underlie teacher development.

Figure 3.1: Collaborative teacher development

Training may and is likely to involve both skills development and knowledge development and is followed by practice in the teacher's context where experiential knowledge is gained. This is likely to be followed by reflection (on action and about action) that may be either an individual cognitive process or through discourse with colleagues in the same context.

In my understanding teachers may then want to engage in formal or less formal classroom based research to explore issues or ideas that may have come up in their reflection or discourse, followed by further reflection and discussion to enhance understanding or practice. This may eventually generate the desire for specialised training depending on the individual teacher's interest in the subject area explored.

The various perspectives of learning that underlie teacher development thus become more meaningful when combined to interact and facilitate learning and development programmes. For instance, skills based teacher education programmes that are followed by on-the-job observation and imitation of more experienced colleagues may enable less experienced teachers to use others' ideas and techniques to create their own unique style. This approach in turn respects the knowledge of experienced teachers and values their contribution to teacher development as mentors.

However, as Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) reveal, skills' training in LTE has become 'big business', especially due to the confidence placed in the evolution and validity of the knowledge base of good teaching. It is considered easy to organise, practical and focused on usable methods. This reliance on research knowledge, however, carries with it the risk of the individual voices of teachers being ignored or perceived as resistance. It also has the disadvantage that teachers trained out of their working contexts may find new skills inapplicable in their classroom. Instead, collaborative processes such as training teachers to peer coach other teachers in implementing new skills can help mitigate such risks. Research on practice can also be encouraged along with critical dialogue between teachers engaged in the research. 'A prime purpose of professional development', as Hargreaves and Fullan (1992:5) argue, should be 'to help teachers articulate their voice as a way of constructing and reconstructing the purposes and priorities in their work, both individually and collectively'.

It is likely that a prescriptive approach to teacher development that imparts a set of external imperatives for practice is resented by experienced teachers, who may object to being told how to teach. It is necessary therefore, as Wright (in Richards & Nunan, 1990) highlights, teacher development programmes must achieve a balance between theory and practice as this is a primary goal of all teacher development programmes. He suggests linking both pre- and in-service programmes to a common theme – teacher and learner roles – because the relevance of language or learning theories can be seen only from their viewpoints and within their context – the classroom which is a social setting with its own conventions, norms and behaviours (Breen, 1985) (in Richards & Nunan, 1990).

3.4   Different approaches to CPD

The terms CPD and in-service education and training (INSET) are sometimes interchangeably used (Craft, 2000; O'Neill, 1994). INSET can be defined as all in-service education and training activities that professionally qualified teachers engage in to improve their professional knowledge, skills and attitudes and to educate learners more effectively (Roberts, 1998). It assumes that teachers engaging in INSET have acquired basic knowledge of teaching and learned basic teaching skills in their ITE (Eraut, 1994), and that INSET activities can make teachers aware of the various options available that can help improve their current practice (Richards & Nunan, 1990).

INSET tends to be interpreted as a range of time-bound (Day, 1999), structured, formal and top-down in-service learning activities designed to bridge the gap between teachers' current level of skills and knowledge and the level required by their role in the system (Roberts, 1998). Often perceived as the quickest and most economic way of developing teachers on the job (Gaunt, 1995), it thus incorporates elements of both training as well as development. INSET activities may be accredited or non-accredited and can be distinguished from less formal in-service (training and) development work that teachers also engage in (Day, 1999).

CPD, however, is perceived to include both formal structured opportunities, such as INSET activities that may be required by external agencies (such as institutions where teachers are employed) and are facilitated by others (such as PD providers) (Evans, 2002), and less formal opportunities which may be initiated by individuals or groups of

teachers employed within the same institutions or area. Such less formal activities can be ongoing and self-initiated and effected. Irrespective of whether the process is training dominated or not, CPD is likely to improve teachers' knowledge, skills and practice and as a result enhance their professional status by moving teachers towards expertise (Kelly, 2006).

The idea of short or long term INSET for serving teachers implies the presence of training inside the development process (Stuart et al., 2009), which is intended to prepare them for present responsibilities (O'Neill, 1994), or to develop externally (institutionally) specified skills, behaviours and strategies (Roberts, 1998; James, 2001) that may equip teachers to immediately implement the learnt strategies in the classroom (Guskey, 2000). Nevertheless, as Stuart et al. (2009) believe, teacher development is a continuum of learning in the context of the teacher's whole career, with teachers within an institution located at various places along the continuum. Learning during the early years is generally aimed at developing understanding of practice, followed by later periods of reflection on work and discussion due to which teachers may continue to gain new insights and improve their skills. This is where a programme of CPD is so important and may take the various approaches or forms described in this section according to the teacher's individual or contextual needs.

3.4.1   Possibilities in CPD approaches

In practice CPD covers a range of possibilities along the training and development continuum. These may be either a formal training approach or may encompass both formal and informal approaches that may be either self-directed or in collaboration with others (likely to be other-directed as described in the previous section). The possibilities being endless depend on the facilities and resources available or made available to faculty in their various contexts. I have illustrated in figure 3.2 below a classification of some common CPD activities as described (see following page for illustration).

SELF-DIRECTED		OTHER-DIRECTED	
INFORMAL	**FORMAL**	**FORMAL**	**INFORMAL**
Peer observation			
Peer coaching			
Mentoring			
Team teaching			
Case study/analysis			
Critical incident analysis			
Action/exploratory research			
Learning a new language			
	Presenting at workshops/conferences		
	Membership of PLCs*		
	Writing articles/papers for ELT publications		
	Teacher portfolios		
	Studying for a formal degree		
Critical friendships			
Informal conversations			Informal conversations
Teaching journal writing		Job shadowing/rotation	Teaching journal writing
Self monitoring			Blogging
Reading			
Distance learning for self-study			

Fig.3.2: Activities for CPD (*Adapted from Richards & Farrell, 2005:14*)
Key: *PLCs – Professional Learning Communities

Formal and informal CPD approaches

Generally, CPD activities that are either advocated by or expected by institutions, or organised within the institution where faculty are employed can be categorised as formal activities. These are likely to be accounted for as part of individual faculty's formal workplace appraisals and are often part of their institution's or local education authority's faculty development policies (such as the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research or MOHESR referred to in chapter two).

Informal CPD activities, on the other hand, may not necessarily be part of institutional expectations or performance accountability of individual faculty. The efforts could be self-directed, other-directed or collaborative and may be organised within the institution or organised and pursued externally. Such efforts can be spontaneous and are not necessarily formally organised, and often are frequently unacknowledged by the work context as part of formal CPD. This apparently is a point of debate/discussion among TESOL professionals for whom informal CPD forms a major part of their career development.

Both formal and informal CPD activities can further be categorised into self-directed (individual and one-to-one) and other-directed (group-based and institutional) (See figures 1.3 and 1.4 for further classification of CPD activities). Thus, the complexity of CPD is evident in the various classifications and combinations of the activities that comprise teacher development.

Self-directed CPD

Mann (2005) perceives self-directed self-development as being at the centre of a definition of language teacher development. It characterizes a predisposition 'toward taking primary responsibility for personal learning endeavours' (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991:29). While self-directed development has its own significance in individual teacher development, there is a need for teachers to take into consideration the context where they are employed and which may have its own specific teacher development agenda and needs. It is apparent then that all the four interacting aspects of CPD (formal, informal, self-directed and other-directed) are significant in their own way as they conjointly cater to the various CPD needs of teachers over their career graph.

The significance of self-directed CPD primarily lies in the idea that being a professional is perceived as taking responsibility for identifying and attempting to meet personal and institutional CPD needs. Likewise the significance of institutional CPD lies in the view that institutions providing CPD opportunities and to some extent funding for their faculty are seen as professional. However, the type of CPD activities that teachers engage vary with the geographical, cultural and institutional contexts that teachers exist in and depends on the stages of their careers, the opportunities available as well as the local CPD culture.

Experienced teachers working within one institution or department are likely to be at varying stages in their careers and hence have different development needs. Self-directed learning allows teachers to 'assume responsibility for setting goals for self-development and for managing and controlling their own learning' (Richards & Farrell, 2005:13), which is vital if teacher development is to be an active, meaningful and engaging process. Self-directed learning then involves personal construction of meaning, uses personal experience as the basis and stimulus for learning; and explores personal teaching practices to solve practice related concerns. It also focuses on self-appraisal (critical reflection and analysis) and the planning and achievement of short and long term goals.

Self-directed learning can thus be formal or informal and can involve activities that are pursued individually or jointly as one-on-one with a colleague or as a group with many colleagues within the workplace or externally. I have classified these in figure 3.3 below (see illustration on following page).

SELF-DIRECTED CPD ACTIVITIES	
INDIVIDUAL	**ONE TO ONE/GROUP-BASED/ INSTITUTIONAL**
Membership of PLCs	Job shadowing/rotation
Teacher portfolios	Mentoring
Self-monitoring	Peer coaching
Reading	Peer observation
Self-study using distance learning materials	Studying for a formal degree
Teaching journal writing	Learning a new language
	Informal conversations
Writing articles/papers for ELT publications	
Critical incident/case analysis	
Action/exploratory research	
Attending workshops/conferences	
Presenting at workshops/conferences	

Fig. 3.3: Classification of Self-directed CPD activities
Key: *PLCs – Professional Learning Communities

Such activities can be both informal, formal as well as self-directed or other-directed, individually pursued or collaboratively pursued in groups depending on whether the individual's workplace requires them to engage in these or whether it is the result of their own initiative. This also includes distance learning where the learner has minimal contact with university staff during the period of study. One example of distance learning is a selection of graduate courses run by Leicester University in UAE where candidates are expected to study part-time, on their own and their sole contact with tutors is through e-mailing.

While CPD activities such as organising teaching portfolios, pursuing formal degrees, being members of PLCs and presenting at formal workshops may be self-initiated, they are often also pursued as a result of institutional requirements and may thus be deemed

as other-directed. A point to note is that, irrespective of whether most of these activities are formal or informal, there are almost always other individuals involved in carrying these through. Some examples that can be cited are managers require teaching portfolios for staff appraisals and they are likely provide teachers with an outline of the contents required in portfolios by institutions; formal degree studies at times involve lectures/tutorials given by university tutors; and professional learning communities involve learning with other community members through interactions and collaborations. Even as presenters at workshops or seminars, teachers are continually engaging in interactions with the attending audience.

Such reflective activities as self-monitoring, teaching journal writing, maintaining teacher portfolios as well as those that involve observations, research and analysis are based on the view that in order to better understand the strengths and weaknesses in one's own teaching, it is necessary to objectively and systematically collect information about teaching behaviour and practices, and then to make decisions about whether there is anything that could be altered (Richards & Farrell, 2005) or whether the status quo should be maintained. An underlying aspect of self-directed CPD is thus reflection on documented information, 'which serves as a source of discussion, reflection or evaluation' (Richards & Farrell, 2005:68).

In the UAE, as my preliminary survey revealed (see chapter two), self-initiated activities such as reading ELT literature, presenting at events organised by professional organisations and studying for formal degrees appear to be more practised as compared to the individual activities such as self-monitoring or teaching journal writing. It is important to note that both presenting at conferences and studying for formal degrees constitute institutional requirements in the UAE and therefore can be seen as much other-directed as they are self-directed. In addition, these activities are often times pursued in collaboration with colleagues who share mutual interests.

Hence, while privately pursued self-directed CPD activities are deemed as a stress free way for teachers to understand their teaching (Bailey et al., 2001), identify areas for improvement, or maintain the quality of their work, ongoing learning and evaluation of one's practice are difficult to achieve on one's own (Day, 1999). They require collaboration with colleagues or other individuals with mutual interests in order to not only better understand their own experiences and opinions, but also enrich others with

the same. Such collaborations result in social interactions that not only allow discussion of existing knowledge, but are also accompanied with the construction of new insights in a socially collaborative environment.

Other-directed CPD

In the sense that collaboration in CPD enhances individual learning collectively, it can also be referred to as 'other-directed' and can serve the collective institutional goals by encouraging interaction between teachers for sharing skills, experiences and solutions to common problems (see figure 3.4 for illustration of other-directed CPD activities).

However, for a culture of cooperation to develop within an institution it is necessary to provide teachers with opportunities to work and learn together through participation in group-oriented activities with shared goals and responsibilities (Richards & Farrell, 2005). This requires careful planning and ongoing monitoring because, unlike self-directed learning, the goals of collaborative learning are likely to be situated and defined by institutional or contextual requirements.

One way in which federal institutions in the UAE attempt to encourage a culture of cooperation is through regularly organising one-hour in-house workshops and seminars which are mandatory for faculty to attend. However, as my preliminary survey revealed, such initiatives tend to be unpopular with faculty because the sessions are mostly organised to take place during their lunch hour, which is seen as unsupportive and discouraging. This is continually turning faculty away from institutional CPD opportunities to participation in external events that are generally organised to take place over weekends, thus providing faculty with the opportunity to leisurely interact with colleagues outside the workplace on a non-working day.

OTHER-DIRECTED CPD ACTIVITIES	
GROUP BASED	**INSTITUTIONAL**
Teaching journal writing	Teacher portfolios
Critical incident/ case analysis	Focused discussions
Informal conversations	
Blogging	
Participating in mailing list/online discussions	
Peer observation	
Peer coaching	
Mentoring	
Team teaching	
Action/exploratory research	
Writing articles/papers for ELT publications	
Attending workshops/conferences	
Presenting at workshops/conferences	
Membership of professional learning communities	

Fig. 3.4: Classification of other-directed CPD activities

Some of these activities such as, peer observation/coaching, mentoring and team teaching, involve a one-to-one approach between colleagues to facilitate the development of either one or both teachers involved in the process. Other collaborative activities such as researching practice, informal/focused discussion and participating in professional learning communities involve several participants either formally or informally.

As long as they are non-evaluative and are not associated with performance accountability, collaborative or other-directed CPD activities provide an opportunity for teachers to interact, reflect on their teaching, get feedback, discuss concerns, share ideas and expertise and consequently develop self-awareness (Bailey et al., 2001). Engaging in such activities help teachers build trust, provide each other with support and as a result of talk, the opportunity to benefit from each other's experience/s. In contrast,

when performance evaluation accompanies CPD as part of institutional expectations, it is debatable how conducive to actual teacher development such activities may be.

Nevertheless, certain CPD activities such as developing teaching portfolios or engaging in focused discussions pertaining to specific teaching/learning issues are expected by institutions where faculty are employed, as is also the case in federal universities in the UAE. CPD then becomes institution-directed and associated with performance evaluation. Even activities such as peer observation, peer coaching, mentoring, team teaching and researching practice may be institutionally directed at times because it may be necessitated by the environment or an institutional concern. In the UAE for example, writing papers for ELT publications, maintaining membership of professional organisations and attending/presenting at events organised by professional organisations form part of institutional expectations where faculty work. Such activities are also accounted for in end of year performance evaluations as evidence of teachers engaging in development. On the other hand, writing teaching journals or engaging in blogging or informal conversations is neither an expectation nor taken into account by institutions and this is often a point of discussion among teachers in the context.

Hence, collaborative activities are viewed as providing a structure for follow-up to training, and facilitating the process of building communities of teachers who are continually engaged in the study of their craft, and who share a common language and understanding necessary for the collegial study of new knowledge and skills (Bailey et al., 2001). Subsequently, it is the institution that benefits in the process by strengthening the skills and collegiality of its teachers and by providing for training on the job, thus cutting down on the need for in-service training (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Research as a form of CPD
Researching practice is another form of development that needs mentioning here. Research done by teachers in their own classrooms, according to Campbell et al. (2004), is not new though a considerable amount of it remains unpublished. In some institutions around the world teachers are necessarily expected to engage in some form of research to inform their practice. While in the UAE it is an expectation, researching practice in federal universities is also accompanied by certain institutional bureaucratic dilemmas and this is generally seen by faculty as discouraging. Nevertheless, a significant amount of research is carried out by faculty but not necessarily made public.

As part of the reflective practitioner model, research done by teachers can be individual, collaborative, formal or informal. It is referred to in many ways such as classroom research (Hopkins, 2002), teacher research (Sachs, 1999), action research (Richards & Farrell, 2005), exploratory research (Allwright & Lenzuen, 1993) and narrative inquiry (Johnson & Golombek, 2002). Action research is carried out by practitioners who are in the situation under investigation and is aimed at solving problems, improving practice, or enhancing understanding (Nunan, 1992). Where action research is not possible, exploratory research is recommended to explore and understand classroom phenomena as opposed to attempting to directly solve practical classroom problems. Another form of research, narrative inquiry is carried out through either reflective writing or spoken processes (Harrington, 1994; Olson, 1995; Golombek, 1998) (in Mann, 2005). Through exploration of their emotional responses to teaching and colleagues (Cowie, 2001; 2003) (ibid.), narrative inquiry, as Chamberlin (2002) (ibid.) views, enables the teachers involved to construct their own professional identity.

Irrespective of what it is called, research done by teachers in their classrooms is self-reflective and comprises a series of small-scale investigations aimed at evaluating, improving, developing and refining teaching. Researching practice is often a catalyst for a process of reflection, self-monitoring and self-evaluation and, as Roberts (1998) suggests, may serve as the basis for long-term change.

To summarise then, in addition to being formal or informal, self-directed or collaborative, CPD activities can also be institution based (on-site/in-house) or external (off-site) (Campbell et al., 2004; Day, 1999). Institution-based CPD includes courses run within institutions based on particular needs of the teachers employed there and as identified by the objectives of local education authorities (such as the MOHESR in UAE). Depending on the purpose, it could involve mentoring, job-shadowing, action research, team-teaching, or supported planning. While outside advisors could be involved, institutions usually rely on internal expertise, as is the case with federal universities in UAE, where internal experts are encouraged to make in-house presentations or facilitate workshops.

External CPD that is formal may be organised at venues other than where teachers are employed such as teachers' centres, colleges, universities, schools or via distance

methods using the Internet. It may include long courses (certificates, diplomas, bachelors and masters degrees, which can be either face-to-face or by distance learning) that may last from a few hours to a few years, or short courses including workshops or weekend courses. Such external events in the UAE are mainly organised by TESOL Arabia and at times by other professional organisations such as the British Council or MERC (See chapter two for more details).

On the other hand, less formal CPD such as journal writing or informal discussions continues both on and off the job, in action, in discussion or personal reflection periods (even over lunch or coffee with colleagues). It is mostly unplanned rather than in periods deliberately set aside for the purpose (Eraut, 1994). An important underlying aspect of any kind of CPD activity is reflection which in itself is a form of CPD and may be carried out in isolation through private activities or in collaboration and cooperation with others through activities that involve discourse thus leading to social construction of knowledge.

In the gradual movement towards the notion of social construction of knowledge, learning communities of practice have fast become popular. Generally referred to as professional learning communities (PLCs), such teacher development groups are generally bigger than the collaborative units mentioned in this section and they operate on the assumption that 'working with groups is usually more effective than working on one's own' (Richards & Farrell, 2005:51).

3.4.2   Professional Learning Communities

PLCs refer to an 'inclusive group of people, motivated by a shared learning vision, who support and work with each other, finding ways, inside and outside their immediate community, to enquire on their practice and together learn new and better approaches that will enhance all pupils' learning' (Stoll & Louis, 2007:18). Members learn from each other's shared activities and experiences because they have common ends and purposes (Dewey, 1916) (in Hoban, 2002). The motive in forming PLCs is thus to share and critically interrogate practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-oriented, growth-promoting way (Toole & Louis, 2002).

Recent literature on teachers' professional learning refers to PLCs as communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lieberman, 1996) (Also Moore & Shaw, 2000 in

Hoban, 2002), learning communities (Sergiovanni, 1994), teacher communities (Grossman & Wineburg, 2000), discourse communities (Putnam & Borko, 1997), and action learning communities (Hoban et al., 1997; Hoban, 1999) (in Hoban, 2002). Despite slightly different meanings, the common emphasis is on social interactions between group members and commitment to a common purpose. According to Bellah et al. (1985) (in Grossman et al., 2001), such communities are formed by a group of people who are socially interdependent, who participate in discussion and decision making, and who share practices that define the community and nurture it.

Sustainability in PLCs is perceived to be possible through collective and shared purposes, aims and needs, ongoing activity, public venue and recognition of performance, and archiving prior contributions (Ackerman & Palen, 1996; Kollock & Smith, 1996; Jaques, 1991) (in Hoban, 2002). These characteristics contribute to group cohesiveness between members as well as strengthening the notion of teaching as a profession. Participation in PLCs is, however, voluntary on the bases of topics of common interest, communication, trust and mutual understanding (ibid.) and at times because of institutional requirements.

Teachers may also form communities within institutions to discuss goals, issues and collaborate on curriculum and materials development, peer coaching/observation, team teaching and action research. PLCs thus encourage teachers to think like a community of professionals rather than isolated individuals working towards the collective purpose of enhancing student learning (Stoll & Louis, 2007). When they extend beyond institutions, within the wider communities or beyond geographical borders, PLCs become venues for networking, thus bringing teachers much closer in dealing with similar learning challenges resulting from social, technological, economic and other global change forces.

The use of the Internet has been significant in establishing global online communities to support teacher learning. While online learning communities take a lot of time, commitment and effort, they transcend time and context allowing members to interact with anyone, anywhere and at any time and thus establish a culture of learning with increased opportunities for interaction and flexibility. For instance, as I can relate from experience, through online discussion lists or communities teachers can reflect on a topic personally, share their understandings with other members through the virtual

platform, as well as document insights from their own authentic context (using blogs or mailing lists) which may be different from the contexts of other members. The interplay of personal, social and contextual influences has the potential for sustainability of learning in PLCs.

Teachers in the UAE also have access to online communities from around the world and this forms a significant part of less formal CPD providing the much needed peer support that enables teachers to collaborate in learning by sharing their thoughts, ideas and new learning to support each other's learning. Two of the most popular online learning communities in the UAE are the Learner Independence group and the Distance Learning group (Also mentioned in chapter two).In addition there are physical communities, such as TESOL Arabia, which provide a platform for development, discussion and debate, and those who are part of these communities are perceived of as professional or engaging in PD. There are also Special Interest Groups (SIGs) formed on the bases of specific types of teaching (for example, ESP or English literature), research, teacher education, the use of instructional technology in ELT and more recently (2009) leadership and management in ELT.

Such communities provide considerable support in establishing social networks by promoting informal conversations about work practices that teachers value (Lieberman, 1996). However, all CPD and the manner in which it is pursued, organised or actualised varies from place to place because it is socially, contextually and culturally bound. There is an interplay of these factors that is manifested in the way in which CPD activities are visible in any context.

When teachers engage in CPD within a community of learning, they are engaging with a community of teachers in a set of practices about how CPD can be realised. Hence while developing in communities becomes a social practice it is also an individual set of dispositions that teachers bring to the community as its members engaging in sharing meanings and creating new identities based on their relationships with one another (Stoll & Louis, 2007). The notion of teacher development in communities is quite different to the social constructivist perspective of developing in collaboration with others. Whereas the latter is still about individual development, the former focuses on the community and on the individual as a member of that community. It entails that individuals grow and develop because they are part of that community (Burns, 2005)

which in turn both affords and constrains opportunities for development. As a result individual development is affected according to the dynamics and rules of the community within which they will learn and exist and this development also feeds back into the on-going development of the community and other members within it.

This has great bearing on the development experiences of teachers, their perceptions of what makes effective CPD, and whether they choose to pursue the opportunities available or alternatives. It is this notion of situated teacher development through external and institutional communities and the sub communities formed by teachers that I have explored in my thesis in order to understand teacher development.

3.5   Factors affecting the actualization/pursuit of CPD

In any context, the CPD choices made or available depend on societal expectations of teachers, institutional/local education authorities' requirements, the contextual culture in which teachers work and subsequently their own values and beliefs as well.

3.5.1   Societal factors

Teaching as a public job is powerfully affected by societal norms and expectations (Roberts, 1998), which makes it pertinent that teachers continually try to find ways to improve student learning; this constitutes development for teachers and will in the process convince society that they are a proper profession. Hence, by learning new strategies to cope with constant and complex change (Hopkins, 2002), teachers are expected to continually meet high standards of teaching and raise the levels of learner achievement in their institutions (Campbell et al., 2004). For example, due to technology 'innovation overload' (Hopkins, 2002:164) in UAE federal universities, teachers employed there are must continually find ways to cope with the constantly changing technological landscape that they work in. They are thus seen as continually engaged in both formal institution-directed CPD learning and less formal self-initiated trial and error forms of learning. It can be understood then that while CPD can be independent of the organisation, it often functions more successfully with its support and recognition (Mann, 2005).

3.5.2   Institutional expectations

Whereas until the mid-1990s, CPD was often taken up as a voluntary commitment by teachers with career ambitions, teachers today, as Craft (2000) highlights, are under

immense pressure to undertake specific development courses for improved quality teaching. CPD thus bears significance not only for the teachers involved but also for the learners, the institutions and subsequently for the society at large. The greatest impact on choice of CPD is perhaps that of institutionalisation of the process whereby teachers employed within an institution must necessarily adhere to the institution's requirements and policies in terms of teacher development. This is most evident in federal universities in the UAE where teachers are expected to engage in specific types of CPD in order to fulfil departmental goals which ultimately result in realization of institutional and the MOHESR goals that are part of the UAE government's policies towards national development.

While the institutionalisation of CPD contradicts the 'bottom-up' aspect frequently cited as a characteristic of CPD, federal institutions in the UAE perceive it as necessary for the fulfilment of standardised institutional goals. This appears essential in view of the fact that recently (in the last decade) the UAE has been engaged in a whole-scale review of the educational system in the country. To meet the challenges of rapid change, education authorities in the UAE are increasingly employing initiatives similar to those adopted by the UK, USA, Australia and many European countries. As a result there has been a gradual recognition of the importance of CPD through teacher education, teacher support and development structures in schools, universities and vocational training institutions.

Institutionalization of CPD is also a reflection of meaningful interaction between teachers and their professional contexts that eventually leads to some kind of change in teachers' professional practice as well as their thinking about that practice (Day & Sachs, 2004) with reference to their teaching context. This process in my view is more formal in the sense that it is more obviously recognised by institutions because it is advocated, organised, delivered and expected to be taken up by the institutions. Nevertheless, non-institutionalised, less formal and self-directed teacher development is also mutually beneficial to individual teachers and to their institutions, though such non-accredited CPD may not necessarily be recognised by institutions as formal CPD (as is the case in my researched context). Hence, while CPD can be independent of the organisation, it is perceived as much more successful with support and recognition of the institution where teachers are employed (Underhill, 1999) (in Mann, 2005).

3.5.3 Contextual and cultural factors

The ways in which teacher education programmes are organised differ across the world and are also affected by the historical, political, social and economic factors existing in that particular part of the world. There are, however, also many common patterns, partly because the basic task is the same, and partly because there has been so much cross-cultural sharing. For example, teacher education in many less industrialized countries has been influenced by colonial legacies or by international aid and development programmes. In the UAE teacher education and CPD programmes are most likely affected by the influx of experienced Western teachers who have migrated here and have been living and teaching here for a number of years.

Teacher learning and development, as mentioned before, does not happen in isolation. The institutional environment is important as is the support from superiors and colleagues; the conditions of service and the local education administration. What and how much is made available in terms of resources and funding depends on socio-economic situation of the context where teachers work. It also depends on the importance given to CPD under the existing conditions. Hence, while the desire to learn may be innate, given the appropriate environment, teachers will learn what they need to learn and over time, making sense of their experiences within the work environment and in the process they will become more self-directed and responsible for their own learning.

Separating teachers from their practice contexts is likely to limit the possibilities for situated learning activities such as reading, reflective teaching, action research or reflective inquiry, thus depriving them of experiences which usually lead to sustained development (Edge & Richards, 1993; Edge, 2001). Even those who engage in distance education while remaining in their context have the advantage of being able to theorize from practice (Richards, 2002) (in Mann, 2005). It is the classrooms that provide both teachers and learners with opportunities for experimentation, exploration, innovation and change (Allwright, 2005; Bailey, 1992; Willis & Willis, 1996) (ibid.), and as a result help to maintain interest in classroom teaching (Haskins, 2002) (ibid.).

All learning thus occurs in conjunction with collective social experience (within the teacher's context of practice) and all are embedded in a socially agreed culture of

learning (Lave &Wenger, 1991 in Moon, 2004). Specific professional cultures are reflected in the physical products of teachers' environments (institutional buildings, books in use, computers), organisations (external networks that teachers belong to) and the manner in which teachers relate to each other (for example forming little communities at the workplace based on mutual interests or job roles). Even staff room discourse is influenced and dictated by contextual cultures as are habits influenced by beliefs about contextual elements. These beliefs in turn are influenced by surrounding cultures of the ways people in general relate to one another.

Understanding the differences in our educational cultures can help us understand our colleagues' approaches to teacher education which may vary from either the craft model, or the applied science model or the reflective practitioner model to teach, or may even be a combination of these. Understanding cultures can also help external CPD providers to decide teacher education approaches within a context as well as relevant topics for CPD; it acts like a needs analysis.

In teacher education, the institutional culture and the culture of teacher education itself influence each other and are both influenced by the broader cultures of a society. The various cultures that surround a formal education system influence the values of people working in educational establishments. Organisational and institutional cultures thus have an impact on CPD needs and choices made by teachers.

To summarize, the way CPD is actualised or pursued and the choices made available or opted for are affected by expectations and requirements of stakeholders (public, institutions and the local education authorities' requirements such as MOHESR in UAE). It is also affected by the aspirations of individual teachers, their contextual requirements, the opportunities made available in that context, and the economic factors that enable such opportunities. Part of the complex picture of actualising CPD are also the values and beliefs of teachers within those socio-cultural, institutional and community cultures which together interact to influence what decisions are taken and what opportunities are made available or availed of.

3.6   Current research on teachers' experiences of CPD

As discussed in chapter one, little research has been carried out on the CPD experiences of teachers in higher education and on the development of higher education teachers in

the UAE. Nevertheless, there are a number of studies on the professional development of teachers in schools and teachers who are relatively new to the profession. In this section, I am going to look into findings of teacher development research carried out in the last decade most of which reports on teachers' perceptions about professional development, CPD activities that teachers popularly engage in, and issues that relate to professional development in general. Additionally, I am also going to look at recommendations made by several researchers for improvement and sustainability of CPD in institutions and the methodology commonly employed to explore teachers' perceptions and experiences.

3.6.1   Teachers' perceptions of CPD

As Glover & Law (1996, cited in Gravani & John, 2005) argue, there is no single agreed definition of CPD and the literature generally provides varying interpretations or descriptions of CPD that are taken as definitions. These include CPD as ongoing learning processes from initial training until retirement (Taylor, 1980; Bell, 1991; Fullan, 1991; Hoyle & John, 1995) (ibid.), as INSET activities following initial training, and as job embedded support activities that add to teachers' professional knowledge and skills (Bolam, 2000). CPD may be individual or whole-school staff development (O'Sullivan et al., 1998) (in Gravani & John, 2005) or teacher development that enhances teachers' professionality and/or professionalism (Evans, 2002). These descriptions are nevertheless valuable in influencing how teachers perceive or understand CPD as well.

Generally, research appears to indicate that teachers' perceptions of CPD fall into different categories; developing subject related knowledge and skills (Flores, 2005; Keay, 2006); and developing criticality, reflective skills and collaborative problem solving skills (Flores, 2005; Beaty, 1998). Interestingly, opportunities for learning that occur during everyday practice are often perceived differently and in some cases are not recognized as CPD (Keay, 2006) by institutions where teachers are employed. This quite often influences the trends of CPD activities that teachers engage in.

3.6.2   Popular CPD activities

Recent studies investigating teachers' preferred CPD activities indicate that, generally, teachers prefer to engage in INSET activities made available to them through their institutions on-site or through external CPD providers off-site or within the institution

(Keay, 2006). Typically, these activities include attending conferences, seminars, short courses, or workshops; reading professional literature, subscribing to professional journals and holding membership of professional organizations (Sandholtz, 2002; Karagiorgi & Symeou, 2008).

Interestingly, however, several studies report growing interest among teachers to engage in less formal and more collaborative forms of learning activities within their work contexts. Such collaborative activities include learning through experience in the working context and engaging in reflective practice (Beaty, 1998; Flores, 2005), collaborative reflective discourse through writing and discussing teachers' self-reports (Burchell et al., 2002), or engaging in study groups (Arbaugh, 2003) or collaborative teacher research (Campbell & Jacques, 2004). Karagiorgi and Symeou (2006) also report secondary school teachers' interest in electronic networking. Collaborative activities as reported in these studies provide practitioners with the opportunity to share experiences with colleagues and peers (Flores, 2005; Keay, 2006) and, through professional discourse, allow teachers to reflect collectively on their experiences, develop awareness and in the process make their personal professional learning visible to themselves consequently resulting in change (Burchell et al., 2002).

While collaborative activities are apparently possible only when the professional culture in which teachers work supports professional discourse (Keay, 2006), it is reported that generally teachers engage in the CPD mediated by their workplaces because they would like to engage in some kind of personal development and often because they would like to motivate themselves in the middle part of their careers (Goddard et al., 1999). Other practical reasons mentioned include availability of financial support for the CPD on offer (ibid.), getting respite from teaching routines, convenience of date, time and duration of event, and knowing who is the facilitator or lecturer of the workshop/seminar (Karagiorgi & Symeou, 2008). There is also indication of teachers' personal interest in accredited INSET courses (ibid; Robson, 2006), financial rewards and improving personal status through CPD, as well as intellectual stimulation (Connelly & McMahon, 2007).

3.6.3   Factors impacting on CPD

Studies carried out on the CPD experiences of teachers report extensively on issues that teachers encounter in their uptake of personal professional development. Standardised

CPD offered by institutions is one such issue that is examined and argued against. In its aim to address 'the collective power of the full staff to improve student achievement school wide' (Newmann et al., 2000:261 cited in de Lima, 2007), standardized CPD misses out on individual teacher development needs as it is top-down, compulsory to attend for career advancement of permanent staff (Flores, 2005), and does not take into account teachers' existing knowledge, experiences and needs (Robson, 2006; Joldoshalieva, 2007). Hustler et al. (2003 in Robson 2006) describe standardized CPD as a 'one shoe fits all' model that creates negative feelings about CPD among teachers.

In being directed by educational authorities, standardized CPD activities are designed against externally set criteria (directed by education ministries or authorities) that are mediated through whole-institution development plans and teacher performance management targets (Burns, 2005). In view of the fact that teachers entering CPD programmes bring with them existing experiences, practices, perspectives, insights and anxieties about the complex nature of their work (Gravani & John, 2005), it can be argued that, based on their varying experience, teachers' needs are likely to vary (Burns, 2005). Thus, standardized CPD ends up being controlling, depriving teachers of the autonomy to make choices according to their individual needs (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000)(ibid.) and failing to effectively draw upon teachers' experiences as resources to make learning meaningful for those involved (Gravani & John, 2005; Flores, 2005).

Along with lack of autonomy, there is recurrent mention in recent studies of lack of release time to pursue CPD after work hours (Arbaugh, 2003; Buczynski & Hansen, 2010), inadequate resources in, for example, suburban schools (including inadequate financing) (Buczynski & Hansen, 2010), excessive workloads, unsupportive working conditions at school and lack of provision of relevant CPD courses (Flores, 2005). Collectively, these aspects are the cause of tension between individual teacher needs, professional system needs and school/institutional needs (Burns, 2005). Consequently, as reported by Burns (2005) and Gravani and John (2005), teachers perceive that their voices are unheard and their needs are not valued in planning their own CPD. As several researchers argue, such tensions between individual and institutional contexts create a climate that may not be conducive to effective teacher learning (Knowles, 1990; Bickel & Hattrup, 1995; Palincsar et al., 1998; Gravani, 2003) (in Gravani & John, 2005) and ultimately affect teacher commitment and motivation. Tang and Choi (2009), in a study exploring life-histories of teachers in Hong Kong, also discovered that market oriented

and managerialist approaches to school education also play a role in shaping a performativity culture that makes CPD externally driven.

3.6.4 Recommendations in the literature to make CPD effective

Collaborative forms of learning feature as a key suggestion in most recent studies of teacher' experiences of CPD, followed by adequate resources allocation, relevance of learning activities to the learning context, opportunities to practice new learning in context along with sufficient time allocation to reflect on practices and beliefs through engaging in dialogue (Beaty, 1998; Robson, 2006; Eaton & Carbone, 2008; Tang & Choi, 2009).

Thus, there is immense focus on the need for institutions to create conditions or the right environment that is necessary for meaningful workplace learning and development of teachers (Knowles, 1990; Bickel and Hattrup, 1995; Palincsar et al., 1998; Gravani, 2003) (in Gravani & John, 2005). An environment that is conducive to effective adult professional learning can be possible when, firstly, institutions understand that individual teachers have different professional life histories and consequently varying learning needs (Keay, 2006). In order to make such an institutional environment possible, Sandholtz (2002) suggests offering teachers autonomy and choice in determining the types of activities for their own CPD and providing the freedom and flexibility to collaborate and openly communicate with colleagues and engage in critical thinking and analysis. Such exposure provides a greater range of references for assessing one's own ideas, performance and need for learning (Sandholtz, 2002). It also increases teachers' motivation to engage in self-directed CPD in addition to the CPD required by their institutional context (Burns, 2005).

Loxley et al. (2007) identify several factors associated with institutional leadership that lead to successful CPD for teachers within the institution. These include belief in the overall purpose of CPD; ensuring that school policies support new teaching strategies; and creating an atmosphere that encourages innovation/experimentation. There is also mention of providing teachers with time and opportunity to meet and share ideas; not overloading them with work; and ensuring sufficient availability of resources. Together these factors build the school environment and culture which is not replicable from one context to the other.

Burbank & Kauchak (2002) recommend allowing teachers the opportunity to reflect on and make decisions about their own CPD as it validates teachers as producers of knowledge and provides them with a voice in their CPD planning. This also serves as a needs analysis for teacher educators and, as Knowles (1980) (in Hoban , 2002) argues, it increases teachers' commitment if they have participated in making decisions for their learning (Gravani & John, 2005).

Collectively, such conditions that create a supportive environment for collaborative forms of learning are suggested by researchers as useful in setting up interpersonal networks (Joldoshalieva, 2007; de Lima, 2007) and teacher learning communities that are focused on the growth and development of the community members (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000 in Burns, 2005). According to Sim (2006), establishing strong and supportive communities within teacher education programmes enables teachers to examine tensions in non-threatening environments. Keay (2006) and Lloyd and Beard (1995 in Keay, 2006) discuss how such processes within communities of practice develop mutual respect and time commitment among community members. Burbank & Kauchak (2002) also suggest institutionalizing collaborative mechanisms into work communities to offer support in structured manner within schools.

In order to integrate collaborative CPD into institutional CPD plans, as Tang and Choi (2009) suggest, it is necessary to have in place policies and practices to restore a culture of trust in schools and within the educational community. Such policies and mechanisms must focus on giving teachers greater control and opportunities to develop relevant CPD plans (Burns, 2005). Only then, as Loxley et al. (2007) believe, will CPD focus on change in practice and the interconnections between individual practitioner, the institution and the wider system within which the institution is located, and how all these aspects are effected either as direct or indirect consequence of CPD.

Finally, Karagiorgi & Symeou (2008) found that teachers would like to be reassured of the quality of CPD through accreditation of the training programme and internal evaluation mechanisms. In this respect, as Beaty (1998) suggests, institutions should invest in providing accredited CPD programmes along with financial rewards, formal recognition and promotion prospects to teachers who successfully complete and excel in implementing learning acquired through CPD programmes (Beaty, 1998).

3.6.5   Methodology

It is interesting to note the varied methods used in obtaining data in the various research studies reviewed here. The vast majority of studies employed data collection through the use of individual or focus group interviews using detailed unstructured or semi-structured interviews. Some studies also include written accounts of teachers' reflections with the aim of gaining data that can provide a detailed picture of teacher development (For example, Eylon et al., 2008; Tang & Choi, 2009). While a variety of approaches were used to gather data, the basic intent remained the same – to explore in-depth teachers' perceptions and experiences of CPD in their own words and to understand their personal accounts and views of the impact of learning.

However, as with all other methods of data collection, there are limitations to such forms of data collection as well. While the data collected may be arguably rich, the fact that information collected is based on teachers' subjective accounts (through in-depth conversations) makes it challenging for institutions to use the information to formally measure the impact of CPD on student learning clearly because 'evaluations have invariably been reliant on participant' self-reports and reviews' (Glover & Law, 1996:83) (in Burchell et al., 2002).

3.7   Summary

In this chapter I have attempted to present an understanding of the notion of CPD and the distinction between CPD and PD in the literature. I have also discussed the nature and role of professional knowledge in TESOL and the various ways in which this professional knowledge is acquired and imparted. Following this, I have discussed the various perspectives on teacher learning that influence TESOL teacher development and the various formal, informal, self-directed and other-directed approaches to CPD that appear in the literature. A brief insight into research as a form of CPD and the significance of professional learning communities is also included in the approaches to CPD discussed.

The chapter ends with a discussion of the various societal, institutional, contextual and cultural factors that impact on the actualization of CPD followed by insight into some recent research on teachers' experiences of CPD. In the next chapter I present and analyze the data collected for this study.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

4   Introduction

A research design, explain Denzin & Lincoln (1994), describes a flexible set of guidelines that connects theoretical paradigms to strategies of inquiry and methods for collecting empirical material. This chapter gives an account of the research design of my study beginning with a description of the research questions and the participants. This is followed by a discussion of the research methodology chosen and the methods of data collection. Subsequent sections in the chapter focus on data collection procedures including sampling, piloting research instruments and the actual data collection process. Towards the end I have described the data analysis procedures followed by research quality issues. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study.

4.1   The research questions of the study

My study aims to investigate the CPD experiences of EFL teachers employed in the foundation English programme in federal universities. It also explores the CPD options available to them, the factors influencing their choices, the benefits of CPD and the accompanying issues as perceived by participants. More specifically, the following research questions guide my investigation;

1) What do EFL teachers employed in the foundation English programme of federal universities understand by the term 'continued professional development' or CPD?

2) What kind of CPD do they engage in?

3) How do teachers justify their choice of the CPD initiatives they undertake?

4) What in their views are the factors that impact on their chosen CPD?

5) What suggestions do teachers have with regard to improving the CPD within their context?

4.2   Participants in the study

Participants in my study consist of EFL teachers employed in the federal universities in the UAE. While the preliminary survey (see chapter two, section 2.5) included all EFL teachers in these universities, the actual study specifically includes teachers teaching in the foundation English programme. Foundation teachers help freshman students develop mandatory English language communication skills as a pre-requisite to joining the English medium university studies (See chapter 2, section 2.2.1 for role of foundation EFL teachers). Foundation EFL departments usually employ around fifteen to twenty appropriately qualified and experienced teachers members of different nationalities catering to classes of approximately fifteen to twenty students each.

Participants in my study are thus full time teachers with a minimum of five years' experience and may be employed in any of the federal universities in the emirates of Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Ras Al Khaimah, Fujairah, and Sharjah (including Ajman and Umm Al Quwain). The last three emirates, Sharjah, Ajman and Umm Al Quwain, are grouped together because, due to proximity and the small size of the emirates, there is only one group of state universities in Sharjah that caters to the need of national students in the three emirates.

One of the reasons for including such a wide selection of full time experienced teachers is to be able to generate a broad range of perceptions, insights and experiences of EFL teachers about CPD. The second reason is that experienced teachers are usually employed as full time teachers on a three year renewable contract subject to fulfilment of certain criteria. Novice teachers, on the other hand, are almost always employed as adjunct teachers over a twelve month contract. The choice will thus ensure that participants in my study are teachers with sufficient experience in both TEFL and in CPD.

4.3   The research methodology of the study

In setting up a research study, it is of paramount importance for researchers to first consider their ontological and epistemological position that helps determine the research paradigm they will adopt. It is also necessary to establish the methodology or the investigative approach by which researchers gain knowledge of the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). In this section, I explain how I arrived at

an informed choice of research design for my study, based on the research issues, personal inclinations and after considering the various investigative approaches.

4.3.1   The ontology and epistemology of the study

Having initiated my study with the aim of understanding participants' perceptions about the phenomenon of CPD and their related experiences, I assume that the nature of reality (ontology) is subjective and that multiple realities exist. Individuals' minds based on personal experiences interpret different subjective meanings of reality even in relation to the same phenomenon. From an ontological perspective my investigation is thus aimed at understanding and interpreting how individuals within a particular context make sense of the phenomenon of CPD.

According to Crotty (1998) and Creswell (2003), meaning or knowledge is socially constructed in that it arises out of interactions between individuals and their world (epistemology). Hence, I assume that it is only through interacting with participants that I will be able to uncover their perceptions about CPD experiences. Recent social constructivists (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 2000; Schwandt, 2000; and Neuman, 2000) concur that individuals' understandings of the world in which they live and work are subjective, varied, multiple, and are formed through interactions with others in the same context. The emphasis in my study is thus on participants' views of the phenomenon under study, the processes of interaction among them and the specific contexts in which participants live and work (Creswell, 2003).

My approach then involves, first seeing the phenomena 'through the eyes of participants' (Robson, 2002:25) and then placing this understanding within my own 'theoretical and conceptual framework of the phenomena' (Arsenault & Anderson, 1998:125). Finally, I will reconsider 'the participants' perspective with the goal of trying to define, unravel, reveal or explain the world' (ibid). My understanding, I acknowledge, is likely to be biased by my own world view. I shall, however, attempt to review the data critically and as objectively as possible with the aim of allowing information to emerge through participants' perceptions and without being influenced by my own prejudices.

I thus expect to 'interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them', (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:2), and consequently require a research approach that will

permit me to do this. In the following sections, I will first distinguish between the positivist and interpretivist paradigms, and then explain the choice of paradigm for my study.

4.3.2   The positivist and interpretivist paradigms

Historically, research is characterised by the positivist and the interpretivist paradigms. Research in the positivist paradigm is directed at testing hypotheses to verify the existence of 'a constant relationship' between two variables (Robson, 2002:21). It is characterized by collecting quantitative data and making statistical inferences to establish facts. Variables are tested under controlled conditions to develop universal laws of cause and effect that are replicable and can be generalized to congruent situations. Positivist researchers view themselves as standing apart from the phenomena being investigated in order to conduct value-free enquiry. They believe that knowledge is objective and that reality is external, rational and independent of the investigator (Wellington, 2000) who can discover this reality by staying detached, neutral and objective throughout research (Bailey, 1996).

Social scientists however, are reluctant to entirely follow the positivist methods, especially when people are the focus of the study, or particularly when it is taking place in a social real world context. Instead they seek forms of knowing, understanding and interpreting the social world from the view point of individuals who are part of the ongoing action being investigated. As Beck (1979 cited in Cohen & Manion, 1994:26) writes:

> (T)he purpose of social science is to understand social reality as different people see it and to demonstrate how their views shape the action which they take within that reality…While the social sciences do not reveal ultimate truth, they do help us to make sense of our world. What the social sciences offer is explanation, clarification and demystification of the social forms which man has created around himself.

Interpretive researchers thus acknowledge that reality is a human construct represented through eyes of participants (Fletcher, 1996 cited in Robson, 2002). Since 'even those in the same setting may not experience social and physical reality in the same way', (Bailey, 1996:27), there exist multiple realities that are socially constructed through interactions between individuals in the same context. The task of the researcher is then

to understand and interpret these multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge.

Interpretive research employs strategies of enquiry like ethnography, grounded theory, case study, narrative research or phenomenology. It is characterised by qualitative methods of data collection (such as semi structured or unstructured interviews and observations) which focus on 'in-depth, long term interaction with relevant people in one or different sites' (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992:6) and allow researchers to acquire multiple perspectives that exist within the specific context. Qualitative research based on an interpretive theoretical framework is thus context specific since 'it posits that ideas, people and events cannot be understood if isolated from their contexts' (Edson, 1988:46). Thus, in order to understand people it is necessary to understand the interpretations which they give of their situation and of what they are doing because the social world, as Pring (2004) explains, is nothing other than our subjective interpretations.

Using an interpretive approach is likely to raise questions of reliability and internal validity. These are, however, countered through methodological safeguards such as transparency of methods and triangulation techniques. That apart, my research is context-specific and limited to a small number of participants which makes the findings non-generalizable to other contexts. These questions are addressed in section 4.7.

4.3.3   The research paradigm for my study

My study intends to investigate and 'interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:2). Thus in attempting to explore, understand and interpret the meaning of CPD to participants within the researched context, my research is qualitative and falls within the interpretive paradigm. Consequently, in order to understand and interpret participants' own descriptions of the phenomenon they individually and directly experience, I have used the phenomenological approach.

4.3.4   Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a strategy of enquiry that examines 'how human beings construct and give meaning to their actions in concrete social situations' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:204). It focuses on 'understanding the meaning events have for persons being

studied' (Patton, 1991 cited in Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:3). The role of phenomenologists is thus to first understand how people within a context individually and collectively understand and interpret phenomena. They then aim to record, interpret and explain the meanings which these individuals make of their experiences.

While each one of us inhabits a subjective world of meaning through which we interpret the social world, the social world itself is 'an intersubjective world' because 'our knowledge of it is in various ways socialised' (Schutz 1954:9). When individuals in a context socialise, they interpret each others' actions meaningfully in terms of what they do, why they do it, why they do it at a particular time and under the given circumstances (Radnor, 2002). Thus, 'the constructs of the social sciences are…constructs of the constructs made by the actors on the social scene, whose behaviour the social scientist has to observe and to explain…'(Schutz, 1954 cited in Radnor, 2002:10/11). It is these multiple social constructs of participants in my study that I intend to understand, illuminate, interpret and explain through my investigation.

Crotty (1998:42) is of the opinion that phenomenology is closely linked to constructionism, or the view that, 'all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is…being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context'. Hence, while the participants in my study construct individual meanings of the phenomenon of CPD based on personal experiences, they also engage in 'the collective generation [and transmission] of meaning (Crotty, 1998:58). It is these individual and collective interpretations of the phenomenon by participants that I am interested in understanding and interpreting as a phenomenologist.

Using the phenomenological approach I will be able to 'engage with phenomena' in the researched context through interaction with participants and hence 'make sense of them directly and immediately' (Crotty, 1998:79), while placing my usual understandings in abeyance and taking a fresh look at things. It is apparent that phenomenology is self professedly subjectivist in approach in the sense of being in search of people's subjective experiences. However, I intend to minimize the imposition of my own subjectivity and previous knowledge of CPD by employing a variety of data collection techniques and by putting aside (or bracketing) as much as possible my own experiences to understand those of participants.

4.4   Research methods

My research study required qualitative instruments that would explore in depth the perspectives of EFL teachers about the kind of CPD they engage in, their justifications for choosing certain kinds of CPD and their prospective contributions within their context.

Hence, I initiated data collection with the intent of conducting semi-structured interviews and requesting participants to write monthly reflection logs of their perceptions about and experiences of CPD over a six-month period. However, bearing in mind participants' full time teaching commitments (twenty to thirty hours a week) in addition to administrative and counselling responsibilities, it seemed unethical to burden them with the additional task of writing monthly reflection logs. I therefore decided to limit my research tools to face to face individual interviews and focus group interviews. In this section I provide a comprehensive description and justification of my chosen research instruments.

4.4.1   Individual interviews

Kvale (1996) describes interviews, as a specific form of conversation that typically involves a researcher asking questions and hopefully receiving answers from those who are being interviewed (Robson, 2002). The purpose of a research interview, according to Wellington (2000) is to probe respondents' views, perspectives or life-history, and in the process 'to obtain descriptions of the lived world of the interviewees with respect to interpretations of the meanings of the described phenomena' (Kvale, 1996:30). In providing them with a chance to reflect back on their career experiences (Kelchtermans, 1993), make their experiences and viewpoints heard and eventually read, an interview thus empowers people and provides them with a voice. It also allows researchers to investigate and elicit things that cannot be observed, such as, 'an interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings and perspectives' (Wellington, 2000:71). The aim is thus not to establish some sort of inherent truth but to illuminate the multiple truths that exist in social situations at a given point in time.

Interviews may be structured, semi-structured or unstructured according to the depth of information sought. I employed semi structured interviews with open ended questions which focus on the meaning of the phenomenon to participants, their individual

perceptions and illustrate in-depth the meaning of the findings (King & Keohane, 1994). In keeping with the phenomenological approach of my study, semi structured interviews helped me understand the phenomenon of CPD from interviewees' own perspectives, through their own descriptions as experienced by them and with the assumption that 'the important reality is what people perceive it to be' (Kvale, 1996:52). In addition, I experienced 'considerable freedom in the sequencing of questions in their exact wording, and in the amount of time and attention given to different topics' (Robson, 2002:278). I could provide participants with explanation where necessary and omit or add questions where required.

Open ended questions allowed me to develop rapport with participants, explore my research questions in depth, seek opinions, elicit information and generate unanticipated answers that enabled a truer assessment of participants' beliefs. Face to face interviewing gave me the advantage of better understanding participants' verbal responses through their nonverbal cues. In addition, possible ambiguity was removed by asking for clarifications from interviewees. The good interviewer, as Pring (2004) suggests, is able to draw out from the interviewee the deeper significance of the event to the point that it seems ever more difficult to generalise.

Interviewing however, is time-consuming in that it requires careful preparation such as organising visits, arranging appropriate time and venue, securing necessary permissions, confirming arrangements, or even rescheduling appointments to cover any cancelations. In addition, recording equipment has to be secured, notes have to written up, and recorded data has to be transcribed and subsequently analysed. There is also the possibility of the interviewer losing control of the situation when open ended questions are used. Nevertheless, the vividness of data collected through open-ended questions outweighs the accompanying difficulties (Wellington, 2000)

A major disadvantage in qualitative research interviews is that biases stemming from several sources are difficult to rule out. Previous knowledge, attitude or personal opinions of interviewers may interfere with their judgement; or misunderstandings may arise between the interviewer and interviewee regarding what has been said and what has been understood. Sometimes, in order to make a positive impression and be helpful, interviewees may say things that they imagine the interviewer would like to hear. In addition, the asymmetrical relationship between participants in the interview process,

based on race, sex, religion, social class, age and professional standing, may be a powerful source of bias (Cortazzi, 1993; Nunan, 1992). I attempted to overcome these issues by firstly bracketing personal bias with the intention of allowing information to emerge from participants (see chapter two, section 4.3.1). Secondly, I gave out the interview schedule ahead of time so that participants had the opportunity to reflect on and prepare responses away from my presence which would make them less likely to respond as I might expect them to. Thirdly, I selected participants who were teachers in the same department in the same university and had all been in that environment for no less than five years.

Development of the interview schedule

The interview schedule was informed by my original research questions (See appendix for interview schedule) based on my interest in the subject and my awareness of the phenomenon of CPD in the researched context (See chapter one for rationale). The interview schedule was also informed by the literature and findings from the preliminary survey questionnaire (See chapter two for this). In order to understand and interpret the meaning of the phenomenon of CPD to participants, I explored in depth ten open ended questions in face to face interviews. Questions in the semi structured interview schedule thus broadly focused on the following categories of enquiry:

- Participants' perspectives of CPD (including the meaning and importance of CPD)
- CPD activities/initiatives that participants were recently involved in
- Reasons for participants' choice of CPD initiatives
- The factors that impacted on/influenced their choice of CPD activities/initiatives
- Participants' suggestions with regard to improving CPD within their context

A week ahead of their scheduled interviews I e-mailed interviewees asking them to reflect on the above mentioned aspects so that they would be mentally prepared to focus on the subject of enquiry. It also put them at ease, saved time that would otherwise be spent in explaining the questions asked and proved useful in retaining focus during the interview. The interview schedule was designed to last an hour and a half bearing in mind that anything less than half an hour was unlikely to be valuable and more than an

hour and a half would be making unreasonable demands and could result in fewer persons willing to participate (Robson, 2002).

4.4.2   Focus group interviews

Litosseliti (2003) describes focus groups as guided discussions with small structured groups of selected participants which are normally facilitated by a moderator. They are set up to explore specific topics and individuals' views and experiences through open ended group discussions. Focus group interviews are thus carried out in order to amplify and understand findings (Robson, 2002) about a phenomenon or culture. The moderator's role is to guide the discussion using a series of open ended questions and minimal intervention in participants'/interviewees' accounts of their experiences.

Contrary to group interviewing, where a number of people are simultaneously interviewed and the emphasis is on the exchanges between the researcher and the participants, focus groups rely primarily on the interaction and stimulation among the group participants themselves (Litosseliti, 2003).The interview typically extends over at least an hour or more, with five to eight participants thought to be suitable, although smaller groups have been used (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990).

Focus groups are advantageous in that they focus on the subjective experiences of people who have been exposed to the phenomenon being studied. This, according to Johnson (1996), gives focus group interviews considerable potential to raise consciousness, allowing participants to engage in the process of developing and re-framing their views through collaboration (Litoselliti, 2003) and as a result empowers participants. This also helps alleviate the biases of the interviewer to some extent. Cohen and Manion (1994) concur that the potential for developing discussion yields a wide range of responses especially because participants have been involved in the particular situation that is the focus of the interview (Merton & Kendall, 1946).

I used focus group interviews to gain additional insights on the phenomenon of CPD in addition to the individual interviews (Wellington, 2000). It also enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of participants' shared understanding (Litosseliti, 2003) about the phenomenon of CPD as they experienced it and in their own voices (see chapter one, section 1.3). Participants were thus able to jog each other's memories and thoughts because they were from the same context. The group discussions also allowed their

views and feelings to emerge, while giving me some control to investigate the phenomenon in greater depth (Merton et al., 1956).

My focus groups were homogeneous in that they comprised EFL teachers employed in the foundation English programme of federal universities and had more than five years of experience in the context. Participants thus had a common background, position and experience, all of which facilitated communication, and promoted exchange of ideas and experiences (Brown, 1999). This illuminated a number of different perspectives, views, attitudes, beliefs, responses, motivations and perceptions on the same topic, in participants' own words (Litosseliti, 2003). A practical advantage was that of being able to collect a large amount of data from numerous participants within a short span of time.

Focus group interviews are, however, extremely time consuming to organise and require careful planning to ensure that all participants can meet at the same time and place. In terms of group dynamics there is the disadvantage of dominant individuals monopolising the discussion and reducing time devoted to each participant; or even individuals hesitant to speak in a group. In addition, similar biases as in individual interviews may result. A focus group moderator therefore needs to be skilled in managing the discussions. Seating arrangements must allow for proper eye contact and a high quality recorder must be strategically placed for optimal recording (Wellington 2000) of the interview.

Focus group discussions, as Sim (1998) clarifies can only be employed in situations where the intention is to explore collective phenomena rather than individual, and consensus of attitudes or generalisation of findings is not required. They are not easy to conduct, sometimes requiring a second moderator to take notes, note non-verbal cues and to identify and analyse the intermingling voices from recordings. However, where a second moderator is not possible, 'the interviewer must develop the ability to evaluate continuously the interview while it is in progress' (Cohen & Manion, 1994:290). The amounts of data generated are far more than individual interviews and require equally longer to subsequently analyse. Despite the limitations, the rich data gained from focus group discussions is, as Gibbs (1997) mentions, 'a rewarding experience for the researcher and the participants' (cited in Litosseliti, 2003:27).

Development of the focus group interviews

As mentioned previously, my focus group interview schedule was informed by the specific topics and questions arising from preceding individual interviews that I intended to explore in greater depth, as well as the original research questions of my study and the relevant literature. A week ahead of the actual interview, I e-mailed participants a list of specific topics to reflect on together with a request to allow the interviews to be recorded. This was done in order to get the utmost out of group discussions and because the information sought required participants to reflect on the following aspects of their PD:

1. Participants' perspectives of PD
2. The importance of PD in their professional context
3. The kind of in-house and external PD that they had recently engaged in
4. Their reasons for engaging in these PD activities
5. The kind of in-house and external PD opportunities available to them
6. Their expectations from the PD activities that they engage in
7. The support offered by their institutions to encourage PD
8. Participants' expectations from their institutions in terms of CPD support
9. Personal or professional factors that motivate or demotivate them in achieving CPD
10. Suggestions for improvement of CPD within their context

On the day of the interview, the same topics were used in the form of eight open ended questions to prompt participants into a discussion among themselves (See appendix for focus group interview schedule). The schedule was designed to last up to an hour and a half, giving participants the option to leave after the agreed time. I found focus groups to be a highly effective technique for qualitative data collection since the amount and range of data are increased by simultaneously collecting from several people (Robinson, 1999). As a moderator my job was 'to generate interest in and discussion about a particular topic… without at the same time leading the group to reinforce existing expectations or confirm a prior hypothesis' (Sim, 1998:347). I also prompted participants to either move on to the next topic or to reflect on and provide more details where necessary.

4.5   Data collection procedures

In this section I explain how I piloted my research instruments and collected data for the study. I will, however, first describe the sampling strategy for my study.

4.5.1   Sampling

Sampling, as Johnson (1992) states, is a systematic process of selecting cases for a research study in order to make it manageable in terms of size and cost. The process involves who or what is being studied, how they are studied and the size of the sample population (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). The sample is a subset representing the total population under study and provides knowledge or information about that population. It is broadly categorized into probability and non-probability sampling (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Patton, 1990).

Probability sampling is mainly used in quantitative research to represent a larger population in which the probability of selection of each respondent is known. Most qualitative research on the other hand, employs non-probability sampling since generalization or 'transferability of results' is not intended (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998:65). Respondents are purposefully chosen because they are information rich (Patton, 1990), based on their convenience and availability (Babbie, 1990), and because they will best help the researcher understand the research question (Creswell, 2003). They do not represent the wider population, but rather the sample population itself.

I used purposive sampling to obtain participants for both individual and focus group interviews. For the individual interviews a non-random stratified sample of participants was selected based on the criteria that they were EFL teachers employed in the foundation programme of federal universities and that they had more than five years of teaching experience. The identified population thus comprised a homogeneous group of individuals based on their employment context and experience.

For the focus group interviews a non-random stratified sample of participants was selected based on the criteria that they were foundation EFL teachers teaching in one of the two federal universities in Dubai, they had not participated in the individual interviews and, as with the individual interviewees, they had more than five years' experience. Another criterion was that participants were also able to participate in the

focus groups on the same day that other participants from their institution were able to meet.

While ideally I would have liked to obtain a minimum of two participants from each federal university in the UAE, it was difficult to gain voluntary participation from universities in Sharjah (including Ajman & Um Al Quwain) and Fujairah. While this could apparently suggest that teachers in these emirates do not engage in CPD as extensively as teachers in other emirates, it could also imply that at the time of my study teachers in these emirates were probably very busy. However, whether or not they engage as much in CPD as other emirates is an aspect worth exploring in a separate study.

The sample obtained for interviews thus consisted of experienced and knowledgeable experts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), who were representative of the range of experience on the phenomenon of CPD in which I was interested (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). They were easily available volunteers who willingly participated in the study, had the relevant knowledge and experience, had the ability to reflect, were articulate, and had the time to be interviewed (Morse, 1991). Besides this, no other classification criteria were used, such as gender, age, race or demographics, because these were not crucial to my investigation. In all, I conducted twelve face to face individual interviews and two focus group interviews with four participants each.

Figure 4.1 (on the following page) summarises participant selection for my study. Additional details of participants appear in the following chapter.

RESEARCH TOOLS	SAMPLING	CONTEXT	SELECTION CRITERIA	PARTICIPANTS
Individual interviews	Non probability Purposive	Foundation English programme in all federal universities in UAE	EFL teachers with more than five years of teaching experience	12
Focus group interviews		Foundation English programme in 2 federal universities in Dubai	(a) EFL teachers with more than five years of teaching experience. (b) Teachers who had not participated in individual interviews (c) Teachers who could participate in the interview on the same day as others from their institution were able to	2 groups of 4 participants each

Figure 4.1: Summary of participant selection as it occurred in my study.

4.5.2   Trialling the research instruments

Trialling research instruments allows researchers to focus on previously unclear areas, and is necessary in order to test the effectiveness of research instruments in gathering the type of data that will provide information relevant to the aims of the study.

Individual interviews

An analysis of responses from the preliminary questionnaire helped me to identify topics that could be explored in greater depth and facilitated developing a semi-structured interview schedule of ten open ended questions. Trial interviews with two workplace colleagues lasted approximately an hour and fifteen minutes and resulted in minor changes to the question wording. Following a discussion with my thesis supervisors in May 2007 I proceeded with at least one pilot interview in the researched context, using this opportunity to develop rapport with intended participants. This resulted in removal of a few introductory questions in my interview schedule that were included to build rapport and that had no direct relevance to my study.

Around this time federal universities closed for their summer break until August 2007. During this time until the universities resumed in September 2007, I researched teacher development information on the websites of federal universities in the UAE. This unveiled areas surrounding CPD that would be interesting to explore through group discussions.

Focus group interviews

The focus group schedule was developed based on my interest in exploring specific topics in depth to gain group insights. In January 2008, federal universities closed down for their month long winter break. At this time, I piloted the preliminary schedule with three of my workplace colleagues to evaluate the time required to conduct the interview, the question wording and whether the topics were interesting enough to generate a discussion that would last at least an hour or more.

Unfortunately, due to time constraints pertaining to my thesis write up I was unable to formally pilot the focus group interview within the researched context. However, as a result of the trial with colleagues, I discovered that individuals with similar experiences and in the same context were quite comfortable in discussing their own CPD experiences. I also reworded a few questions and gained the experience of facilitating a group discussion that was being recorded. Most importantly I was able to practise the nature of my own involvement in the focus group interviews as a moderator/facilitator to ensure a coherent discussion around specific topics.

4.5.3   Data collection

The pilot of my research instruments was an ongoing process closely knitted into the sequence of devising each research instrument, piloting and reviewing it, the actual data collection procedures and the consequent data analysis. In this section I explain the data collection procedures following the pilot of each research instrument.

Individual interviews

Having previously obtained permission to access participants for administering the preliminary survey it was easy to request access to foundation EFL teachers in the same context for conducting both individual and focus group interviews. I also posted requests for voluntary participation in my study on the TESOL Arabia members e-mail

list and the TESOL Arabia Distance Learning Support e-mail list that reaches out to all paid members of TESOL Arabia residing in the UAE. I then personally e-mailed all voluntary participants informing them of my research topic, the significance of their role in it, their time input, the research etiquette that would be followed and my contact details for further information.

Following this I set up individual interview appointments with participants who responded to my first and second invitations. Between October 2007 and January 2008, I scheduled twelve face to face interviews. Interviewees were emailed the interview schedule a week ahead of meeting so that they could reflect on their own CPD. Scanned copies of the consent form bearing my signature were also e-mailed to avoid utilizing the scheduled time for any other purpose. All interviewees preferred meeting at their institutions after work. My own manager at the time kindly allowed me to leave work an hour early on the days scheduled for interviewing.

Prior to the actual interviews I communicated with participants through e-mails, phone calls and personal meetings where possible. This helped me establish rapport, trust and ensure the possibility that participants would be willing to share information that would be recorded. While my interview schedule included a predetermined list of topics to explore, I did not rigidly follow the order of questions because I know from experience that semi structured interviews often result in unexpected areas of interest that lead to other questions worth asking. Interviews lasted from one hour to an hour and a half and were recorded with participants' permission. Recorded interviews were transcribed as soon after as possible and returned to interviewees for respondent validation (Radnor, 2001) thus providing them with the opportunity to review what they had said, make corrections, and add/delete points before the analysis was begun.

Focus group interviews
The preceding individual interviews helped me conduct a sort of situation analysis in order to understand important aspects of CPD to those involved, the meaning these aspects have for them and their effects on those involved. The focus groups then helped me to understand the collective subjective experiences, views and feelings of participants about mandatory CPD in their context. Participants included foundation EFL teachers teaching in the two federal universities in Dubai, some of whom had originally responded to my requests for participation in individual interviews. However,

having conducted the required number of individual interviews, I decided to include them in focus group interviews. While I would have liked to conduct focus group interviews with teachers in other emirates, time constraints associated with my day job made it impractical for me to travel long distances outside the emirate of Dubai for any additional focus group interviews.

The same procedures of contacting participants were followed as individual interviews with the only difference being that individuals were invited to meet in a group. Appointments were set up in one institution at a time for practical access. Participants were e-mailed scanned copies of the consent form bearing my signature, university details and personal contact details, as well as a list of topics to reflect on before the group convened. In order to avoid forced participation, interviewees were pre-informed of other participants, thus giving them the option of opting out if they desired. This resulted in at least one participant opting out of being interviewed in a group.

My focus group interviews were 'a form of hybrid with characteristics of a discussion as well as of an interview' (Robson, 2002:283). The traditional form of answering and questioning was avoided to encourage group interaction. I also resorted to such courtesies as providing donuts and coffee to facilitate focus group interaction and to help to smooth data collection (Carey, 1994). Interviews lasted from an hour and a half to two hours and were recorded with participants' prior consent. The focus groups were conducted only after participants' work hours on days when they did not mind staying back for a minimum of an hour. Contrary to my expectations, most participants found the discussion interesting enough to stay beyond the scheduled hour and a half. Recorded interviews were transcribed and copies were e-mailed to participants for validation before analysing content.

4.6   Data analysis

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) liken data analysis and interpretation to choreography where the story must be told in the most effective way to convince the audience. I have attempted to analyse and interpret the interview data (both individual and focus group) with the intention to present it in a way that would lead the reader to understand the meaning of the experience under study.

I followed Radnor's (2001) step by step guide to qualitative data analysis, although I used colour coding instead of alpha numeric coding that she recommends. Interviews were first transcribed and multiple copies of the transcripts were printed. I then read the transcripts for 'topic ordering' (ibid: 70) to draw out and list topics that were linked to my original research questions. These were listed on an A4 sheet of paper and colour coded for use as a reference guide for subsequent readings of the transcripts.

A second careful reading of transcripts helped me identify the explicit and implicit categories that emerged within each topic. I colour coded the categories using colours that corresponded with colours of the topic that they were part of. In case of more than one category in a topic, I used numeric coding. A third reading for content helped to identify quotes that were aligned with each category within the topics. I labelled the quotes according to the category they represented.

Keeping the master copy intact, I then used the word processor to copy and paste the categories and quotes on separate Microsoft Word documents representing each topic. These were then printed and read again to look for 'subtleties of meaning' (ibid: 88), in order to understand data, interpret it and write down the descriptions of my interpretation.

The real work of interpretation and description begins only when the analysis is complete. Since interpretive research is based on the epistemological position that knowledge is socially constructed and that we are in a world of multiple realities, it is the researchers' responsibility to be creative and constructive in making sense of data and theorizing from it.

4.7   Research quality

Qualitative researchers, according to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), acknowledge that there is no value-free or bias free design. In order to make research findings convincing and trustworthy, I have acknowledged biases by considering the issues of validity, trustworthiness (or reliability), transferability (or generalizability), objectivity and ethicality of the research methods employed.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994:100) define internal validity as 'the degree to which findings correctly map the phenomenon in question', external validity as 'the degree to which findings can be generalized to other settings similar to the one in which the study occurred', reliability (trustworthiness) as 'the extent to which findings can be replicated, or reproduced by another inquirer'; and objectivity as 'the extent to which findings are free from bias'.

Validity

I recorded the conversations for accurate interpretations (Maxwell, 1992), took notes while participants engaged in discussions, and incorporated member checking (Padget, 1998) by returning transcripts to participants for respondents' verification. Research tools were double checked for clarity and the time taken to administer them. Data were collected at the start of each term of the academic year to secure a high degree of involvement by participants (Robson, 2002).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) identify researcher bias as another threat to internal validity. The researcher's personal assumptions and preconceptions may affect preferences in participant selection or even the questions asked and data selected for reporting and analysis. In order to avoid this, I have firstly tried to clarify my world view and theoretical assumptions in the preceding chapters. Secondly, in keeping with the phenomenological stance of my study, I have considered the importance of reflexivity, i.e., 'an awareness of the ways in which the researcher as an individual with a particular social identity and background has an impact on the research process' (Robson, 2002: 172). Hence, bearing in mind that my status as a researcher could impact on participant' responses, I made efforts to establish a trusting professional relationship with supervisors before gaining access to the teachers who reported to them and who would be participants in my study. In addition, instead of selecting participants, I invited volunteers from a homogeneous context to participate in my study.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness or reliability of methods and research practices in qualitative research is concerned with dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) or 'the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the

same observer on different occasions' (Silverman, 2000:188). I tried to increase dependability in my research in three ways.

Firstly, all interviewees were provided with the same standardised questions that had been carefully worded after piloting (Robson, 2002). Secondly, interviews were transcribed as accurately as possible and returned to participants for verification. Lastly, as Kirk and Miller (1986) (ibid.) recommend, I documented all procedures of my research including transcripts, charts, drafts and final reviews of data, according to which the research process could be replicated or reconstructed.

Transferability

In qualitative research transferability refers to whether findings are transferable to other similar contexts. Since qualitative interpretive research is time and context bound, and limited to a small number of participants, findings are rarely representative of the sample or even generalizable/transferable to external contexts. However, as Radnor (2001) advocates, an explicit description of the research process and methods used in data collection and analysis, together with a thorough analysis, give insight of how the research was done. As a result theoretical propositions arise and generate conceptualisations for researchers in other contexts to explore. I have attempted to make this possible in the following chapters by providing rich, accurate, detailed and complete descriptions of my data collection, analysis and interpretations.

Objectivity

Trustworthiness in interpretive research is thus extremely valuable to assess the research quality. Hence, while I acknowledge the subjective nature of my research, I have attempted to the best of my capability to present an accurate, detailed, complete and bias free account of participants' perceptions, views, and feelings as they were experienced by participants and as they were revealed to me.

4.7.1 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues in research may stem from the kinds of problems investigated by social scientists and the methods they use to obtain valid and reliable data (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Ethicality in research is thus an important concern related to rules of conduct; typically, to conformity to a code or set of principles in research (Reynolds, 1979). Although the nature of my research study in itself did not pose any kind of ethical

problems, the research procedures adopted along with the possibility of my research being published required me to take the following steps to prevent any possible problems.

Certificate of ethical research approval

As a first step in doctoral research, I was required by the University of Exeter to submit a 'Certificate of ethical research approval' to the Chair of the School of Education and Lifelong Learning Ethics Committee. This contained a brief description of my research project, details of participants and their context, details of ethical issues considered prior to data collection and how I intended to deal with these.

Informed consent

Diener and Crandall (1978, cited in Cohen & Manion, 1994:350) define informed consent as 'the procedures in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that would be likely to influence their decisions'. Participants in my research were all volunteers who were well informed of the subject of my investigation, their role in my study and the significance of their contribution. While survey respondents' consent was secured through supervisors, interviewees were e-mailed copies of a signed consent form (see appendix 2 for consent form) together with the pre-interview topics for reflection.

I adapted the consent form available on the University of Exeter School of Education and Lifelong Learning website. It included details of my study, addressed participants willingness to participate and be recorded on conditions of anonymity and confidentiality, as well as the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Besides, prior to being involved in my research all participants had the opportunity to discuss any concerns to verify the research ethics that would be followed in data collection. While I ensured that participants in my research had continual access to my current contact details, I also communicated with them for reminders and scheduling appointments. Member checking of transcribed interviews was also done for participants to review and omit any inaccurate or sensitive information that might cause unintended negative consequences.

Access and acceptance

Cohen and Manion (1994) stress the importance of securing permissions to access the institution where the research is to be conducted, and acceptance by those whose permission one needs before embarking on data collection. This is the opportunity, they believe, for researchers to 'present their credentials as serious investigators and establish their own ethical position with respect to their proposed research' (Cohen & Manion, 1994:354). Through my involvement with TESOL Arabia as a CPD events organiser and through my previous employment experience in the researched context, quite a few supervisors and teachers were to some extent familiar with me. Nevertheless, considering the benefits of easier access to participants by obtaining assent and cooperation from those at the top (Festinger & Katz,1966), I still approached the supervisors of the foundation English departments with a formal, written request to access their teachers for participation in my research (Bell, 1987). (See appendix 2 for this request).

I also explained that my study was in connection with the EdD in TEFL and the name of my university, both of which are well known in the UAE, and the fact that I intended to explore various factors associated with CPD in the context. Having gained official permission, I met the supervisors in person with a view to negotiating access, timings, and to assure them of the research ethics that would be followed in data collection.

Privacy

As a moral responsibility towards participants who voluntarily participated in my research, I felt it was imperative to consider their right to privacy. Diener and Crandall (in Cohen & Manion, 1994) describe this from the following perspectives;

i. Confidentiality of sensitive information – This refers to how personally or potentially threatening the information is that is collected by the researcher. I signed the consent and confidentiality form and provided participants with its original copies assuring them that the information revealed to me would not be utilised in any way that they were not aware of or in a way that would be harmful to them.

ii. The setting being observed – Intrusion into participants' private settings was avoided by conducting meetings in a variety of locations at their workplace where participants felt comfortable to meet (cafeteria, common room, meeting room, classroom etc.).

iii. Dissemination of information – This concerns the ability to match personal information with the identity of the research participants. In transcribing, analysing and interpreting data I allocated alpha numeric codes to participants so that any kind of recognition was avoided. Anonymity of identity and confidentiality of information shared was established through signed consent forms. Participants were assured that their institutions would not be identified in any way since the study intended to explore federal universities as a single context and not as individual institutions.

Other measures

A few additional measures were taken to make the process of data collection comfortable and unobtrusive for participants. Interview appointments were scheduled at participants' convenience with regard to their personal and professional commitments, comfort and mental status. Time limits were agreed and adhered to as much as possible. I also regularly asked participants for feedback to counter against any kind of researcher bias that might affect my data collection and research procedures.

4.8   Limitations

Experiencing limitations is a part of any research study and needs to be taken into consideration by the reader. Even though there are not many limitations pertaining to my investigation, the one that must necessarily be mentioned here has to do with asymmetrical relationships (Nunan, 1992) between the researcher and the researched.

Within the researched context I held the status of an external interviewer who was exploring a context that I did not belong to. This put me in a vulnerable position of receiving information from interviewees that they believed I would like to hear. It required considerable effort in building a trusting relationship with interviewees and cautious facilitation of interviews on my part to get information that was as accurate as possible given the situation. As mentioned in this chapter I also e-mailed interview

schedules to enable participants to give as accurate responses as possible which would be uninfluenced by my status as the researcher.

Another limitation to my study relates to the single research method employed. However, the use of two different types of interviews enabled me to gather rich data that provided in depth and valuable insight into the experiences of participants.

4.9   Summary

This chapter is a description of the research design of my study. It provides insight into the research questions that guide my study, the research paradigm and the methodology employed for the study. I have also included a description of the research instruments, and the data collection process that includes sampling, piloting and the actual data collection procedures. Towards the end, I have described the data analysis approach taken followed by research quality aspects and the limitations pertaining to my investigation. The following chapter presents the findings of my study along with a discussion of these.

CHAPTER FIVE
DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5   Introduction

In this chapter I first describe the manner in which data from my study is presented and illustrated followed by additional participant details. Following this I have presented and analysed data emerging from each of the five research questions.

5.1   Data presentation and illustration

In presentation and analysis data has been taken holistically and rearranged under emerging themes that appear as sub headings under each research question. This is done based on the understanding that, 'data collected over a specific period needs to be taken as a consolidated whole and reorganized according to how the meanings of that whole can best be managed' (Holliday, 1991:214), in order to provide a thick description of findings. The emerging themes are also used as evidence for discussion of findings in the following chapter. My data analysis is my own organized construction and interpretation of participants' perceptions and interpretations of CPD and will be different to what other researchers would do with the same data.

In the tables illustrated in this chapter, I have referred to the federal institutions as HCT for Higher Colleges of Technology; ZU for Zayed University; and UAEU for United Arab Emirates University. The total number of interviewees (overall and for each category emerging from the findings) in the illustrations is indicated using the letter 'N' and the corresponding percentage of interviewees in each category is indicated by the letter 'P'.

Participant details

While sampling details have been mentioned in chapter four (section 4.5.1), I have included here additional contextual details of the teachers I interviewed. Out of the twelve individual interviewees (N=12), nine were females and three were males; while out of the eight focus group interviewees (N=8) four were females and four were males. These details appear in figure 5.1 below (see following page).

	INTERVIEWEE CODE	GENDER	INSTITUTION	EMIRATE
INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWEES	T1	F	HCT	Ras Al Khaimah
	T2	F	HCT	
	T3	F	HCT	Sharjah
	T4	F	ZU	Abu Dhabi
	T5	F	ZU	
	T6	F	ZU	Dubai
	T7	F	ZU	
	T8	F	ZU	
	T9	M	ZU	
	T10	F	HCT	
	T11	M	HCT	
	T12	M	HCT	
FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWEES	T13	M	HCT	Dubai
	T14	F		
	T15	F		
	T16	M		
	T17	M		
	T18	F		
	T19	F		
	T20	M		

Figure 5.1: Details of individual and focus group interviewees (N=20).
Key: F-Female   M-Male

In the presentation of data both individual and focus group interviewee responses are indicated in simple percentages where possible and in the analysis individual interviewees are represented using alpha-numeric codes (as indicated in figure 5.1 above) to avoid identification.

5.2   Analysis of data

In this section, I have analyzed both individual and focus group interview data under the research questions that the emerging data corresponds to. Findings thus appear thematically under the research questions answered and are supported by conversation extracts. In order to illustrate the number of interviewees holding similar views, I have grouped both individual and focus group interviewees so that the total number of interviewees in any illustration is twenty (N=20).

5.2.1 What do EFL teachers employed in the foundation English programme of federal universities understand by the term 'continued professional development' or CPD?

Responses to this question resulted in a wide range of views which have been grouped under five themes as illustrated in figure 5.2 below.

UNDERSTANDING OF CPD	N	P
Skills development	14	70
Life long learning	11	55
Keeping informed	10	50
Revitalization	5	25
Learning for interest	4	20

Figure 5.2: Themes emerging from interviewees' understanding of the term CPD (N=20).

A common perception that links each of the eight themes is that of CPD as involving some form of learning. This may include training for new skills or competencies, some kind of formal learning or merely keeping oneself up-to-date. The most frequently stated perception of CPD relates to developing skills related to context requirements and then improving these skills for overall development as a teacher.

i.   CPD as skills development

Firstly, majority of the interviewees perceived CPD as acquiring specific skills (through either formal or informal training) with focus on being equipped to effectively teach a particular subject or curriculum area within their institution. These were indicated as skills that teachers may previously not be acquainted with. For instance, as one interviewee narrates;

> "...two weeks ago we all got trained to be IELTS markers. That was really good because IELTS exam preparation and marking is a new area that I've basically had no training in" (T1).

Such training may also be related to the use of newer technologies that the federal universities continually invest in and that they require all teachers to use as part of their teaching. As the following interviewees elaborate (on the following page) , the job roles that they have been assigned for a particular semester may require them to get trained in certain technical skills that will enable them to perform effectively within their work context;

"HCT has invested in a programme called 'Turn it in' where students submit assignments online and I can mark them...I have to familiarise myself with this" (T2).

"In this semester I've been given 'ICT and Design' as one of my courses. So all my professional development is technological" (T10).

Hence, as most interviewees revealed, there appeared to understand CPD as new learning that is situated in and determined by the context in which teachers work. This is also apparent from the following comments made by some interviewees;

"PD is something that is fuelled by situations that you're in..." (T9).

"I see it as learning that will help me teach something better in class" (T15).

As well as learning specific (largely technical) skills, CPD was also perceived as relating to continually improving one's existing professional skills with the ultimate aim of teaching effectively. As one interviewee explains;

"PD in my mind is what you do to improve your skills as a professional so that you can give better" (T15).

"Being involved in formal training or simply activities that enable me to improve my performance and build on my skills that are deficient in the professional profile" (T12).

CPD is thus perceived as some form of learning or teacher training intervention the aim of which is to help teachers develop expertise in specific technical skills based on their respective teaching assignments during the academic year. It is interesting to note how this understanding appears to imply the situational nature of teacher learning within the context as the skills acquired during a particular year may not be required during the following year with another teaching assignment. Additionally, CPD was also perceived as developing or improving the already acquired professional skills that would enable teachers to perform better in their classrooms with the aim of improving student learning.

ii.   CPD as lifelong learning

A second most frequently expressed meaning of CPD relates to learning that is continuous through the duration of the teacher's career from onset to retirement. As the following interviewees (on the following page) express their view points on teacher learning;

"For me PD means life long learning. I believe one can never know enough" (T2).

"When do you finish learning how to be a teacher? I don't think you ever do. It's one of those clichéd but life long learning things. You never stop learning how to be a teacher and you can tell the ones who do" (T10).

More specifically, CPD was perceived as learning with purpose that adds value to a teacher's professionalism in the form of enhanced capabilities and practice. As the following interviewees reflect on their understanding of CPD;

"I see it as constantly learning how to do my job better by pursuing best practice as demonstrated by successful practitioners" (T7).

"For me PD is anything that keeps me stimulated and enables me to do my job better than I can already do it" (T11).

"I see CPD as learning in real life terms that can add real value to your life... It's something that I could learn, that I could take away and say that this has made difference to the way I do something" (T13).

Hence, a second understanding of CPD reflects teachers' views of development as a lifelong process that involves numerous possibilities which inspire teachers as professionals who are also aware of their changing/enhanced practice.

iii.   CPD as keeping informed

The third most frequently expressed understanding of CPD relates to teachers keeping themselves informed with new developments in the field of ELT. As is evident from the comments below;

"An opportunity to keep up to date in current teaching methods and philosophy" (T6)

"I see it as opportunities to become more informed, improve my knowledge about teaching, keeping myself updated on current research...actually a combination of opportunities" (T10).

Most interviewees who held this perspective of CPD as keeping informed indicated that with their years of teaching experience it was imperative for them continually seek opportunities to keep themselves up-to-date with new research and methodologies in their field or else they would feel 'extinct'. As the following interviewees share their respective understanding;

> "I need to feel that I'm somehow in touch with current best practice. It is really critical for me because I don't want to be tagged like a fossil! I'm so concerned about just being sure that while I know what my experience is telling me, I also know how the approaches and methodologies are changing at this point because there are a lot of things that go full circle in your career" (T18).

> "Well, I've been teaching for many years now and I suppose in my career, professional development for me would be just knowing what's out there…are there any new methodologies that people are exploiting or researching; and really updating my skills on those new methodologies if I consider that they would work with my particular classes" (T19).

Hence, a third meaning of CPD entails teachers' views on the necessity to keep themselves informed of developments in their field. This seemingly implies that as teachers gain experience those who are keen about development tend to keep themselves informed of new research in ELT.

iv.   CPD as revitalisation for teachers

The fourth most frequently expressed understanding of CPD relates to teachers revitalizing themselves through engagement with professional development activities. A number of interviewees perceived professional learning opportunities as providing opportunities to assimilate and/or discuss new ideas and preventing teachers from falling into a stalemate. As one interviewee shares his apprehension;

> 'The issue for us is to not remain stagnant as teachers because students realize when we are unenthusiastic in class and that could be the worst thing that could happen to our students or to ourselves. So I think PD is the best approach to keep ourselves enthusiastic in our jobs' (T16).

Hence, as the following interviewees argue, teachers need to find a way to refresh their teaching energies so that they can give back more effectively when they return to their classroom;

> "PD I think keeps us up to speed so that we don't rely on old information…it keeps us from vegetating" (T13).

> "I realise that to be able to stay in teaching so long, it's critical to change because you won't survive or enjoy it otherwise. So yeah, I need PD for revitalization and to feel sure that I'm in touch with current best practices" (T18).

Occasionally exiting the classroom to partake of learning activities was perceived as allowing teachers the opportunity to gain relief time from teaching and enabling them to focus on their own learning. As the following interviewee elaborates;

"I think it's amazing to have a chance to learn rather than teach, because you're always giving information to students and sometimes you need to be on the receiving end. You need to be sitting down and actually using the thought process that's become dormant" (T15).

Hence, a fourth understanding of CPD appears to entail the key role that CPD plays in maintaining teachers' enthusiasm teaching.

v.   CPD as learning for interest

The least expressed understanding of CPD relates to perceptions of CPD as learning fuelled by personal interest. Such learning may not necessarily relate to subject areas that teachers are not skilled in. Instead, as the following interviewees explain, there may be areas that teachers would like to engage with purely out of professional interest;

"I believe CPD is about opportunities to develop professionally in areas that I'd like to pursue and not necessarily areas that I'm weak in because some times there are areas that I don't want to pursue" (T10).

"If something pops up that's going to be useful to me and that keeps me interested and able to perform better, I'm happy to go along with it" (T13).

As experienced teachers, a few interviewees revealed that their learning needs tend to vary with changing times and depend on the phases of their careers that they are in at the particular moment when the CPD need arises;

"Over the past ten years my definition of PD has changed in terms of what I require. Whereas early in my career I wanted to acquire basic teaching skills, now my requirements have matured so that perhaps an interesting PD session for me would focus on action research for example" (T4).

"I've been teaching a tad longer, but it's interesting how PD has gone in cycles for me. When I graduated a long time ago, I was very gung-ho and tended to think that there were a lot of fossils there who weren't with the time and didn't want to change. And of course now I'm one of those fossils as well (*Laugh*) and I have different interests" (T18).

Altogether the views expressed by interviewees about learning for interest appear to summarise CPD as part of professionalism of educators and as something that added value to a teacher's professional image.

"Professional learning is a part of professionalism of any educator. It is really learning for change, improvement of teaching or learning. It can add value and make difference to the way I do something' (T6).

Hence, despite being the least frequently expressed understanding of CPD, learning for personal professional interest appears to align to the notions of ELT as a profession that needs to be considered with professional seriousness by TEFL practitioners and researchers.

To summarize then, CPD was mostly perceived as skills oriented training focused on acquiring skills relevant to teaching effectively within the institutional context. In addition, CPD was also perceived as improving existing professional skills to continue to perform effectively in the work context. Secondly, CPD was understood as lifelong learning directed by modern developments in ELT and resulting in some kind of evident change in teaching. The third meaning of CPD that emerged relates to continual efforts to keep by teachers to keep themselves abreast of new developments in their field. The less frequently expressed but nevertheless notable perceptions of CPD include professional learning as a way to keep teachers enthusiastic about their teaching and professional learning and growth as an essential part of teacher's professionalism.

The following section addresses the second research question and discusses findings related to the types of CPD activities that teachers in federal universities generally engage in.

5.2.2   What kind of CPD do teachers engage in?

Responses to this question revealed a wide range of CPD activities that participants were interested in. These are grouped under ten categories and illustrated in figure 5.3 that follows.

CPD ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST	N	P
Professional development through work	20	100
Attending CPD events	13	65
Presenting at CPD events	9	45
Formal education	9	45
Reading professional literature	7	35
Research	5	25
Writing papers for professional publications	4	20
Informal learning	4	20
Membership of and volunteer work with professional bodies	4	20
Others	2	10

Figure 5.3: Responses indicating CPD activities of interest among interviewees (N=20)

Among the CPD activities that emerged as most popular with interviewees are development through work, participation in CPD events, presenting at CPD events and also engaging in formal higher education as part of professional development.

i.   Professional development through work

A majority of the interviewees revealed that their main professional development was through teaching. This included training associated with specific types of teaching, multiple teaching roles that were either assigned or volunteered for and managing projects associated with teaching in the context.

Teaching

Most interviewees indicated teaching and daily engagement with their students in class as a significant source of learning as teachers were able to gain knowledge from practical experiences in the classroom. For instance, as the following interviewee implies, in making student learning effective, there is scope for teachers to develop as well;

> "My new course ICT and design is about developing resources using technology. So my students and I are exploring five programmes together. The students research and do a mini-lesson in pairs on one different programme so that each student becomes a specialist in one different programme. I see it as a great PD opportunity for me as well because I know the basics but I don't know them in depth. So I do some research and they do some research" (T10).

In perceiving teaching as a developmental activity, the views of interviewees were not limited to teaching their foundation English students alone. There were other assigned or volunteered teaching roles (See chapter two) within the institutional context that were also argued to be part of a teacher's CPD. As can be gathered from the communication below;

> "I'm also an active participant in the Centre for Professional development (ZU) in terms of planning and delivering CPD. We look at cooperative learning and at developing communities of practice for sustainability of professional learning through follow up" (T6).

> "I also do the EdD tutoring and I'm an online DELTA course tutor. I find it quite interesting that I'm able to work with both students at the college and adults or peers who are studying" (T7).

> "I'm also a CELTA trainer on their in-house programme" (T10).

Hence, it is apparent that in addition to their day jobs that involve teaching foundation English, several teachers are involved in other professional roles that were either voluntary (such as working with institutional CPD centres or teaching on external programmes) or assigned by the institution (such as CELTA training) based on their individual professional competence.

Context specific technical activities

Other interviewees listed context specific technical activities such as team teaching and peer observation as opportunities for CPD. As the following interviewees share;

> "I like sharing classes and discussing so we know the same students" (T7).

> "I'm more keen than most people are of being observed and I like to talk with my colleagues about it afterwards. When that happens I think that something has contributed to my professional development" (T8)

Interestingly, team teaching and peer observations were not mentioned profusely as CPD activities which may imply that either teachers do not see these as developmental or that teachers at certain institutions do not engage in these activities as much as teachers at other institutions do.

Additionally, there was mention of in-house training that institutions formally offered their teachers in order to develop a trained workforce that could run or teach specific skills or courses. These included training for supervising and examining in-house examinations and specific types of technology skills that would be useful in using specific software that were bought by universities where teachers were employed. As is revealed by the following interviewees;

> "At the moment the training is for our teachers to become IELTS examiners, so we're organising all the different training available…it's great and I like to do it. I really want to do IELTS examiner training" (T5).

> "Technology is a big issue at HCT obviously. There's a real push for our courses to be online so I try to go to technology PD sessions and up skill my technological know how regularly"(T10).

Hence, several interviewees engaged in CPD through participating in technical activities within the institution, such as team-teaching and peer observations which form part of their mandatory work at the institution and training available within the institution to become adept at teaching in-house courses.

Managing projects

Another source of learning through work was revealed as being able to uptake, manage and successfully see the completion of projects assigned as part of teachers' job role at their institutions. The projects could be designing a set of activities for a particular course or designing an entirely new course and then being involved in teaching it too. Some insight is provided in the following comments made by a few interviewees;

> "For me the best PD is not only teaching but also doing practical projects for work. I like coordinating and managing projects. A lot of people are doing projects on either assessments or writing vocabulary activities etc. That's practical PD" (T5).

> "Creating new course outlines is PD for me" (T19).

Hence, professional development through work was revealed as a result of teaching students, peers and colleagues through various initiatives within the institution, enhancing teaching skills through technical learning activities, and managing work projects assigned as part of teaching in the context.

ii.   Attending CPD events

The second most preferred CPD activity emerged as participation in CPD events as attendees. Generally, it was revealed that teachers participated in two types of CPD events, in-house or those events that were organised by their institutions and off-site events that were organised by professional development organisations.

In-house CPD events

Among the in-house CPD events that interviewees participated in were both those that were workshops and sessions that were perceived to be immediately applicable to their teaching or the projects that they were involved in designing. For instance as the following interviewees reveal;

> "In the monthly PD sessions we've had the opportunity to learn different computer related things and the application into our teaching" (T2).

> "Recently we had a De Bono workshop where faculty were trained to do sessions and last month in February we had a two-day workshop where we were trained up to re-think our thinking skills (*Laugh*)"(T19).

Additionally, interviewees also participated in the conferences that were organised within the institutions.

> "We have a research forum where people present research. For example, recently someone did some research on CEPA and then there was something about some research on e-learning instruction" (T10)

Hence, in-house CPD activities that interviewees engaged in ranged from attending shorter in-house sessions organised by the institution to in-house conferences. This also highlights that institutions make provisions for their teachers to develop and will be analysed further in the remaining research questions.

Off-site CPD events

As well as participating in in-house CPD events, interviewees also revealed that they participated extensively in professional development events organised by TESOL Arabia. For most teachers, as the following interviewees state, TESOL Arabia events are significant in that it is the largest local CPD provider and professional development organisation that organises off-site events for teachers in the region;

> "The TESOL Arabia annual conference is a forum for professional development of English Language teachers in UAE" (T9).

> "There's TESOL Arabia local chapter that holds events once a month which I go to" (T1).

> "TESOL Arabia has these little SIGs' functions throughout the year in the city of Dubai, Al Ain, Abu Dhabi…little sessions for members of TESOL Arabia to go to" (T13).

Besides TESOL Arabia, there are a few local CPD providers mainly in Dubai (See chapter two) that organise one-off networking and development events for English language teachers in general. They are however not quite as popular among teachers in federal universities as they are among school teachers in the UAE. However, some interviewees have found other lesser known associations where they engage in off-site learning with a specific focus on their needs and interests;

> "I do courses short-term…I'm involved in life coaching stuff actually and I do those on weekends."(T14)

> "I'm doing the listening programme in Dubai which is a 3 day off campus quite expensive one. It's a combination of psychology of listening to music to enhance your language learning abilities. Its run by another UK based provider in Dubai. Now I'm running some of this for trial groups. It's a 2-3 day training programme" (T18)

At times, as one interviewee reveals, teachers also travel to other events around the region (Middle East) or elsewhere;

"I went to the Writers' conference in Doha last fall…on writing centres" (T14).

Hence, the prevalent trend among teachers is to participate in both in-house and off-site development events. While in-house events are focused on acquiring knowledge and skills (and developing those skills) for use within the immediate context, external events it appears provide teachers with a venue to develop with a focus on their personal professional interests. Additionally, the significant interest in off-site events appears to imply that there is difference between what is offered in the institutions that teachers work for and what some professional development organisations are offering. Some of the reasons become apparent in section 5.1.3 where the reasons for engagement with certain types of CPD are analysed.

iii.   Presenting at CPD events

The third most preferred CPD activity emerged as making presentations at CPD events. Presenting at CPD events was revealed as occurring at three levels - in-house or within the institution where teachers work, off-site at local professional development events organised by TESOL Arabia, and off-site international or those presentations that teachers make at various international conferences.

In-house presentations usually included show and tell workshops on skills that teachers had acquired expertise in. They were either asked by the institution or at times they voluntarily presented new skills to colleagues at work. For example, as one interviewee reveals how she assisted colleagues in understanding a voice-recording soft-ware that could be used with students in the classroom;

"I held the 'audacity' workshop and people (now) come to ask me how to do that…I show them what it is and how I do and use the recordings". (T2)

Among the external local events which most interviewees indicated they presented at, the TESOL Arabia annual conference and its special interest groups feature prominently (see following page);

> "Last week a couple of my colleagues went out to a school in Satwa (*a small town in Dubai*) and ran a TESOL Arabia workshop there on language teaching games" (T10)

> "I've been presenting every year at TESOL Arabia annual conference and at the testing conferences (Current Trends in English Language Testing). I've also presented at the ESP SIG conference on how to design a web based resource and create hyper links for the Internet and the Intranet" (T4).

There were however some interviewees who seized opportunities to travel to locations outside the UAE where they could present papers at international conferences worldwide. For example, as the following interviewees relate;

> "I went several times to Vienna, Cairo and Turkey and gave papers at their expense" (T7).

> "Last year 3 people from our team presented in Seattle" (T12).

Hence, presenting at conferences and smaller events emerged as the third most preferred CPD activity among interviewees. There appeared to be equal interest in presenting at both in-house and external conferences and there are likely to be interesting reasons that encourage teachers to present so extensively. These are analysed in the next research question.

iv.   Formal higher education

As well as making public presentations, engaging in formal higher education also emerged as the third most preferred type of CPD activity among interviewees. Several interviews revealed that they were either considering taking up or were already studying for a higher degree such as a Masters, a PhD or an EdD. Some had also already completed their diplomas or higher degrees. I have included in this section some excerpts from the interviews to indicate the nature of the academic qualifications that interviewees were associated with;

> "I completed my Masters in applied linguistics and another in ELT and a third recently on educational technology. Now, I might go to the University of Sterling to see their PhD programme this summer" (T4).

> "I'm interested in the EdD and I'm expecting that to take 4 to 5 years" (T5).

> "I'm doing a PhD from the Deacon University in Australia" (T10).

> "I did a 6 month long online learning course from the Institute of Education and Learning in London University. You have to input stuff online every week and then you have to write a 3,000-5,000 words dissertation and summarize all your weekly observations. At the end of it you get a certificate" (T12).

v.   Reading professional literature

Another CPD activity that many interviewees reportedly engaged in relates to reading professional literature in the field. This includes institutional newsletters, professional ELT journals, books and online articles. A few excerpts from the interviews highlight how reading professional literature is perceived to be of help;

> "I read the HCT newsletter the other day about teaching IELTS in class and it was really simple with tips and a simple teaching structure…it also had some really good links to the web" (T1)

> "The book that has most influenced me is 'Diary of a Language Teacher' by a German language teacher in a secondary school" (T9).

> "I try to update myself from journals like TESOL Quarterly…I read regularly anything that looks interesting" (T10).

vi.   Research

A few interviewees indicated preference for involvement in formal research as part of their development. The research was either part of their teaching or the formal higher educational degrees that they were studying for. As the following interviewees explain;

> "There's a culture of people researching their subject area" (T9).

> "Even as part of their coursework people are producing papers constantly about things connected with what they were teaching because it generally requires you to dip into what you are doing" (T18)

> "We know so many people who have done research as part of their education" (T20)

vii.   Writing for professional publications

Another slightly less preferred CPD activity mentioned by interviewees involved writing research papers for professional ELT journals. These included both local and international TEFL or ELT journals, periodicals or ELT books. For instance, as one interviewee informs;

> "I've published a paper in the Teacher Education Forum" (T4).

In addition to writing for international journals, there are also in-house publications that some interviewees wrote papers for. As the following comment indicates;

> "We contribute to the print journal of teaching and curriculum at ZU from within the Centre for Professional Learning. It is aimed at practical material for lesson use". (T6).

viii.   Informal learning

A few interviewees indicated that their CPD activities revolved around sharing materials with colleagues who taught similar courses. For instance, as one interviewee narrated from personal experience;

> "One of the ladies who teaches here, she and I just share everything from my folder. If I photocopy something that I think is good I give her a copy too. We do that all the time" (T1).

Besides sharing materials there was an inclination to perceive informal work conversations and discussions as developmental. Several interviewees shared their personal experiences during their interviews;

> "When someone sees what you're photocopying, just by a chat we can bounce ideas off each other" (T1)

> "Most of our learning in the workplace is informal PD by the water cooler, by the photocopier, chatting over coffee or in the smokers' corner" (T6).

> "A major thing that I get a lot of benefit from is my discussions with my colleagues about what they're doing since each one of us is doing some really exciting things individually and in teams"(T10).

ix.   Membership of professional bodies

Besides engaging in a variety of other activities either in-house or off-site, a few interviewees perceived being members of professional development organisations and volunteering time to work with them as indicative of ongoing engagement with professional development. As can be gathered from the comment below;

> "I've maintained my membership with TESOL Arabia and I like getting their Perspectives magazine. I get lots of e-mails from you about events that are coming up because I'm on the mailing list" (T11).

Some other interviewees divulged how they were already committed to voluntarily working with TESOL Arabia and using their skills and expertise to help the development of other colleagues in the profession;

> "My role includes supporting teaching and learning using new technology. We try to provide PD sessions for faculty" (T9).

> "I've worked so much with the TESOL Arabia Research SIG" (T9)

Besides being personally involved in such voluntary developmental work, a few interviewees were also keen to rope in other colleagues who either had the skill, expertise or the willingness to contribute to the development of others;

> "We are asking individuals what they're interested in and re trying to get systematic by asking people (faculty) to present on topics of interest"(T9)

x.   Others

Among the other forms of CPD activities, only one interviewee perceived the process of seeking out CPD that is individually relevant to teachers as a CPD activity itself;

> "I realize that possibly part of your training is that you have to go and find what you need to develop yourself" (T11).

Another interviewee was of the opinion that learning a new language was also an attempt to professionally develop as it provided valuable insights into the process and pressures of learning a second or foreign language for the learner;

> "A colleague wanted to her exams in Arabic GCSE…I think it gives you insight into learning a new language. Learning any language gives you an appreciation and empathy for how difficult it is for a student" (T12)

Hence, a majority of the interviewees indicated a preference for development through teaching and work associated with teaching, followed by attending CPD events, making presentations at CPD events and engaging in formal education. These were followed by reading professional literature to gain awareness, engaging in research pertaining to work and formal study, and publishing papers in professional publications. Among the slightly less preferred CPD activities were informal conversations as a form of development and volunteer work with professional development organisations. Very few interviewees indicated the process of seeking out opportunities for CPD as a form

of development itself and at least one interviewee cited language learning as a source of development.

Interestingly the choices indicated were quite varied and an analysis of the reasons for making such choices in CPD appears in the following section.

5.2.3   How do teachers justify their choice of the CPD initiatives that they undertake?
Responses to this question revealed a variety of reasons that justify the choice of CPD initiatives that teachers undertake. Themes emerging from the findings are collated in figure 5.4 that follows, followed by analysis of the sub categories emerging within each theme. In response to this question several interviewees provided multiple reasons that form part of each of the three main themes illustrated in figure 5.4. Hence, while the total number of participants remains (N=20), these may not necessarily appear so when the percentage of responses for each category are added up as illustrated in figure 5.4.

REASONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN CPD ACTIVITIES		N	P
Institutional provisions	Professional development days	8	40
	In-house opportunities	7	35
	Financing is available	5	25
Institutional expectations	Performance evaluation	10	50
	Formal higher education	9	45
	Mastering new technologies	5	25
	Teaching particular courses	5	25
Personal professional interests	General interest in professional growth	10	50
	Networking	7	35
	Maintain enthusiasm in teaching	4	20
	Keeping informed and keeping up-to-date	4	20
	Fulfillment of future career plans	3	15

Figure 5.4: Percentage of responses indicating preferred reasons for interviewees to participate in CPD (N=20)

i.   Institutional provisions
Almost all interviewees cited that the main reason for engaging in CPD was related to the fact that their institutions made certain provisions for teacher development. These included the allocation of professional development days, numerous in-house training opportunities and the availability of funding to engage in external CPD.

Professional development days
One of the most cited reasons for engaging in CPD was that federal universities allocated days during the academic year when their teachers could interrupt teaching

and engage in professional development that was available on those days. As the following interviewees explains;

> "We've got one day a month that's the Open Learning Day, when there are no lessons and students do independent learning and its very often that's when we do PD if the PD that we want is available on that particular day" (T13).

> "In between each nine week term we have the ILA week when we don't teach and we'll do PD activities and also get ready for the next term"(T5).

> "They have a day of PD when there are no students and we all do PD…it's a whole day of PD sessions" (T1).

It is evident from the excerpts that the professional development days are known either as the Independent Learning Activities day (ILA) or the Open Learning Day (OLD) in different institutions and the duration too varies from one day each semester to one and a half day each semester to one week in between each term.

In-house opportunities

As well as allocating days for professional development, federal universities reportedly organised in-house professional development sessions that teachers could participate in, learn from or contribute to by facilitating the sessions if they had something to share. The remarks made by the following interviewees indicate the variety of such in-house opportunities that teachers could avail of;

> "Donna the PD coordinator has just sent us a choice of different workshops ...professional development sessions that we could attend over the whole semester and we can elect to go or not to go" (T19).

> "There's certainly more opportunity here. They work pretty well here and try to make it balanced so that there's something of interest to everybody here" (T2)

At times, external or visiting speakers were invited to present at in-house sessions;

> "They offer tremendous opportunities here in terms of brining people in. It's really good" (T7).

> "One of my colleagues got in touch with Mario Rinvolucri and he came here while he was in Dubai" (T10).

Some interviewees also indicated the abundance of online learning opportunities and accompanying educational technology support that was available in-house;

> "You have so many opportunities for doing any online course, training and professional development here" (T7).

"There are other online things that I can choose from that are quite good in terms of technology…" (T18).

"We also have some just in time kind of training as well. You can go to the educational technology department at any time if you need any kind of help in IT. So there's a lot of in-house stuff" (T12).

Another in-house opportunity that appeared to be greatly valued by teachers was the in-house training that they received prior to being assigned new responsibilities within the institutions. As one interviewee highlights;

"We all got trained to be IELTS markers. That was really good because this is something I wouldn't have got in Australia" (T1).

As well as being trained and developed in-house interviewees revealed that they could participate in off-site or external CPD events during week days by exchanging classes with willing colleagues. As one interviewee explains, teachers who intended to participate in external CPD events on weekdays could swap classes with colleagues and later make up for those;

"If we can sort our classes at work and trade with colleagues who are willing, then we can go for the PD during the weekdays" (T18).

Financing is available

A third reason cited by interviewees to engage in CPD relates to availability of funding. Generally perceived as an incentive, most interviewees indicated that availability of financial assistance encouraged them to engage in external CPD activities such as formal higher education and presenting at international conferences outside the UAE. As the following interviewees highlight;

"The institution gives you academic grants so that's good…Besides, if they want me to go to Dubai (from Abu Dhabi) and present for the institution then they pay for my trip" (T4)

"They are very generous because they pay for our TESOL Arabia membership and registration which is great. It encourages me to write papers when they pay to go and present" (T7).

Part of the financial provision that was not significantly mentioned but nevertheless emerged from the interview findings refers to salary increments based on the amount of CPD that teachers engage in. For instance, as one interviewee (on the following page) explicates the amount of the increment;

"There's a four percent increment on your salary for the chosen few teachers who are considered to be exceptional in doing lots of PD" (T12).

Hence, one of the most frequently mentioned reasons for participation in CPD relates to the facilities provided by federal universities for teacher development. These include allocation of professional development days during the year, organising in-house professional development sessions, and financial assistance all of which are intended to encourage extensive participation in CPD.

ii.   Institutional expectations

The second reason that interviewees cited for participating in CPD relates to expectations of the institutions where they were employed. These include evidence of development required in teachers' annual performance evaluations, the necessity to master the newest technologies that institutions continually purchase, and to develop competence in teaching particular courses that individual teachers are assigned. While the underlying reason from the institution's perspective was to improve student learning, interviewees perceived it as employment security and retention.

Performance evaluation

Performance accountability appears to be a significant part of teachers' job roles at the federal universities. Each aspect of their work from teaching to materials development to engaging in any form of CPD is formally paid attention to when teachers' contracts are being renewed at the end of every three years. As the following interviewee communicates;

"Whatever you've contributed for the development of this place, and student evaluations and observations by the director are all taken into consideration when evaluating your annual performance" (T3)

A crucial part of the annual performance evaluation is focus on whether teachers have made efforts to develop themselves during the year and how much development they have engaged in. While the need to engage in a certain amount of CPD is not advocated directly, institutions nevertheless expect teachers to be seen as developing themselves based on directives of the MOHESR (See chapter two for more information on this). As the following interviewees inform, the expectation to engage in CPD and present some

evidence of having developed is crucial to their performance evaluation and contract renewals;

> "At the end of the year you have to put in your portfolio and its good to have PD in there somewhere. If you're not seen as doing enough then they will question you. Some people's contracts have not been renewed. So I assume they expect us to be doing something" (T5)

> "They don't explicitly write it as an expectation that you must do say 15 hours PD. But it obviously goes into your portfolio at the end of the year. And if that part is empty, I don't think it would look good at all on your portfolio" (T7).

Part of teachers' performance evaluation also involves mandatory classroom observations conducted by their line managers or deans and semester evaluations of teachers conducted by their students. This is pointed out by two interviewees as follows;

> "Classroom observations are happening more often recently now that I'm up for renewal. It's the third year of my contract so the dean came in to observe me" (T9).

> "The first thing they do is give you a laptop and tell you that you have to use it in every class…and in student evaluations they ask students about how effectively we use technology (in class). So we're aware that we are being assessed on our technological abilities" (T11).

As a result of institutional focus on individual teacher development activities, it appears that teachers' interest in CPD is mostly performance appraisal driven. As the following interviewee confides;

> "We're presenting this year at TESOL Arabia conference because it's on our APET (Annual Performance Evaluation Tool). That's the truth and it's not because we have that desire to impart knowledge or anything. It's because it's on our APET so we'd better do something about it. A lot of teachers see attending TESOL Arabia annual conference as an opportunity to put something on their CV" (T10)

However, as some interviewees indicated, there appeared to be a general understanding among teachers that institutional focus on performance evaluation is intended for documentation pertaining to gaining international accreditation;

> "The reason for things like the APET is different as well…it's for accreditation and so on. They do it for another reason, not developmental" (TT13)

> "Our PD goals have to tie in with department goals for accreditation" (T11)

The comments seemingly imply that institutions are driven by interest in fulfilment of accreditation criteria rather than a genuine interest in teacher development.

Studying for a higher degree

As part of institutional expectations to retain a quality workforce, a number of interviewees revealed that they were studying for either a master's degree or a doctoral degree. In order to gain more knowledge about their subject under study they were engaged in activities such as reading, researching and participating in relevant CPD. For example, two interviewees elaborate on their higher education focused CPD;

> When I did my Masters in Educational Technology I attended all IT related sessions and that was helpful" (T4)

> The certificate forums on how to be a teacher…I went to one of those when I was doing my masters' research and found that interesting personally as a researcher"(T10).

This also supports the point made in chapter two that teachers employed in federal universities are expected to have certain qualifications that distinguish them from teachers in schools and that indicate their specialisation in the subject they teach. For instance, as the following interviewees indicate;

> "I did my Masters degree because I wanted to develop professionally and because I always felt guilty of not being qualified professionally" (T3).

> "The MA is becoming like a BA and the only thing that distinguishes you from anyone else is a doctorate" (T5).

Additionally, as one interviewee reveals, a formal accreditation also provides teachers with additional recognition by the institution and acknowledgement of their specialisation;

> "I'm doing a 2-3 day training programme for listening to music to enhance language learning. And I'm running some trial groups here. At the end of it I get some accreditation which is nice. It means that I can be a provider" (T18).

Mastering the new technologies that institutions invest in

Interviewees also revealed that they were expected to gain the skills required to successfully operate, utilise and teach the art of effectively using new technology or software that the federal institutions continually invest in. As one interviewee reveals;

> "There are lots of developments in e-learning for example at the moment so some of us need more development in that area" (T12)

As new software programmes are meant to assist teachers in teaching effectively and hence improving student learning, it is apparently inevitable for teachers to develop skills in using the newer technology. The following interviewees shed some light on a few technological programmes that were in use at the time of the interviews;

> "HCT has invested in computer related things. We've been bombarded with programmes like 'Turn it in' and 'Snag it'" (T2)

> "What happens here is that PD is mostly technological because technology is a big push at the moment. BlackBoard Vista is a big need and there's lots of PD surrounding that (that we all attend)" (T10).

Teaching particular courses

A few interviewees indicated that their institutions expected CPD that was focused on training teachers to effectively plan, design, develop or teach particular courses or assigning them courses based on the training they had acquired otherwise;

> "I don't mind going to PD such as this Green Living workshop in a few weeks because when I come back I know that I'm going to be applying it to the learning cycle that I'm working on. These sorts of things I don't mind doing" (T18).

> "I've become an online course designer so I have to do this and run this course online. So, obviously all my chosen PD has to be focused on delivering courses online and then feed into this". (T11)

At times teachers were also expected to teach the new skills to their colleagues so that new knowledge could be effectively utilised in the institutional context by all teachers. For instance as this interviewee divulges;

> 'Sometimes people are sent to formal training, maybe like you are going to be trained to be trainers, and they are of course expected to come back and train people" (T17).

To summarise then, institutional expectations also form a major reason for teachers to engage in CPD. From the perspective of institutions teachers are expected to account for their development in performance evaluations. They are also expected to gain formal university degrees such as master's or doctorates. In addition, teachers are required to develop expertise in advanced technological programmes that federal universities invest in and gain knowledge and experience pertaining to new courses that they are required to design, develop or teach.

iii.   Personal professional interests

A third significant reason for teachers to engage in CPD is relates to personal interests in various aspects of professional development. As revealed by the interviewees, this is primarily driven by general interest in developing as a professional, networking, maintaining continuity in the process of teacher development and keeping oneself informed and up-to-date.

General interest in professional growth

Some interviewees indicated that they simply liked to participate in in-house and external CPD sessions as either presenters or participants;

> "I've always liked going for PD…I want to learn" (T2).

> "I tend to go to things which interest me. I enjoy listening to some key note speakers" (T10).

> "I like to present as part of my own PD. I strongly feel that if I'm presenting then I will go obviously" (T17).

A few other interviewees revealed that they were particularly interested in studying certain subjects which prompted them to undertake formal higher education;

> "I love educational technology and I really wanted a degree in it" (T4).

> "I'm interested in the EdD" (T5).

In mentioning examples of development activities that appealed to them, a few interviewees related that they were motivated by the desire to do something in addition to their day job/teaching responsibilities. These interviewees particularly appeared to be interested in development activities that were not directly related to their work at their institution. As the two interviewees reveal;

> "I quite like having a bit of work on one hand and something just keeping me thinking on the other hand. It's quite a nice balance" (T5).

> "There are things that i am interested in that are not particularly related to the things that I am doing at the college" (T20).

Networking

Intermingling with other colleagues from other institutions also came across as a significant reason for engaging in CPD, especially external CPD. The opportunities provided by external events or in-house events open to all was greatly valued in terms of enabling teachers to talk and socialise, build networks with colleagues from other communities and to gain knowledge of what was going on in other contexts that other teachers at the same level were teaching in. The interest and enthusiasm to build and grow professional networks is summarised in the comments made by some interviewees as follows;

> "One of the reasons I go to conferences is that I look for networking. We get very insulated at our college. We don't even talk to people in other colleges. So I enjoy meeting old friends and other people there. I've missed sessions because I was talking to someone and I used to feel guilty about it. But now I realise it's probably more important to talk to a few people, even old friends because they've moved on professionally to another institution. I believe it can be useful to find out what other people are doing, perspectives from another place. Besides, the atmosphere at TESOL is different because you're not really at work. Its a conference so people are more willing to spend time chatting whereas when meet at work, we're obviously focused on something else like a task" (T17)

> "It's a good opportunity to catch up with colleagues in other departments who you don't get to see during work time...even some colleagues that you've met from other campuses" (18).

Additionally, according to one interviewee, such conversations in a professional environment enable the social construction of knowledge;

> "You meet other teachers and you can bounce ideas off each other, especially here because people have been around the world and there's lots of experience. So networking really helps in furthering your career and knowledge by gaining insight from others" (T1).

For continued enthusiasm in teaching

Engaging in CPD activities was also perceived to result in maintaining enthusiasm for growth, change and teaching. As two interviewees share their views;

> "I have a desire to be better. I reflect, go into class, and come back and think that worked really well or that bombed, think that I'll try again so what can I do better next time. There's an automatic constant reflection and desire to improve" (T10).

> "For most part the issue for us is to not remain stagnant as teachers because students realise when we are unenthusiastic in class and that could be the worst thing that could happen to our students or to ourselves. So I think teacher development is the best approach to keep ourselves enthusiastic in our job" (T16).

Keeping informed and keeping up-to-date

A few interviewees indicated that having spent several years in the profession, CPD was crucial for them to keep informed of emerging developments in the field of TEFL/TESOL;

"In my case, I just think it's good to keep up to date with what's going on" (T1).

Others also mentioned that CPD was the way for them to update their qualifications that were acquired decades ago. A few interesting comments from interviewees in relation to updating qualifications appear below;

"When I did my first masters there were no computers. I did all my research with index cards and catalogues and walking the stacks of the library at ten in the night trying to locate resources. So I really wanted to upgrade my qualifications because my MA is now twenty years old and the university would want to see that I've brought myself more up to date"(T11)

"My first degree was not up to date. I got it twenty years ago. I've done lots of things since then. I've had an amazing life. But qualifications wise I needed to update my degree" (T12)

Future career plans

Incidentally, very few interviewees mentioned future career growth plans as the reasons they engaged in CPD. This may imply that most interviewees were in the later phases of their carers. On the other hand, the few who did see themselves finding other jobs in the future were probably in their mid-career phase of teaching. As we know from the following interviewees;

"Doing IELTS is great because eventually I expect I'll go back to my country Australia where this ten years experience will come in extremely handy. However, I'm going to need probably a doctorate to get a good job in teacher training". (T5)

"I think part of being at the TESOL conference is also about looking out for a good job at the job fair. It's a very worthwhile investment in the way of your development" (T17)

Hence, personal professional interests too formed an important reason for interviewees to engage in CPD. These included a general interest in professional development activities, networking at professional events, retaining enthusiasm for teaching, keeping oneself informed and up-to-date and future career plans.

To summarise then, among the most significant reasons for interviewees to engage in CPD were the provisions that their institutions made for them by allocating professional development days, offering in-house learning options, and providing financial assistance for external CPD. Secondly, CPD was driven by institutional expectations from teachers to provide evidence of professional growth for annual performance appraisals. Institutions also expected teachers to acquire university degrees, master new technologies, and become adept at teaching particular courses and/or train colleagues in doing the same.

The third ranking reason cited for CPD pertained to personal interest in professional development such as to remain motivated about teaching, to benefit from networking opportunities provided by CPD events and to remain enthusiastic about teaching. Personal interest also involved experienced teachers keeping themselves informed about new developments and updating their qualifications along with some of them fulfilling future career plans.

5.2.4 What in their views impacts on their chosen CPD?

Responses to this question can be broadly categorised under four headings; institutional factors, non-institutional factors, factors that are simultaneously institutional and non-institutional, professional factors (implying factors associated with being in the profession of ELT), and personal factors. Several categories and sub-categories emerged within each heading creating a complex picture of factors impacting on the CPD choices made by interviewees. These are illustrated in figure 5.5 (on the following page). As with data analysed in section 5.1.3, less attention had been paid to less attention has been paid to the frequency of findings and more to understanding what in the eyes of the interviewees seems to encourage or discourage them in the uptake of CPD.

FACTORS IMPACTING ON CPD CHOICES OF TEACHERS		N	P
INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS			
Contextual cultures	Teaching in the foundation programme	7	35
	Absence of collaborative work culture within the institution	6	30
Lack of institutional support	Lack of release time & workloads	20	100
	Lack of autonomy in choosing CPD	14	70
	Insufficient funding	14	70
	Lack of acknowledgement for informal CPD	5	25
	Lunch time CPD sessions	3	15
Performance evaluation pressures	Extensive documentation	7	35
	Evaluation of teachers by students	5	25
	Focus on evidence of CPD	5	25
	Salary increments	8	40
	Pressure to engage in formal higher education	8	40
Lack of support in conducting and disseminating research		4	20
Lack of continuity and sustainability in CPD		3	15
NON INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS			
Perceptions about teaching as a profession		6	30
Disillusionment with CPD providers	Lack of awareness of experienced teachers' needs	6	30
	Inapplicability of CPD to the context	6	30
PERSONAL FACTORS			
Phases in the teaching career		4	20
Personal commitments		3	15

Fig 5.5: Percentage of responses indicating factors that impact on CPD choices made by teachers (N=20).
Key: TEFL-Teaching English as a Foreign Language

5.2.4.1 Institutional factors

Among the institutional factors that emerged as having an impact on the choices made by teachers for CPD were the culture of the context where teachers were employed, lack of institutional support and the several pressures associated with annual performance evaluation of teachers. Additionally, the interviews also revealed the lack of dissemination of research conducted within the institutions as having an on what kinds of CPD teachers chose to engage in.

i.   Contextual cultures

In relation to their context of employment and its culture interviewees spoke about the fatigue resulting from teaching in the foundation programme and the lack of a culture of collaboration at the workplace as impacting on their CPD.

Teaching in the foundation programme

Teaching elementary level students in the foundation programme over prolonged periods of time was perceived to be monotonous and resulting in 'fatigue' from teaching. As the following interviewees communicate their experiences;

> "I find that I kind of get stuck in a rut because I'm teaching beginner level students and it's the same programme and they come with the same language issues and you kind of think, 'Wow! I've seen this now for the sixteenth thousandth time this week' (*Laugh*). Can anything make it more interesting?" (T14)

> "The thing that actually dissuades me after a while …is that I get tired of wallowing amongst apathetic students (*Laugh*)…just that I'm at the end of my rope with it…" (T13)

> "It is like I'm dumped down here! I've been here 3 years and I'm scared like I'm becoming dumb…And it's simply because of the students we have and their expectations. So the word 'challenge' from the students' point of view is obstacle, whereas the word 'challenge' for me is the opportunity for to broaden their horizons and that unfortunately from the kind of teaching that I do is the biggest problem I have." (T16)

Adding to the 'fatigue' experienced by foundation teachers are the other responsibilities associated with teaching foundation students, such as disciplining students, counselling, advising and one-on-one tutoring (see chapter two, section 2.3).As we know from the following excerpt;

> "I didn't expect to come into a college and have to be such a hands-on guide. I chose to teach at college level because I did not want to have to do discipline or deal with their personal issues. I wanted to teach adults. But I seem to have landed in a situation where I'm not wanting to be where I am...That is the problem of this area too because I've noticed in South Korea where I taught EFL writing and EFL speaking, I wasn't just kind of lumped as a general all round teacher who is a supporter as well. We should be there to support their English so that they can learn the business courses or whatever they need to learn the English for" (T15).

In dealing with foundation students some interviewees also perceived lack of support from the management in being flexible with the foundation curriculum or adapting learning to suit the learners needs as teachers perceived fit;

> "We don't have the freedom to tailor the classes to the level that the students need at that stage in their education" (T14).

This lack of support was perceived as reflecting the fact that foundation programmes served corporate interests for institutions where the aim is to gain and maintain a

maximum number of high school graduate students within the institutions. It also seems to be suggestive of an implicit competition between the various federal universities of higher education in the UAE. As one interviewee reflects on the situation just described;

"I also think that it's because education has become a business and business has to appeal to the masses and the masses at the level that I am at are not the high achievers. We are here over and above our class time hours because so much of what we do all day is based on the lowest common denominator, but business is designed at making as much money as possible and (*cynically*) you don't do that by only picking your top 5 flyers" (T14).

Hence, prolonged teaching in the foundation programme, dealing with non-teaching issues followed by minimal support from institutional management were all reported to be the cause of monotony experienced by foundation teachers that led to disinterest in CPD. As one interviewee reveals;

"Everybody has been there for a long time and they're going through the motions of sharing knowledge with each other. That's what they call PD. And because everybody knows that they're going through the motions, no one's really enthusiastic" (T16).

Absence of collaborative work cultures within the institution
Generally, as the following interviewees relate, federal universities were perceived to be rather individualised where neither departments nor institutions freely shared information;

"Some institutions are open to collaborative styles of teaching and learning whereas others are very compartmentalising with individual and competitive approaches. That doesn't help" (T6)

"My colleague and I share materials all the time. But I've noticed people don't do that. They're like, 'It's mine and you're not getting it!' They are secretive" (T1)

The absence of collaboration within the workplace was seen as depriving teachers of the opportunity to engage in learning with colleagues through talking and sharing information and understanding;

"I can attend an EXCEL session for example, but if there is no system for me to try it out or to talk with colleagues about the challenges involved in doing it, then it will come to a halt"(T6).

"Its one of the things we don't have here…opportunities/venues where teachers come together and share, engage in informal PD, where they can talk to one another about what they are doing, what works and what doesn't work"(T8).

The impact of being in a non-collaborative environment was most felt new joiners to the institution especially in adapting to the technologically advanced institutional environment. As one interviewee speaks from experience;

> "For me it was a huge shift of culture to go from a traditional environment with no technology into an environment like the HCT which is totally wireless and everyone's using online material repositories such as SharePoint, WebCT and BlackBoard Vista. There's a lot of stuff, so for me initially it was just survival. It was very stressful and I hated going into class thinking that all I knew at that moment was how to hook up the laptop to the projector. And nobody really had the time to tell a new comer what they do or how they do" (T11).

Hence, the monotony of foundation teaching and non-collaborative institutional cultures were perceived as contextual factors that impacted on whether teachers chose to do specific types of CPD or not.

ii.   Lack of institutional support

The second institutional factor that impacted on CPD choices of interviewees relates to lack of institutional support. Interviewees perceived lack of release time and workloads as impacting on the decision to pursue CPD. They also reported lack of autonomy in choosing CPD and insufficient funding for CPD as discouraging teachers to engage in professional development. Interviewees were also expressed discontent over the lack of acknowledgement for informal CPD and the fact that in-house CPD was expected to be engaged in during lunch time.

Lack of release time for CPD

Most interviewees cited lack of release time for pursuit of CPD and their tremendous workloads associated with teaching as the deciding factors in pursuing CPD. Some interviewees mentioned that their managers were reluctant to allow them release time for engaging in external CPD. As one interviewee shares his experience of lack of managerial support;

> "I thought I would get support because it was a prestigious event I was going to present at. I thought it would look good for the college. It was based on my innovative practice that I had kind of logged and recorded and made a presentation and it was accepted for a conference. It was e-learning so it was sexy and current. But it involved taking 2 days off of teaching time. I had support up to a certain level but then it was stopped. … …but it's just…I feel that it's the arbitrary way that people decide and the PD often comes down to a decision maker saying yes or no for release time. It's not consistent, or subject to or accountable to anybody…" (T17)

There were other interviewees who revealed that workloads associated with teaching in the foundation programme left teachers with no time to pursue any extracurricular activities. As an interviewee relates the nature of his work;

> "I'm already pitching so much time. We don't have textbooks for example so we're constantly generating material and there are so many other tasks to do…" (T11).

In order to cope with the workload, as two interviewees reveal, teachers often tend to take work home;

> "Constantly updating the web-based content for students takes a lot of time so I usually do it from home. But I haven't done it in a couple of months now" (T4)

> "I don't know how many of you take your work home, but I do…I'm marking over the weekends…" (T15)

A consequence of regularly taking work home was the impact on the long-term CPD commitments that some teachers were engaged in, such as studying for a higher degree. As the following interviewee relates;

> "It's really difficult, and we have other things that we need to focus on. I have enrolled in a diploma programme in England…this is my second year and I have only done one assignment in a year and a half! I don't have time because you're here till I don't know when and every single minute is gone. This is something that I really want to do, that I have paid for and that counts towards 20% of my appraisal and I can't do it because there's just no time; because we're also taking our work home" (T15)

As a result, as some interviewees explain, teachers often have to either make choices or give up CPD opportunities that they find challenging to juggle along with work priorities;

> "I was on a PhD for a while but it was in London and I couldn't go three times a year to attend their classes or take time out of work to interview teachers for data collection…it would have been a nightmare"(T7).

> "This year I've decided not to go to TESOL Arabia conference because to go I lose time with my students. It's a process of weighing my PD versus their development. I can't in all honesty cancel classes for a day at this point in their learning cycle..." (11).

Additionally, interviewees who were interested in sharing new knowledge, ideas or skills felt constrained due to lack of time in their work schedules. For example, as the following interviewees relate how they feel constrained due to lack of time;

124

> "We've got to get our APET (*Annual Performance Evaluation Tool*) done; teaching done, PhD or MA done, plus you have a family so that in 24 hours where do you get the time to contribute to PD?"(T10)

> "I went to the Writing Centre conference in Doha last year. It would be useful to have a writing centre here (in the institution) but at the end of the day, I don't have time to work with it now that I'm back….I think it's a great programme but I have no release time, and I have no colleagues who have release time so we can put this on the table…" (T14).

Hence, lack of support in getting release time for engaging in CPD and the extensive workloads accompanying foundation teaching emerged as the most cited institutional factors impacting on teachers' pursuit of CPD.

Lack of autonomy in choosing CPD

The second factor that was perceived to have an impact on CPD choices was the lack of autonomy in making decisions for professional development. Interviewees expressed discontent over the fact that teachers were expected to engage in mandatory CPD that reflected collective professional development goals of the institution rather than what teachers perceived their needs to be. In the following excerpts a few interviewees attempt to explain the process of hierarchical decision making involved in how the mandatory CPD goals of teachers are decided;

> "It's a very complex procedure. From the main organizational goals each college director selects what they see as being the college's goals. Then that filters down to department level. By the time it gets to us, it's a mixture of organizational, institutional, departmental and personal goals based on student evaluations and based on what you perceive your gaps in your abilities. So it's a combination of these" (T11).

> "I think we have college goals and department goals and it is expected of everybody in a department to achieve specific things together. Sometimes that specific thing might not be appealing to everybody. But the supervisors also have restrictions as they're accountable to someone else higher up. So, each department has to do something to prove that they've adhered to the college goals within those organizational goals. So it's easier to make everybody do the same thing, especially in big departments, you know, where you have 20 staff members in the same department. They (the supervisors) want to make sure that they've ticked that item off their list of things to do and sometimes we're not interested in that goal, we want to do something else but then we have to…"(T15).

Nevertheless, despite understanding of the accountability process at every level of the institutional hierarchy and the need for management to take certain decisions about collective CPD, there appeared to be general discontent pertaining to mandatory CPD.

As one interviewee sums up his thoughts on how lack of autonomy in choosing CPD is not favoured;

> "A lot of what happens in most colleges is a top-down management…and when you're doing top down management it doesn't empower us as teachers and we are less likely to do any kind of PD because you have very few choices. Actually it was our choice to be in this profession and we should have the choice to do what we want to do. The PD sessions that I've enjoyed most, were the ones that it was my choice to go rather than being recommended or suggested" (T16).

At times, as the following interviewees explain, the relevance of certain types of activities remains ambiguous;

> "Sometimes you're put into things and you're like, 'what am I dong here? It's not going to be useful'" (T13)

> "The team goals don't always make sense because they're not always explained clearly for us and we're not given a road map of so much of how we're going to get there. I think that there is a big gap between what management at the top of the pyramid has for goals and what we at the teaching level always understand everything to be. The flip side that I have found is when I've had PD expected of me without an explanation of how it will be seen to work down the road. So I've sat in PD sessions where I'm not clear at that time where I'm going to be putting this into…" (T14)

Altogether, lack of choice and lack of relevance in CPD are seen to create resentment among experienced teachers. As we know from the following interviewee;

> By the time you're at my stage, you've done lots of teaching and quite a bit of PD. I know what I'm doing and I enjoy it. I know how to challenge myself so I don't really think I need to be told to challenge myself. And I think I respond much more positively to affirmations than to threats. It's childish when they say you've got to do this or that" (T5).

Hence, CPD being 'externally directed' by third party decisions was perceived with resentment and regarded as lack of consideration by the institution of views and needs of the individual teachers.

Insufficient funding

While institutions had for long funded teachers to participate in both local and international off-site events, the trend was gradually changing to part-funding and in some institutions it amounted to almost no funding even for local events (such as the TESOL Arabia annual conference). Some excerpts from the information relayed are included as follows (see following page);

"I was surprised to learn that to go to the TESOL Arabia conference the acting director has to struggle to gain partial funding from the university. We had to pay the rest from our own pockets! I don't consider that encouraging professional development" (T3)

"We also used to get full funding, certainly the early bird registration. They would agree to cover membership and all. But now you pay for your membership yourself and only 30% (of the conference registration fee) gets paid. So it's in your own time and you've got to pay from your pocket …" (T17)

"We've got a problem, we don't have funding anymore. Last year was the big funding so three of our colleagues went to the States. This year one person applied who said he wouldn't go even if he was accepted because the funding was not enough" (T12).

Where teachers managed to obtain institutional funding for participating in external events, they were required to make presentations for colleagues to communicate their learning experience. Some interviewees perceived this as a deterrent due to the amount of work involved in preparing for presentations. There were others, however, who were quite willing to make formal presentations as long as the institution paid for their CPD. In the following excerpt from a focus group interview, participants discuss their views about accountability over funded CPD;

T17: "If you go to a conference in Houston or something, you have to come back and present on it …"

T19: "That happens all the time…and I don't really like doing that. I don't like presenting to my colleagues. There are people who love doing it and are comfortable doing it. But I am not…

T18: "It can be more threatening too because you know your colleagues…"

T17: "You need time for preparation..."

T20: "Then they start probing and asking questions that you are really not in a position to answer and you feel a bit vulnerable because, this is really not my area…And then the institution asking, did you do the test at the end? (*Laugh*)…you failed? (*Laugh*)…you're not any good! Give me the money back!

(*Everyone laughs*)

T18: "Oh, actually I don't mind at all. I'd just go through the college and get them to pay for it. And then I'd throw them a bone (*Laugh*)" (T18).

A few interviewees however indicated that they preferred to pay for their own development;

"I find it extremely stressful to have someone else supporting me doing something. So I pay for myself and prefer to take care of my own educational needs" (T5)

> "I prefer to do it myself than to go through the college to sign up and get some cash. No I really just don't want to know about that and when I do feel that I need to upgrade in some skills area is because I think they're useful or I need it or I see myself going into that area later on…I just go ahead and do it, pay for it myself and don't get them (the institution) involved at all…" (T20)

Hence, while institutional funding for professional development was seen as important, there were varying perceptions about whether funded CPD should be accounted for through formal presentations or not.

Lack of acknowledgement for informal CPD

While teachers were continually engaged in a variety of activities that they regarded as developmental, institutional authorities were seen as reluctant to acknowledge less formal activities such as teaching or curriculum development as CPD. As the following comments highlight;

> "Teaching is not counted as PD but it does contribute to your development as a teacher. You don't put in teaching (in the APET) because that's your job" (T10).

> "Creating new course outlines or teaching is not recognized as PD because it's another task that you have to do…and so it leaves no room for real learning"(T15).

> "The informal nature of professional learning is often considerably undervalued. There's not much emphasis on informal learning and not much discussion of the potential or the validity of allowing people to sit and discuss and have more time to actually work alongside each other"(T6).

Instead, more formal activities that teachers engaged in were readily acknowledged. For example, as one interviewee shares her experience;

> "I've written so many papers and presented in so many places, I have two Masters with distinction. My student and faculty evaluations have been good as well. I think they recognized that so they promoted me on their own" (T4).

The fact that less formal CPD is not acknowledged by authorities is perceived as eventually having an impact on performance evaluation and increments as a tremendous amount of development was reportedly less formal. As one interviewee expresses concern;

> "I think our supervisor knows exactly what we do. They know and they appreciate it. But that's not reflected in writing anywhere and it's a concern because the supervisor is not the one that will comment on your work. I mean the supervisor will know and recommend to the management the renewal of your

contract or maybe that two percent that we may be getting over and above our four percent" (T15).

Lunch time CPD sessions

Another factor identified as lack of support relates to the scheduling of in-house development sessions during the lunch break. As the following interviewees reveal this is generally perceived as an inconvenient time to either present or attend CPD sessions;

> "There are loads of in-house PD sessions and these are scheduled during the common break between twelve to one (in the afternoon). But with our time table we actually teach between these times at least two to three days a week. So I give these a miss" ((T5).

> "A lot of these things PD take place in the middle of the day during the lunch time period, and that's my only lunch time when I can get something to eat…so I end up not going although the session's really interesting to me…" (T19)

Hence, to summarise, lack of autonomy in choosing CPD with the pressure to engage in mandatory CPD based on institutional interests and lack of sufficient funding to engage in CPD in addition to accountability over funded CPD formed part of the factors that interviewees identified as examples of lack of support from their institutions. In addition, they also revealed inconveniently scheduled in-house CPD as an issue followed by reluctance of management to allow release time for external CPD during the working week.

iii.   Pressures associated with annual performance evaluation

A third major institutional factor impacting on the CPD choices of teachers relates to the requirements associated with their annual performance evaluation. As findings revealed, teachers felt pressurised due to extensive documentation required for performance portfolios, the on-going student-teachers evaluations and the necessity to document evidence of development. In addition, the expectation from teachers to engage in a certain amount of CPD that would determine salary increments was also regarded as a performance evaluation pressure besides the requirement to up take studying for a university degree.

Extensive documentation

The annual performance evaluation tool is an online professional portfolio system where teachers are required to document their work and development records. It is known in some universities as the Annual Performance Evaluation Tool (APET) and in others as the Performance Evaluation Portfolio (PEP). Several interviewees expressed

discontent over the amount of work involved in inputting work records into the online portfolios as required a lot of time;

> "Documentation is very necessary, it's just when it becomes a burden then it becomes a waste of time. It becomes distasteful if it gets in the way of your development opportunities and eats into your time" (T15).

> "It's very time consuming to complete it and difficult to narrow down to exactly what they're looking for. All the time spent on paperwork could be better spent in the classroom with students" (T10).

Some interviewees revealed that most of the free time at work was utilized in trying to update their work records. For instance, as the comments below reveal, open-learning days allocated for professional development were also utilized for updating performance records;

> "I find that I'm quite busy at the college…it's not the demand of teaching, it's not the demand of learning, it's not the demand of marking, but it's the documentation that is required here and that I find that eats up a lot of my time. I find that even with Open Learning Days, I usually use that time to catch up on documentation instead of what I should be doing with PD…" (T16).

> "With all that documentation that you have to do…because it's squeezing you so tight, you get a day of freedom and you say , 'ah…here's a chance to lift it up' and then you don't do the PD that you though you would do on that day" (T13)

Evaluation of teachers by students

Formal teacher evaluations done by the students they teach are significantly valued by institutional management for renewal of teachers' contracts. The evaluations, however, are perceived to increase the pressure on teachers to continually up skill themselves as they are regularly assessed by their students. A few interviewees also expressed the apprehension that students who are still learning EFL may evaluate them inaccurately as the online teacher evaluation surveys are administered in English;

> "So we have to work on PD to improve our technology skills. And when the students assess us, they assess us on how much technology we use in the classroom. And if you're an English teacher, we still are using technology. We have online learning, and we use e-mails and we type up things and we use Word and Excel. But the students don't understand. They think that you're going to go in and teach them Flash and you're going to teach them this and that…and they assess you poorly on the fact that you didn't teach them technology in the classroom." (T15)

> "We teach students to give constructive feedback but sometimes they make mistakes. So if on a scale of 1-5, '1' is disagree and '5' is agree, and the student puts all '1s' mistakenly it can't be changed"(T10)

Additionally, there is uncertainty among teachers about how much importance is given to the results of student evaluations during the annual appraisals of teachers. However, as the following interviewees express, the knowledge that the evaluation results will be used in appraisals tends to add pressure on the teachers;

> "This is where we often get a double signal because on hand we are told that getting a low rating on student evaluation is not a terrible thing because we're not there to do exactly what the students want us to do. But then, on the other hand, we often learn of situations when a teacher brought something forth of students, and you know, they (management) end up saying, 'the customer is always right'(T14).

> "When you go in with your APET, the supervisor always digs these numbers out and the comments on the student evaluation forms and you get asked, 'why do you think they said this? Is there anything that you can do to …?' they use it as a sort of cattle prodding…" (T13)

Hence, teacher evaluations done by students are seen as another pressure pertaining to performance evaluation and bearing on employment security of teachers in addition to extensive documentation of work records.

Focus on evidence of CPD

Teachers also feel pressurised by the requirement to provide evidence of professional development in their performance appraisals. As the following interviewees reveal, having participated in CPD courses teachers are expected to take up job roles that showcase the application of their learning;

> "They've moved towards what you can show that you can do now as a result of PD that you've undertaken. It's more result oriented now. Like I go to tech courses so they gave me an online course to design, manage and run. So we're being really watched to see can we do it" (T11)

> "Just attending isn't enough for them. It's actually achieving something or applying after having attended because it has to be evident. That's why the supervisors want to know when we intend to accomplish the goals, what the goals are, if they're substantial, how long we will be working on these, what will be the practical application and the pace of the process etc." (T12).

The focus on providing practical evidence of development is geared towards justifying that teachers engage in CPD that is intended for institutional development. As the following interviewees (see following page) sound their discontent;

"The performance evaluation requires you to tell what have you done to improve the students' learning, for example, what you've done to provide the technology support for students" (T16)

"We justify everything to the end of improving the college. So my goals for CPD state I am learning this so that I can improve the college and not that I am learning so that I can improve myself…" (T15)

Salary increments

In order to encourage teachers to develop themselves continually, federal universities have introduced a financial incentive. Those teachers who are seen to engage extensively in CPD activities during the year are recognised and rewarded with a certain percentage of increment in their annual salaries. An interviewee explains how the salary increment process works;

"There's a group of three senior managers who decide who's going to get the increment. If you're seen doing lots of PD, if you're prominent then you might get that increment. The more you're seen to be doing the more you have the chances of getting that increment into your salary. So if somebody has enhanced their skills and are then applying those newly enhanced skills they might get the pay rise" (T12).

However, as some interviewees argue, the criteria for gaining the salary increments did not appear to be clear because among people engaging in similar activities some received the increment while others did not;

"A few people who did not have a Masters, once they got that their salaries increased" (T11).

"I have got two Masters. It took me about five years to do the second and it was difficult because I was teaching. I got an excellent degree which is fine but did it do me any good? Did it get me any money? No it didn't. Did it get me a promotion? No it didn't…" (T12).

Despite this most teachers felt under duress to indicate a high level of CPD activity. As the following comments highlight, teachers either entered a noticeable number of CPD goals in their portfolios or were keen to be seen as participating in as many CPD events as they could;

"Sometimes you put in stuff (in the portfolio) because you want it to look good and then you suddenly realize that you have to do that…so when am I supposed to teach?"(T10)

"Our people have become almost serial workshop attendees. That can become an issue when you may be seen to cut too many hours from your lessons" (T11).

Overall, salary increments based on the amount of CPD activities that teachers engaged in was perceived as an additional pressure associated with performance evaluation that would create an unpleasant work environment between colleagues at work. As one interviewee expresses his views on the subject;

> This is a business model that is being applied to education and I don't think it's applicable or wise to have even thought about it. It's not an incentive. I think it's a disincentive in some ways. It is something very negative. It's going to lead to a lot of dissention and there's going to be a lot of unhappy people at the end when some are getting it and some are not getting it. That's not an incentive!" (T12).

Pressure to engage in formal higher education

As part of seeking international accreditation for federal universities, institutional management has made it mandatory for all their teachers to possess a university degree (masters or doctorate). As the following interviewee elaborates;

> "For a while they've been seeking external accreditation from the North American Association of Colleges and one of the things that came up was how much research time faculty were allowed and the level of faculty qualifications to see if people were really teaching their subjects. That highlighted a few fuzzy areas and then there was a drive where during the performance evaluation people were being told that they had to do additional degrees" (T11).

Along with the institutional expectation to uptake university degrees also came the pressure to complete the degree within a duration determined by the institution. As one interviewee relates, deadlines set by the university were not appreciated as they were associated with performance evaluations;

> "My Masters was my own initiative but it ended up being on my PEP. My line manager said you should finish this by such and such a date. And that was not the terms that I started this qualification on. I was doing it at my own pace and I did it in the time frame that was allowed. And then suddenly I was under pressure and that became less pleasant to do it. And more of a chore, but it was necessary to keep my job. Once someone else started telling me then it became difficult" (T12).

To summarise then, the third most significant institutional factor that impacted on CPD choices made by teachers pertains to pressures associated with performance appraisals of teachers. These include the amount of time and work involved in extensive documentation of work records and the apprehensions associated with students' evaluation of teachers. Additional pressures associated with performance evaluation

include the requirement to provide evidence of professional development, engage in extensive CPD for salary raises and the strain of acquiring a university degree.

iv.   Lack of support in conducting and disseminating research

The fourth institutional factor that emerged has impacting on the professional development of teachers was associated with the perceived lack of support for research. Teachers in federal universities were continually engaged in academic research either for higher education or for presenting at conferences. However, much of this research was unpublished or unpublicised. As some interviewees highlight the situation pertaining to lack of dissemination of research within the institutions;

> "My Masters' dissertation was based on the application of technologies in the learning process and language learning in particular. But I haven't shared it with anybody because I'm not sure if I would want to but I think a lot of other people have done similar things based on the students and the college and the system, and where is it?" (T20).

> "If you go to our teachers' resource room, there's a very sad little box in the corner with copies of theses. Someone's done some research on teaching and learning here, very specific to our department, so it's quite interesting to read. I've got two other dissertations which are a PhD on reading which a really big issue is for language teachers. I think those people made an effort and probably made sure they contributed in some way but it's stuffed away in a corner. I don't think you can even spot it or catalogue it. I just came across it one day by accident looking for a different thing…" (T17).

Part of the reasons cited for not publicising research relate to the tedious process of documentation involved in justifying research proposals for institutional approval. Secondly, approved research is then closely monitored for the manner in which findings are reported. An excerpt from the focus group interviews highlights the situation in a discussion between the interviewees;

> T17: "If we did try and organise to gain approval there would be a whole lot of paper work that we would have to do. And people become more deterred thinking 'would they be monitoring my work more carefully as in the sense of putting me under more scrutiny?

> T20: "Or maybe in your research or analysis or your conclusion, you're being slightly critical…maybe in an oblique fashion of organisational management, you know, then you get told, 'Ah, ah, ah, you cannot do that!'"

> T18: "And that's why I decided to not do mine (Masters) through here. Because I did not want them dipping their fingers and holding me up and saying, 'change this one…I know that it's wrong'. At a PhD level you probably can guarantee that it's so specific that no one is actually operating at that level in any case. But the people who are making the decisions don't necessarily have an

understanding. But they are the people who say change this, change that …and they haven't done all the reading that you have done. They haven't looked at what the current issues are and the current research directions and where are the gaps that have to be addressed. And they may want you to do something else."

Hence, institutional protocols regarding research appeared to discourage teachers from engaging in research and those who did engage in research were reluctant to publicise it or share it with the university due to various reasons. In an excerpt from the focus group interviews, some participants reflect on the reasons why teachers are uncomfortable in sharing research within the institutions they work for;

T20: "I think a lot of people would be deterred because I would think they're (institution) going to be quite critical in the way they'll look at it. I would also think about whether I was critical about the management (*Laugh*), and that I paid for this in own time with my own money, so why should I give it to them. That's probably selfish but why should I just hand it over to them when they made it really difficult for me to do it and haven't supported or helped me in any way…"

T18: "Besides, you don't really want to be publicising the fact that things are so bad because it gives the country a bad image and they (government and institutions) don't want their country to drop on the lists in terms of the standards of whatever it is they are doing…"

T17: "Perhaps in another context you might still be able to publish or speak out even in the face of official opposition, but here you're probably more reluctant because you would like to keep your job".

Hence, some of the reasons for not publicising teacher research relate to tedious approval procedures followed by close monitoring of approved research and employment security.

v.   Lack of continuity and sustainability in CPD

Another institutional factors impacting on CPD pertains to the nature of CPD events in federal universities. As two interviewees argue, one-off events that institutions organise do not provide continuity in development;

"Presenting at and attending sessions is good once in a while, but it's a one-day event that people forget about once they return to their workplace" (T4).

"Teacher development is not done systematically here for example; it's done through one-off CPD or through one to one just in time or whatever. But there are not like many ongoing seminars or courses to take you to a different level of development" (T12)

In addition, due to the largely expatriate workforce in federal universities there is high risk of lack of sustainability of knowledge and expertise. As one interviewee elaborates

that the when teacher leave the institutions, CPD leaves with them unless there are measures to sustain the knowledge and learning within the institution;

> "Without sustainability the knowledge or learning can disappear because teachers are largely expat teaching workforce and most of them are on short-term contracts. So the nature of PD becomes short-term for teachers who will focus on their own professional careers. As they move, the PD moves with them and is not left behind in the team or organisation when they leave. This impacts on institutional PD programmes because when people are in influx it's difficult to sustain anything" (T6)

To summarise then, the institutional factors impacting on CPD of teachers firstly relate to the non-collaborative culture of the institution where foundation teaching is seen as fatiguing. Secondly, teachers experience lack of institutional support in terms of release time, lack of autonomy in choosing CPD, insufficient funding, non-recognition of informal development and inconveniently scheduled CPD sessions. The third factor influencing CPD pertains to pressures associated with annual performance appraisals. These include extensive documentation for portfolios, teacher evaluation by students, institutional focus on practical evidence of CPD, and the requirement that all teachers should acquire a university degree. Additionally institutions were seen as unsupportive of academic research and as lacking the measures to sustain in-house learning.

5.2.4.2   Non institutional factors

Among the external factors that were identified as impacting on CPD choices made by teachers were the social perceptions about teaching as a profession and the disillusionment that interviewees experienced with CPD providers in the UAE.

i.   Perceptions about teaching as a profession

The social perceptions about EFL teaching as a profession were perceived to emerge from the various reasons why individuals took up the profession. While some individuals, as the following interviewee reveals, become EFL teachers out of interest in ELT or teaching, others are prompted by monetary, social aspirations or travel aspirations;

> "It really depends on the teachers that you get in teaching English and being here (in the UAE). For me it's still exciting and it's still interesting. But you find that there could well be people in this context who really are here for different reasons. The actual teaching is secondary to a number of other reasons. It might be their children's education, their social life here, their saving plans, their lifestyle and teaching is what they do to do the things that they like." (T19)

This in turn is perceived to affect teachers' interest in teaching and development. For example, as the previous interviewee elaborates;

> "It doesn't mean that all these people with these other goals as priorities are not doing a good job. They may well be, but there are people who I know have been teaching the same sort of thing for 10 years and they haven't changed what they do. They like to go to the same chapter of the same book and teach it the same way…that's less trouble (*Laugh*) and sometimes it just feels safer doing the things that they've been doing for years and years. I don't know maybe they don't even enjoy teaching. They're just doing it because they have a secure employment" (T19)

As a result of the aspects discussed, a few interviewees were able to cite personal experiences of social views on ELT as a non-profession;

> "I think that EFL compared to the other subjects is not really a subject. Academically, we are not taken seriously the same way like a math teacher or a physics teacher. But EFL is thought of like you kind of fell into that profession because maybe you were interested in traveling and that was the only job you could do when you were traveling. That's one perspective and the other perspective, you really couldn't make it into any other profession and that was your part time job" (T16).

> "I think one of the biggest hurdles to us being accepted as a profession is the fact that are we a profession? My sister for example will still tell her friends that I'm not really a proper teacher because I did that one month's course about fifteen years ago. Since then I've done so much. But I think there's still that notion that real teachers go to a training college for nine months and then they have to do training skills" (T11).

Hence, the reason people take up EFL teaching and their resulting priorities as professionals in terms of development contribute to social perceptions about whether EFL teaching is a profession in the conventional sense. As a result of the various views, as one interviewee explicates, EFL teaching does not provide much scope for climbing the career ladder;

> "EFL teaching, it's got a sort of a shelf-life, like a vortex and you get higher and higher and then what do you do to feed back into it? That is the problem because there is no real career structure in TEFL. You just go onto another contract. Whereas in other jobs you get into management, you get injected into new jobs and you get in new people and so on …You don't have that effect in TEFL…" (T13)

ii.   Disillusionment with CPD providers

The second non institutional factor that was perceived to impact on teachers' CPD relates to disillusionment with CPD providers such as TESOL Arabia. As TESOL

Arabia is the largest in the Middle East, most of the views expressed by interviewees relate to this organisation. Overall they perceived that TESOL Arabia was unaware of the needs of experienced teachers and that the events they organised were often inapplicable to the workplace context.

Lack of awareness of experienced teachers' needs
Generally, TESOL Arabia was perceived to organise events with a focus on initial teacher education that disappointed experience teachers who attended their events;

> "TESOL Arabia has these other little sessions for members and actually I used to go to them. But now I don't because I find that their audience is specifically those people in secondary school or primary school and they don't have the background as EFL teachers. It's like what I did when I first did my training, that's the kind of stuff they want, very very basic practical stuff. It doesn't really interest me because I think we want something specific for the tertiary level. That's why I stopped going" (T16).

> "I think I have had this criticism for TESOL Arabia. I feel that the delivery is pitched to people who are newly in EFL. Sometimes I think you are telling us something that anyone here who has a qualification should know and is fully aware about. Don't tell us about pair work again, we've all learnt about pair work! (*Laugh*) We're operating at a different level so it's not enough" (T18).

In fact as the following interviewees (each of whom has been TEFL teachers for almost two decades), reflect they felt that there was not much in terms of methodologies or research that they were not already exposed to;

> "It's hard to pinpoint what will be of real value and help you invest in the future as well because at my age a lot of the things have come along already. There's not much new coming along. I've seen very little new in the last few years…if I could have some PD, it would have to be something that would have an effect that I haven't been able to achieve before you know…but that doesn't come very often…" (T13)

> "I've heard nothing new in TESOL Arabia because I've been doing it for too many years now. There isn't anything new unless we do neurological surgery to insert languages into our brains (*Laugh*)" (T7).

Inapplicability of CPD to context
As a result of its generic nature, most non-institutional CPD offered by TESOL Arabia was perceived to inapplicable to the context where participants in my study were employed. This apparently differentiates institutional CPD from non-institutional CPD as in-house learning is tailored for applicability within the context where teachers work.

As the following interviewees comment about the generic nature of non-institutional CPD;

> "The presentations I've attended in TESOL Arabia might look nice when they tell you about the things. But once you go and try it out in class they might be useless, difficult or inappropriate for your kind of students" (T3).

> "Can I afford the luxury of going off and doing something fantastic that I may not get recognition for? Or, something that's not going to directly assist me? I've become very careful and focused" (T11).

Hence, it emerged that non-institutional CPD was regarded as far too basic for the needs of experienced teachers and inapplicable to their context. Other issues were discussed that were associated with TESOL Arabia as a CPD provider including event organization and event management aspects such the same organizers being involved year after year, inviting experts who are unfamiliar with UAE educational culture and participants' etiquette. However, bearing in mind that this thesis is less about CPD providers and more about the CPD experiences of teachers in federal universities, the subject of CPD providers is best left open to further research in a separate study.

5.2.4.3   Personal factors

As personal factors impacting on experienced teacher development, there was mention of the different career phases that experienced teachers are in and other aspects related to personal lives. Depending on whether they are in their early, mid or later career phase, teachers are perceived to have varying development needs. Generally interviewees recounted from personal experiences how their own perceptions of CPD and development needs had changed over time;

> "When you first start off you don't have much experience so you're sort of absorbing everything, whereas now you have a clear idea of what your students need and what you'll like as well. That's why you're sort of more ready to reject what you think might not be suitable for your particular context. Whereas when you're young, you know, you're experimenting with everything which I did a lot. I know I can say that it's only in the last five to six years I've sort of matured as a teacher and I feel much more confident now than I used to be twenty years ago…" (T19)

Additionally, as the following interviewees reveal (see following page), teachers' individual CPD needs depend on and change with the context that they find themselves;

"There are new nuances coming through in the classrooms and the cross contexts as well. My career isn't all UAE based. I've only had six years in the UAE. So that's another phase of heavy learning or looking at a completely different context and wanting different PD from my phase say with migrants, or from my phase with children, or from my phase with adolescents. It was all English language teaching but each context had different demands and my PD interests moved accordingly" (T18).

"I started off by being a high school teacher and then being a French teacher and then I moved over to adult education which is quite different and then teacher training as well. And then when I migrated to Australia, I taught young adult learners and migrants as well, and I went back to teacher training. I did CELTA programme for a while, and then I moved here and the context is totally different as well. So PD for me has changed quite drastically!"(T19).

Hence, the CPD needs of teachers reportedly depended on the different phases or stages of their teaching careers that they were in and the working contexts that they found themselves in.

Besides the factors associated with their professional life, a few interviewees also indicated that aspects related to their personal lives, such as family commitments and weekends had an impact on whether they chose to engage in CPD or not. As the following comments reveal, teachers are either tied up with studying over weekends when most non-institutional CPD takes place, or they just need to rest or have family commitments;

"I'm doing my Masters and it's just work life balance against study. I come to work before six every morning …2 hours earlier because it's the only time in the day where I feel able to do some study where there's nobody around to disturb me" (T20)

"It's just that by the time it gets to the weekend, I think 'can I go on a Thursday? No, I have too many things to do…can I go on a Friday? No, I just want to sleep', and I'm tired and then you've done it, attended it, seen it, heard it before. So you weigh how useful is it going to be …" (T15).

"I would go because there's always a chance there will be gems in there, but it's on the weekend and I've got kinds. So I can't go. I'm the sole parent; I can't just leave the kids at home on a whole weekend" (T18)

To summarize then three major factors (institutional, non-institutional and personal) featured as impacting on the CPD choices made teachers. Institutional factors included the culture of the context in which teachers teach, the perceived lack of institutional support, the pressures associated with performance appraisals, lack of support in research and lack of continuity and sustainability in CPD. Non institutional factors

included social perceptions about the EL profession and teachers' disillusionment with CPD organisations. Personal factors impacting on CPD referred to the varying needs of teachers with the different phases in their careers and finally a few teachers also mentioned aspects of personal lives such as weekends and family commitments that affected their CPD.

5.2.5   What suggestions do teachers have with regard to improving the CPD within their context?

The responses to this question revealed several interesting suggestions along with mention of individual contributions that some participants were either willing to make or were already making toward their context. Figure 5.6 on the following page illustrates the major themes emerging from interview responses. I have presented and analysed the themes which evolved into two main categories; suggestions intended for the institutions and those for the CPD organisations. Within the suggestions, I have attempted to include mention of individual contributions by participants where applicable.

	SUGGESTIONS TO ENHANCE CPD		N	P
INSTITUTIONS	Encourage a collaborative culture	Encourage collegial support	6	30
		Utilise local expertise	5	25
		Encourage teacher-exchange programmes between institutions	4	20
	Encourage teachers to take CPD initiatives	Ensure realistic workloads	10	50
		Allow teachers release time for CPD	9	45
		Provide sufficient funding	9	45
		Allow autonomy in choosing mandatory CPD	6	30
		Encourage research within the institution	11	45
	Recognise and support informal CPD		3	15
	Maintain and sustain CPD		2	10
CPD PROVIDERS	Be receptive to the needs of experienced teachers		4	20
	Take measures to prevent volunteer burn-out		2	10
	Set up and activate specialised groups		2	10

Figure 5.6: Percentage of responses indicating suggestions made by interviewees to enhance CPD in their context (N=20).

5.2.5.1 Suggestions and contributions relating to institutions

The suggestions made by interviewees for their institution relate to the expectations these teachers have from their workplaces. The suggestions specifically include encouraging a culture of collaboration, creating an environment where teachers are encouraged to take CPD initiatives, recognising and supporting less formal CPD and taking measures sustain CPD.

i.   Encourage a collaborative culture

Within the institutional community it was suggested that teachers with experience could be encouraged to offer ongoing support to colleagues, create opportunities to bring external experts from other federal institutions, and to set up some form of teacher-exchange programmes between institutions. In addition interviewees also suggested that institutions could encourage both interdepartmental and inter-community knowledge sharing.

Encourage collegial support

In order to enable eased induction of new joining colleagues, it was suggested that experienced teachers could be formally asked to mentor them and familiarise the new joiners with the institutional culture and working norms;

> "I think it's really nice to have senior teachers who've been teaching for a long time in this institution to mentor and give a little bit of extra training and offer ideas" (T1).

As one interviewee also reminisces from her own experience how she felt the need for some collegial support;

> "I felt I needed a mentor. I felt I needed ideas from other teachers, but I didn't find anyone who was really helpful and I had to do it myself"(T3)

Additionally, teachers perceived the need to include more ongoing support as part of in-house provision so that learning was optimal. For instance as one interviewee suggests;

> "People would like more support, following the introduction of new technology for example. Some people like myself like to get a bit of instruction and then be left alone. But people tend to get frustrated when they are left to experiment by themselves" (T11).

Another suggestion was that teachers who benefited from external CPD could share their understanding with colleagues as this could result in ongoing support in specific areas of development;

> "Teachers who develop a particular skill and knowledge can go back and work alongside colleagues. This can help build collaborative shared communities of practice for professional learning within institutions" (T6)

Utilising external expertise for CPD

Some interviewees suggested that rather than continually prompting in-house teachers to present new knowledge and research to colleagues, institutions could also invite experts from other federal institutions as this would expose teachers to newer perspectives from other federal universities in the same context;

> "I think it would be really nice if they got outside people in. You don't have to always exhaust what you have in-house here because you see them all the time so you can always ask them anything anytime. My argument is for some sort of professional balancing by getting someone from another college rather than utilizing the same people all the time" (T1).

Interdepartmental and inter-community knowledge sharing

Another suggestion pertaining to encouraging a collaborative culture relates to sharing knowledge between the various departments within an institution as well as knowledge with the wider community of teachers in the federal education sector. Firstly, as the following interviewee argues, the process of knowledge sharing between the various units in an institution would benefit all parties involved;

> "Cross utilization of ideas across departments can only serve to enhance institutional learning programmes. Professional learning, in my view, is contextual and occurs within individuals, teams, departments or organizations. If these pieces interact then the learning experience for everyone will be richer all around rather than each individual tapping only into one tier of learning" (T6)

Secondly, as part of a 'two-way' CPD process in which both communities would benefit, there were suggestions of extending knowledge and expertise to other teachers in the wider community;

> "Faculty members are being sent to conferences in Europe or America. What do they bring back? No body knows. That's personal development. I think teachers in schools need that kind of PD (from us) because their institutions cannot send them abroad for any certificate conferences/courses and in the process we may learn something from them too" (T4).

An excerpt from a focus group conversation (on the following page) reveals how interviewees discussed setting up a 'bank' of volunteer teachers who, as part of their own CPD, would willingly mentor teachers in government secondary schools;

T15: "We could perhaps set up a volunteer centre and maybe the college should help by releasing teachers for a couple of hours a week so they can present little workshops for school teachers who need training in specific aspects of classroom management, or creating learning materials. With the experience between the teachers here we could set up centres in all of the colleges in the UAE where people can sign up as volunteers and say, 'Well every Wednesday afternoon I'm available for teacher training', then they can visit schools or mentor a teacher personally once a week, work with her for six months or a year".

T13: "We did this sort of thing a number of years ago when we got teachers from the local schools to come to the college for a month of evening classes. They were so enthusiastic and when they went back the idea was that they would train other teachers. Then the Ministry reined in on it and they pulled out the funding and it stopped…"

T15: "That's what I'm saying, that we need something similar but on a voluntary basis as part of our PD. So whatever each person knows they can match up with one teacher who really needs it. We could have some kind of online forum where people sign up".

T16: "Yeah, we could each commit one day of the week to go out to a secondary school and as part of our duty that we get paid for here, we'll go out there to mentor, observe teachers, offer mini demo-lessons and then have feedback sessions with teachers. The idea is exchanging knowledge. We'll learn a little bit about the context our students are from so that back at college we're not so harsh on them and the school teachers also gain something from us. The government could fund it in our salaries as they do with our regular salaries. I think we all have the skills and expertise to do it in the field that we're in and when it becomes an exchange we're both empowered. When we return do a better job with our students in terms of classroom management and those teachers learn some techniques from us. It's a win-win situation".

Hence, suggestions were made for institutions to find ways to open communication and knowledge sharing venues between institutional departments and between segments of the wider community of teachers teaching especially in the UAE government schools where the foundation students graduated from.

Encourage teacher-exchange programmes between institutions
Another suggestion made by interviewees relates to initiating teacher-exchange programmes with other institutions either local or abroad. As one interviewee highlights the benefits of learning about different contexts that this would have for them;

"The experience of going to a different place or another country and finding out that actually some of the problems are very similar and some are very different, gives you a new perspective. It can refresh you and you can come back and probably do a better job. I mean at TESOL Arabia I met all of my ex-colleagues who are now in different places and I found out that in some ways we all had similar problems and in some ways we dealt with it differently. That was so useful" (T16).

Additionally, some focus group interviewees engaged in a discussion about the potential usefulness of experiencing different perspectives;

> T15: "I think there should be some more exchanges between teachers here and teachers in other institutions around. I think going somewhere else for a few days or for a few weeks and observing what's happening, maybe this is what we need..."
>
> T13: "Because if we don't move then we are in the same gene pool, isn't it?"
>
> T13: "Whereas, I think the pool needs freshness…"
>
> T15: "Exchanges between us and the other institutions will give us a chance to observe and learn…so they have a chance to learn from us and we learn from them".

Hence, quite a bit of interest emerged in the focus group discussions about experiencing the on-goings in either local or international institutions and suggestions were made for finding ways to expand learning through collaboration.

ii.   Encourage teachers to take CPD initiatives

As part of encouraging teachers to take initiatives for CPD it was suggested that institutions could create the right environment for teachers to feel encouraged. This could be done by firstly easing teachers' workloads and allowing them release time for CPD, proving the incentive of sufficient funding, allowing teachers the autonomy to decide their own CPD, encouraging them to engage in formal research and also recognising informal CPD that teachers engaged in.

Ensure realistic workloads and allow release time

Generally, it was felt that mandatory CPD was justified when teachers were also provided with the release time that could be used for the CPD and then teachers could also fulfil institutional CPD goals;

> "If they reduce our teaching hours then it's reasonable to expect one, two, three, four, and five…" (T3)
>
> "If they gave us release time for example, one day of the week as our PD time, with end of the year discussion to account for it, then that would be useful. I would love to have that one day a week where I do a lot of other stuff but also broaden my horizons and come back with brilliant ideas. So if my teaching doesn't provide me with the intellectual satisfaction, at least through PD I can gain that and I can tie it to my context. I wish I could do that…" (T16).

Provide sufficient funding

A second suggestion referred to the need for institutions to fund the development of their employees. As the interviewee below provides insight into why it is imperative for institutions to fund employee CPD;

> "I'd like them to be paying for it (CPD) ...Especially the way the salaries are and the inflation in Dubai, for any of us with children it's very hard to justify being here financially and then when you've got to pay for your PD…I don't take kindly to that. I resent having to pay all the time and having paid, we all just paid for our Masters studies as well. You've spent thousands already and that's not in Dirhams, that's in another currency…" (T15).

Allow autonomy in choosing mandatory CPD

Most interviewees perceived that they were capable of self-development and possessed the capacity to plan and pursue CD if they were allowed to;

> "Teacher development is something that you can yourself take charge of. External forces will always push you in a certain direction but a lot of it is down to you and how much your institution lets you do" (T11).

> "I'd like them to be more selective in terms of the types of PD that they force us to do. Sometimes they don't choose well…I think they're ill advised, and we get something that we all have to attend and I mean we walk out saying, 'God! Wasn't that rubbish!' That does happen…" (T15).

Encourage research within the institution

In order to encourage institutional research it was suggested that institutions should provide some sort of incentive in terms of reduced teaching loads or financial support or even some time off from work, which would encourage teachers to work on their research and also to make contributions to the institution's research base;

> "All it would take for them is to have an incentive for people who have done a paper as part of their studies…some financial incentive or time off incentive, like if you're prepared to publish, we're prepared to make it worth your while in some way…I bet there would be a lot of people who would be willing to put in the same work as this" (T18).

Recognise and support informal CPD

Suggestions were also made for institutions to formally recognise informal CPD activities that teachers engaged in. As the following interviewee comments (on the following page), the need was expressed for institutions to encourage opportunities for

teachers to engage in less formal professional interaction through dialogue with colleagues;

> "Its really important to go to PD sessions but I also think that it's important to get so much off the people you work with because there's a lot of experience here"(T1).

Generally, interviewees suggested that institutions should encourage teachers to set up physical forums to engage in informal discussions pertaining to teaching and learning issues, to be able to share knowledge and to exchange ideas;

> "I think the big need is to have forums for teachers who are either new or they have very little support and they just need to talk some times about things that have happened to them. It gives the reassurance that they are not alone (and that they can share problems informally)" (T11).

At the time of this study, at least one interviewee revealed that she was working on setting up such a forum in Dubai with the help of an international organisation;

> "I'd like to set up a professional organisation for teachers to come together and talk about their work. I think that's going to take a bit of shift in thinking. I've spoken to someone on the board of PHI DELTA KAPPA, an international organisation, to set up a chapter in Dubai. Typically once a month a meeting will be held for university faculty, teachers and principals to come together, listen to a speaker, have dinner, converse and share…just come together and network"(T8).

Additionally, another interviewee revealed his attempts to set up an online discussion forum for teachers to discuss issues associated with teaching and learning;

> "I wanted to involve more teachers in discussing online issues that were important to them, so I created a website to encourage shared exploratory practice. I wanted to stimulate people to share and discuss…I'm still looking at ways to get it to gain momentum" (T9).

Interestingly, the focus group interviews that were conducted for this study were commended by participants as an apt example of how informal discussion forums have the potential to generate reflective dialogue and discussion. Below is a detailed excerpt from the discussion on being part of the focus group interview;

> T14: "This interview was quite good actually...the process of me ordering my thoughts about the subject of teacher professional development and reflecting on it" (T14).

> T16: "The fact that we all came into this for a focus group interview signifies that we're more likely to be encouraged by informal types of development"(T16).

T13: "It's been good, it's been interesting and it gives you the opportunity to iron things out, get them out and understand what other people are thinking.

T16: "It's just fantastic that when we talk to people a lot of it goes on without it being formal PD…"

T15: "But its' different when someone comes and throws a question on the table and we know we have an hour or more to discuss it…"

T13: "And it doesn't happen enough…"

T15: "Exactly, it doesn't happen enough…we could discuss these things anyway and we don't look at the whole picture…and sometimes it takes an outsider to come and get you to sit back and take a look at the whole picture differently. Like when you asked us what we could do (to enhance CPD within our context), we had never really thought about it before and we've come to realize that yeah we can do it! "

T13: "We should do more outside the box that we're in…"

T15: "I think its all the constraints that we have of the daily pressures that we have …it just makes you so focused on getting this one assessment done and marking that project and finishing this bit that you needed to do and you know getting to one place and back …it just takes over your life…"

T16: "But yeah thanks a lot for providing this because it reminded me of what panel discussions are supposed to be like in conferences and they're never this good. And I actually enjoyed myself and I thought it was good fun. And I'm writing this as part of my PD, not in terms of tongue-in-cheek".

(*Everybody laughs*)

T14: "Thank you very much; I've taken away stuff in my brain"

Hence, suggestions were made for institutions to consider the significance of informal dialogue and discussion amongst teachers and to encourage the setting up of discussion forums for potential CPD. While most teachers made valuable suggestions, a few were already engaged in the process of setting up either physical or online community forums for such informal discussions.

iii.   Maintain and sustain CPD

Another suggestion for institutions to consider reflected the need to maintain continuity in CPD. There were suggestions for long-term CPD with regular follow up measures. As the following interviewees (on the following page) make suggestions for longer CPD programmes with more structure as compared to one-off events and follow up support;

"I think there has to be more structured PD opportunities for people who really need them. For example, longer courses like the RSA and not one day which people forget about" (T4)

"Institution led programmes of professional development have more importance than the one-off workshop which will always be there to meet short-term needs. Across the institution we must look at what are our long term goals and how these can be sustained through follow up to delivery. Follow up is critical as part of continuity in PD programmes" (T6).

Secondly, considering that the EFL workforce in the UAE was largely expatriate, there were suggestions to find means to benefit from the specialisations that they bring with them and in the process allow them to develop. As one interviewee highlights the nature of the EFL workforce in UAE and what this means in terms of sustaining CPD;

"How do we keep ourselves employed is one you specialize to such a degree that there's very few of you in the world that can do it, so you're on of the people called on. Or two, we just always move with the flow of whatever comes up, that's the big thing and three is to be adaptable. And I think the irony of it is that I went in to this whole career because I was willing to move out of Canada to be here, to be in the other countries that I've taught in, and to move colleges, to move places. That's part of what keeps me employed. And so when you think a huge chunk of your employees, your specialists are nomads who have put their roots down in this area, I think there have to be ways to capitalize on their specialization and adaptability and willingness" (T14).

One of the interviewees was at the time of the study involved in trying to set up formally acknowledged long term CPD programmes for teachers within the institution;

"Courses can be a good framework within which to develop and stimulate people to find out more. I'm trying now to set up for ZU (with the CTL) certified PD in the form of a series of sessions that look in more depth at particular topics. So that if you attend 5 sessions for example, you get a certificate that is recognized by the deans of all colleges" (T9).

Hence institutions were seen as capable of creating an environment conducive to teachers development by firstly encouraging a culture of collaboration and secondly by taking measure to make teachers take the initiative to develop.

5.2.5.2 Suggestions and contributions relating to CPD providers

Three distinct suggestions were made by for CPD organisations to consider and as mentioned in earlier sections, these were directly intended for TESOL Arabia. Generally interviewees suggested that professional development organisations should be

receptive to the needs of experienced teachers as much as they are receptive to the needs of inexperienced teachers. As comment below clarifies;

> "PD providers need to consider the needs/levels of teachers they are catering to. They must distinguish between experienced and novice teachers and try to organize/have something for the PD fulfilment of both" (T6)

Secondly, there were suggestions for the organisations to involve newer volunteers in their events organisation and management so as to gain newer ideas and strategies and more energy

> "I worked for International House in Poland and you were part of the PD organizing thing for two years after which you let it go to somebody else no matter how good you were. So it did not become too much for those involved. I really think TESOL should do something like this...about time"(T11).

A third suggestion pertained to the set up and increased level of activity among specialised groups that would encourage and interest experienced teachers;

> "If I could have some very specific groups like 'writing' for instance, I would seriously show up for that. It's my passion. And, if we're going to talk about writing then yes, I'm happy to contribute. I went to the 'writing centre' training, I can help, run workshops on writing and on life coaching" (T14)

To summarise, the suggestions made by interviewees relate to institutions and professional development organisations creating suitable environments and conditions for teachers to take interest in and engage with CPD. Additionally, it became apparent from findings that there was sufficient expertise among experienced EFL teachers to take initiatives if the right environment for them was available.

5.3   Summary

In this chapter I have presented and analysed data from my study based on the research questions of my study. I have analysed the understandings that teacher bring to CPD, the choices they make in terms of development activities and the accompanying reasons. I have also analysed how teachers perceive their development is influenced by institutional and non institutional factors. Towards the end of the chapter I have analysed some suggestions made by interviewees about how CPD can be enhanced in their context. In the following chapter I will discuss the findings in relation to the literature and the context.

CHAPTER SIX
DISCUSSION

6   Introduction

In the light of my experience as a tertiary EFL teacher and following a consideration of what the existing literature on teacher development suggests, I have attempted to establish in the previous chapters that teacher development is socially constructed and that communities of learning and practice are key in realising socially situated and socially constructed teacher development.

In this chapter I intend to consider the findings from my study in the light of what I have read and as a result attempt to construct an understanding of these aspects. I will also talk about how teachers' perceptions are shaped by their experiences and by the employment context, and how the activities that they engage in are reflective of existing cultures of CPD and of the 'smaller cultures' (Holliday, 1999) that they develop to enhance their own professionalism. As a result of the distinctive cultures, there is evident tension between individual teachers' and institutional CPD needs as well as apparent conflict between the cultures of institutions and CPD providers.

I will also discuss the emergence of the distinctive culture of CPD in the UAE and the agentive role that teachers play in making this happen.

6.1   A discussion of the key findings

This section discusses the key findings from my study in light of the literature and the background of the context in which the research was carried out. Through the discussion I have attempted to highlight the tension that exists between individual EFL teachers, their working contexts and the professional development organisations in the UAE.

6.1.1   Teachers' understanding of CPD

The perceptions and understanding about CPD that emerge from my study resonate with some of the current research reviewed (see chapter three section 3.6) with 'growth' consistently emerging as a key aspect of teachers' development. CPD is thus perceived in two ways; as context related improvement of skills and as lifelong development or growth. As context related improvement CPD is perceived as development of skills that

are immediately applicable to the teaching context and that enable teachers to perform effectively within the working environment (Bolam, 2000). There is evidence in chapter two and chapter five of institutions providing appropriate opportunities that are geared towards equipping teachers with the tools to operate effectively within the institutional environment.

As lifelong learning CPD is seen to last through teachers' careers from onset to retirement (also Gravani & John, 2005). It is understood to involve keeping abreast of new developments in TESOL, updating oneself through formal qualifications, and specialising. The underlying notion in the various perceptions of CPD relates to evident change that is realised through improved teaching methodologies, specializing in specific skills or through improved student performance. Altogether while engaging with CPD is perceived as a way of revitalizing teachers, as Evans (2002) indicates, it is also understood to be part of a teacher's professionalism.

These perspectives suggest and verify how both training and development form part of a continuum (as discussed in chapter three). They also suggest how teachers are placed at various places along the continuum depending on the phase of career that they are in and how their understanding of CPD and development needs vary accordingly. Findings of the study also indicate the difference in understanding of CPD among teachers who are new to the institution (not necessarily new to the professions) and those who have been employed there for a few years or many years.

Teachers who are new to the institution have probably worked elsewhere in a different context for a few years and are likely to perceive CPD as acquiring the skills required to operate effectively within the new work context. On the other hand, those who have been working in the institution for a while may view CPD as specializing in areas that they are interested in, whereas those who have been employed there for longer may perceive CPD in terms of more independence from their institutional context and perhaps more oriented towards their future career goals or plans. The CPD interests of the latter category of teachers are likely to extend beyond the immediate institutional context. Irrespective of how CPD is understood, the underlying aspects remain the same – learning and growth – implying an evolutionary understanding of CPD.

Accordingly then, the development paths or activities that teachers choose are dependent on their current needs and understanding of CPD which in turn is likely to be influenced by their experiences in the previous work contexts. This understanding of CPD as being situated within the practice/occupational context seems to illuminate how teacher development processes are socially constituted.

6.1.2   CPD trends among teachers

As shown in chapter five (section 5.1.2), the key CPD preferences among teachers that emerge from my study are development through teaching and participating in (attending or presenting at) institutional or external CPD events (also Keay, 2006). While quite a few teachers are also engaged in formal higher education, there is slightly less inclination to engage in self-directed and self-initiated activities such as reading professional literature, or engaging in professional dialogue as, in the views of the participants, these are perceived by institutions as less formal (Beaty, 1998; Flores, 2005). Such activities also include research, additional roles associated with teaching, writing papers for professional publications, and voluntary work with professional development organisations.

The notion of CPD being situated in teaching relates to Hoban's (2002) idea of learning being situated in social practice (in this case professional practice) and also encompasses the view that CPD comprises all activities that teachers engage in during their careers which are designed to enhance their work (Day & Sachs, 2004). What emerges from the CPD choices of teachers is also the trend to engage with participation en masse in in-house or external professional development events. This apparently highlights the inclination among teachers to learn from social interaction in groups that allow for collaboration and dialogue so that learning does not happen in isolation. It also reiterates that development occurs in a social world through engagement with interconnectedness that also takes into account the individual set of dispositions that teachers bring to the social practice in their social world (as indicated in chapter three, section 3.3.3).

Part of participation in external events organized by external CPD providers (professional organisations) also entails, as Scollon (2001) suggests, teachers being part of a professional discourse system, which encompasses both knowledge and the social

practices of communities of practice (Clarke, 2008). Such communities are meant to be goal oriented, provide teachers with support, connections and resources for career development and inculcate an overall security in their identity (ibid.). As Wenger (1998:45) elaborates, a community of practice is 'a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise', and one in which members are mutually engaged in that shared enterprise, thus making use of a shared repertoire of ways of doing things. Within the community, learning is socially constructed through social interactions and sharing of experience both of which inform practice.

Thus, the community of practice is not static and involves continual renegotiation of the understanding of the joint enterprise among members of the community. Over time this is perceived to result in continuity of practice and the evolution of new elements of practice (Backhouse, 2006). Having said that, in the UAE, which is the context of my study, external (outside the institution) communities of practice exist in the form of TESOL Arabia. The community comprises features that Scollon (2001) identifies as characteristic of professional discourse systems which teachers identify with, as it also extends their 'professionalism' in TESOL/TEFL.

There is, however, also the institutional unit or the corporate discourse system (ibid.) which the teachers work in and which they inevitably are expected to primarily identify with. In the following section, through a discussion of the reasons that lead EFL teachers to engage in certain types of CPD, I will elaborate on the tension that exists between teachers identifying with their professional communities and their institutional/workplace communities.

6.1.3 Reasons for CPD preferences among teachers

The prominent reasons that surfaced for CPD engagement focus on the availability of provisions made by institutions followed by performance appraisal expectations that institutions have from the teachers they employ. Among the less popular reasons are personal interest in CPD (Goddard et al., 1999) , upgrading professional profiles (Connelly & McMahon, 2007) through formal qualifications and keeping informed through networking – all of which are generally inclusive of the need to fulfill societal expectations of teacher development and also pave the way for future career opportunities.

155

More observable are the reasons associated with belonging to the institution of employment and their expectations. This implies that there is an inclusive institutional community where teachers spend most of their time and whose norms they are required to adhere to. Partly these norms are related to teacher development with the outcome of improved student learning which explains why institutional expectations become the primary reason for teachers to engage in CPD. Another reason could also be (as we are aware that CPD within the institution is focused on learning to teach effectively in context) to assimilate teachers within the 'culture' of the institution through specific types of activities that are characteristic of the institutional communities of practice.

It is imperative to understand that when teachers become members of a community of practice, they bring with them their individual dispositions and a historical sense of themselves to bear on the communities that exist and that teachers become part of, and in this way contribute to the shaping of the community of practice.

6.1.4 Factors impacting on the CPD of teachers

Teachers in my study perceive CPD to be affected mostly by the institutions' requirements, the local professional organisations (CPD providers), the external society within which expatriate EFL teachers and their institutions exist, and teachers' own professional careers and personal dilemmas. It seems imperative to note that the institutional community, the community of professional development organisations (TESOL Arabia) and the community of expatriate EFL teachers employed in federal universities can be seen to represent sort of micro-cultures that exist within the large culture (Holliday, 1999) of the (academic) society of UAE. The existence and intermingling of micro-cultures existing in the UAE educational culture is discussed further in section 6.2

According to the participants, the institutional factors impacting on their CPD consist of a work environment which does not promote collaboration and where informal CPD is not acknowledged. Working in this environment is also characterized by the monotony or burn-out resulting from teaching in the foundation programme, standardized CPD (Flores, 2005) that is appraisal oriented, the lack of autonomy in choosing CPD (Burns, 2005), the lack of release time (Arbaugh, 2003) and lack of dissemination of research.

These can be perceived as making up the culture of the institution where teachers are employed.

The second factor that impacting on pursuit of CPD relates to CPD providers. As participants reported this seems to reflect the culture of professional organisations in the UAE that appears to have disillusioned experienced teachers due to lack of consideration of their needs. The third factor impacting on CPD, societal perceptions about teaching, appears to be reflective of the societal culture where teachers, institutions and professional development organizations exist. Within the societal culture, teachers experience perceptions of teaching as a 'non-serious' profession. The fourth factor that impacts on CPD choices reflects expatriate EFL teachers' personal career interests and the individual set of dispositions these teaches bring with them to bear on their teaching context. It also includes the changing CPD needs of teachers over different phases of their careers and with changing contexts that they work in (See chapter three section 3.2.3)

What emerges from the findings in this section is that there appears to be some kind of interaction between the institutional culture (where teachers are employed) and the non-institutional culture (comprising professional development organizations in the UAE). At the centre of this dynamic interaction are the foundation EFL teachers employed in federal universities. In their interaction with and existence as part of the institution and the professional development organizations, foundation EFL teachers also bring their own individual dispositions of their previous work experiences in other contexts and their understanding of professionalism (see chapter three, section 3.5.3). As a result, some of these teachers experience a sort of tension with the institution and professional development organisations that they associate with in the UAE. In certain ways this tension makes teachers question the kind of CPD that is offered or made available to them and as a result leads them to exercise agency over realising their own understanding of professionalism in different ways.

The concept and understanding of 'micro-cultures' as introduced here is developed further in section 6.2 to interpret where the findings from my study are leading to.

6.1.5   Suggestions to enhance CPD

The suggestions made by participants in my study in relation to improvement of CPD within their context broadly focused on institutions of employment and professional development organizations in the UAE (more specifically TESOL Arabia).These are the two communities within which teachers work, learn and grow.

Suggestions pertaining to institutions relate mainly to the need for institutions to create an environment that is supportive to the professional growth of teachers. Firstly, it was suggested that institutions could facilitate collaboration between teachers within the same university, between teachers and departments in different federal universities in the UAE and between teachers in federal universities and teachers in federal schools in the UAE. Various methods such as mentoring, coaching and teacher exchange programmes were suggested as a starting point.

The second suggestion pertaining to institutional support for CPD relates to encouraging teachers by easing their workloads, allowing release time to pursue CPD, provide sufficient funding and autonomy in choosing CPD activities appropriate to their needs. According to participants, they also perceived the need for institutions to ease the bureaucratic procedures governing research within institutions, acknowledge informal CPD and sustain in-house CPD by formalizing it and making it longer term.

Suggestions pertaining to professional development organisations imply that needs of experienced teachers are different from the audience that organisations such as TESOL Arabia cater to. Therefore, as participants suggested, TESOL Arabia should look into organizing newer special interest groups with focus on activities intended for specialised interest of experienced teachers. Additionally, they also suggested that there should be opportunities for experienced teachers to get involved in the activities of professional development organisations as volunteers.

The suggestions made by participants in my study appear to be further indicative of the point highlighted in closing the previous section – that teachers' individual dispositions comprising their past-life histories (Haneda, 2006) of experiences within previous work contexts and the current understanding of professionalism come to bear on present work contexts and understanding of CPD. Not only that, the contributions that were

being made by some participants at the time of my study exemplify how some teachers decide to apply agency to develop different ways of understanding professionalism. Underlying the application of agency is the implication that when teachers' voices about understanding their own professionalism are not heard and when their individual dispositions are not taken into consideration, teachers move to find alternative ways of undertaking professionalism. There is also the implication that when teachers seek out alternative forms of CPD this may be reaffirm existing understandings of professionalism not being met by their institutions – and possibly for some teachers the act of doing this also leads to new understandings of professionalism too. These evolving ideas are explored in the following section.

6.2 Towards a cultural understanding of foundation teachers' experiences of CPD

In the preceding sections I have often used the terms 'community of practice', 'small/micro culture' and 'large culture'. I now revert to these concepts in light of some of the literature reviewed that will help understand CPD in cultural terms and teachers as agents in their own development.

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), communities of practice are professional groups where social learning occurs through extended collaboration among people who have a common interest in some subject or problem (for example, federal universities where UAE national students are educated). The term 'culture' on the other hand, as Holliday (1999) uses it, refers to cohesive behaviours exhibited by a group. Whereas the term 'large cultures' defines ethnic, national and international (geographical) differences between behaviours, the term 'small cultures' refers to small groupings or activities which exhibit cohesive behaviours concerned with social processes as they emerge (for example, foundation English teaching to freshman students in federal universities). Hence, while communities of practice are focused on learning with a group of like-minded people, the term 'small culture' implies the shared common understandings of the communities that emerge through joint engagement with learning.

Scollon's (2001) use of the term 'professional discourse system' refers to behaviours, discourse, actions and meanings that establish professional identity. Similarly, Marsh (2003:9) defines a professional discourse system as 'a pattern of thinking, speaking, behaving, and interacting that is socially, culturally, and historically constructed and

sanctioned by a specific group or groups of people' (cited in Clarke, 2008:16). Clarke (2008) also identifies how the notion of 'cultures' and 'professional discourse systems' tend to be used to refer to similar idea of common shared understandings and cohesive behaviours that members of the group identify with and are identified by.

6.2.1   Foundation EFL teachers as a micro-culture within the institution

From Holliday's (1999) perspective of national 'large cultures', the tertiary educational community that operates on the norms and regulations decreed by the MOHESR can be viewed as a large culture within which several small cultures (federal schools, federal universities, teachers in each of these cultures) exist. Hence, if federal universities in the UAE are viewed as a community where EFL teachers are engaged in the practice of teaching UAE national students, it is also a community which propagates the MOHESR directives in terms of teacher development and retention. As one of its objectives pertains to developing teachers in-house, the kind of activities that federal universities generally provide their teachers with for development are reflective of their 'small culture' of CPD within the institution. Since each institution is likely to have varying trends of engagement with CPD activities (see section 6.1.2), the differences are in a way indicative of the differences in the identity of these individual 'small cultures' and the identity of their members as established by their common shared understandings and the collective behaviours that they engage in in relation to the CPD.

Scollon (2001) identifies all ESL/EFL teachers as part of the same professional discourse system because assumingly they are all expatriates, with travel experience, generally hold membership of a common professional development organisation and engage in the activities of the organisation in some capacity. However, as emerged in the context of my study, EFL teachers belonging to a common professional discourse system are also simultaneously part of several other small cultures, such as expatriate EFL teachers teaching in the foundation programme of federal universities in the UAE or those EFL teachers who teach in other programmes in the same universities (see chapter two, section 2.2). Each of these small cultures that exist within the same occupational discourse system (Scollon, 2001), another term for institutional community, are characterised by their own common shared understandings of the joint enterprise that they engage in within the institutional community of practice.

In figure 6.1 below I have attempted to illustrate where the federal institutional community in UAE and the community of expatriate EFL teachers intersect in terms of teacher development.
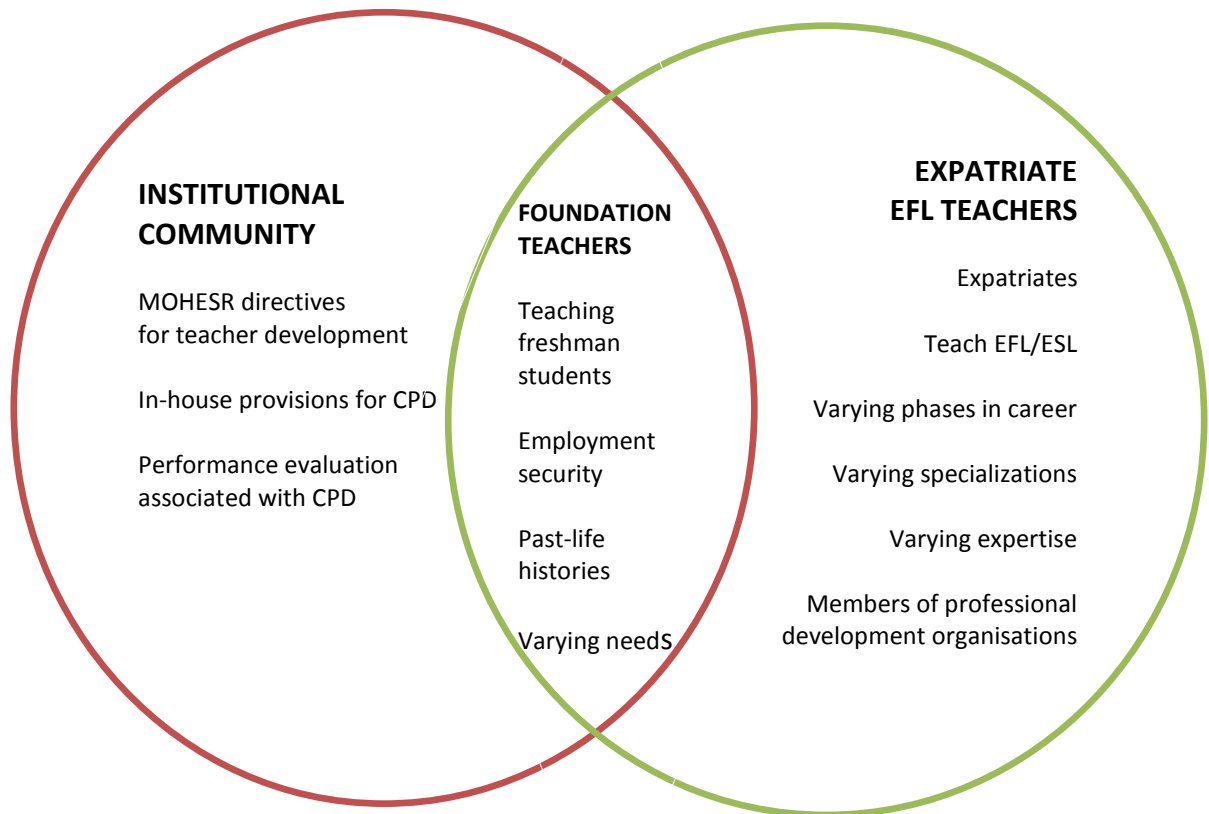

INSTITUTIONAL COMMUNITY

MOHESR directives for teacher development

In-house provisions for CPD

Performance evaluation associated with CPD

FOUNDATION TEACHERS

Teaching freshman students

Employment security

Past-life histories

Varying needs

EXPATRIATE EFL TEACHERS

Expatriates

Teach EFL/ESL

Varying phases in career

Varying specializations

Varying expertise

Members of professional development organisations

Figure 6.1: An illustration of the intersection between the institutional community and community of EFL teachers and its impact on foundation EFL teachers.

The illustration presents a rather complex picture of foundation teachers simultaneously identifying with and working in several micro-cultures. As already discussed in the findings (sections 6.1), institutions driven by MOHESR requirements make certain provisions for teachers' development for which they also make teachers accountable. On the other hand, EFL teachers as Scollon (2001) identifies belong to a group with common characteristics which identifies shared common professional behaviours and characteristics. Where the two groups intersect are the foundation teachers who are expatriate EFL teachers employed within the federal institutions. Within this complex system of connections, foundation teachers also bring their individual set of dispositions from previous work contexts and experiences (see section 6.1.3 and 6.1.4) or what Holliday (1999) refers to as cultural residues of the other cultures that they have

previously belonged to. As a result of bringing their past life histories (Haneda, 2006) to bear on the present small cultures that teachers find themselves in (such as those formed with the foundation EFL teachers that they work with), these teachers develop new shared common understandings that are informed by but also go beyond their cultural residues or their individual dispositions from past life histories.

6.2.2 Existing tension between the institutions and teachers

Earlier in the chapter I have identified three categories of experienced teachers employed in federal universities – those who are fairly new to the institution, those who have been there for a few years and those teachers who have been employed in the institution for several years. Depending on which phase of career they are in, and how long teachers have been at the particular university, their CPD needs and decisions will vary. On the other hand, federal universities, in principle, offer numerous opportunities for in-house teacher development (see chapter two, section 2.4). The reality of the situation is however quite complicated as institutional provisions or expectations relating to CPD involve a formal discourse that is tied to application of the MOHESR directives, quality workforce development, staff promotion, salary increments and formal recorded evidence that will gain (or maintain) eventual accreditation of the institution itself.

Hence, while apparently institutions are seen as paying significant attention to the development of their EFL teachers, the reality is that the way they construe CPD does not quite match the needs of experienced teachers. Institutional initiatives are perceived as top-down, imposed, arbitrarily decided upon, and based on seemingly generic institutional goals which teachers associate with authoritative procedures of the institution. Teachers perceive themselves as peripheral participants in their own CPD as their learning goals /activities are continually determined and decided by others resulting in lack of autonomy in deciding on learning that teachers perceive as appropriate to their needs (see chapter five, section 5.1.4.1)

Thus, what also emerges is the two distinctive ways in which teachers develop a sense of community with different values and norms. In their own way both the institution and foundation teachers are engaged in what Wenger (1998) refers to as a joint enterprise in their own individual practice. However, within the joint enterprise teachers may feel they have a different sense of agency and power to influence the outcomes of their CPD.

So whereas all communities of practice may be referred to as 'joint enterprise', they are likely to vary in the forms they take.

The model illustrated in figure 6.1 depicts foundation EFL teachers with a distinctive culture of their own as they exist in federal universities As a result of their various relationships and memberships within the multiple cultures that they belong to, a complex picture emerges of the identity of EFL teachers. Additionally, identifying with one system or culture will often call into question the identification with membership of and commitment to the other systems or cultures. Teachers who are members of each system will often experience periods of greater or lesser identification with either of the cultural systems or communities that they belong to (Scollon, 2001).

6.2.3   The effect of alienation from institutional culture of CPD

Within their institutions, the type of teachers that I have just described (experienced and specialists) feel constrained by what the institutional community offers in terms of CPD. They also feel constrained by the institutional conceptions of how one can be a foundation English teacher within the realm of the federal institution. Most teachers feel that these views are unreflective of their knowledge and expertise, and because the institutional expectations are imposed they do not find space for their own individual development needs within the institutional community's agenda for CPD.

However, as employees of the institution teachers have to go through the motions of CPD at the institution. In being peripheral participants in their own CPD, teachers do not see institutional CPD as the emergent property of the social interactions within the community (Wenger, 1998). Instead, such learning is perceived as situated within the institutional culture and decontextualized from the culture of being an EFL teacher. What teachers would like instead is to actively participate in the community of practice that they belong to by physically interacting, doing the shared work and most importantly by having a 'voice' in the negotiation of shared meaning (Backhouse, 2006). An example of lack of voice experienced by tertiary EFL teachers in my study is evident in the anecdote below that was communicated by a participant in my study;

> "There wasn't much in those days. But I do remember sessions were organized on how to work with Arab learners which we had to go to. I'd worked all over the Middle Easy so I knew quite a lot about Arab learners. I didn't think that was an issue for me. I didn't feel like I was going to get anything out of these

sessions, but I had to go to them. And you know, nobody was saying, 'well, here's this big bunch of professionals with all this knowledge. How can we see what they can contribute to the UAE? How can we build a community of such professionals?'" (T20).

As a result of feeling alienated from their institutional culture, teachers are beginning to reject the CPD in which they have no say. They tend to either become complacent or engage in the 'bare minimum' (Aubrey, 2008), or they are increasingly engaging in finding alternative ways to develop and realize their professionalism through alternative communities of practice. This is another genre of the complicated network of micro-cultures that exist in the larger culture of EFL teachers worldwide.

6.2.4   Non institutional communities of practice

What teachers can do within the institutional community of practice in terms of CPD is a manifestation of what is possible to do within the community of being a teacher in that institution. Teachers in my study feel constrained and without a voice in what they conceive of as CPD, because the institutional culture of CPD is characterized by policing, monitoring and managing their CPD. There are likely to be a variety of reasons for this that can be linked back to the notions of teaching as a profession as illustrated in the findings in chapter five.

Since experienced teachers consider the kind of CPD constituted within the existing parameters of the institutional community as unsatisfactory to their needs, teachers are finding an outlet for evolving in alternative communities. It can be said that teachers with shared understandings of mutual interests in EFL exercise their agency in setting up non-institutional communities of practice. This appears to be their way of compensating for the inadequacies of the system of institutional CPD as it is. Within these non-institutional communities, teachers find themselves able to do certain things that they would be unable to do in the situated community of the institution.

One example of a non-institutional community in the UAE is that of TESOL Arabia, which has over the past two decades become the major professional development organisation for TEFL/TESOL teachers and which forms part of their professional discourse system. In co-existing within the same society or 'large culture', there is inevitable interaction between the institutional culture of CPD, the non-institutional culture of CPD (represented in TESOL Arabia for example) and the culture of

experienced expatriate EFL teachers (who are employed as foundation EFL teachers in federal universities).

The interaction between the three micro-cultures is illustrated below in figure 6.2.
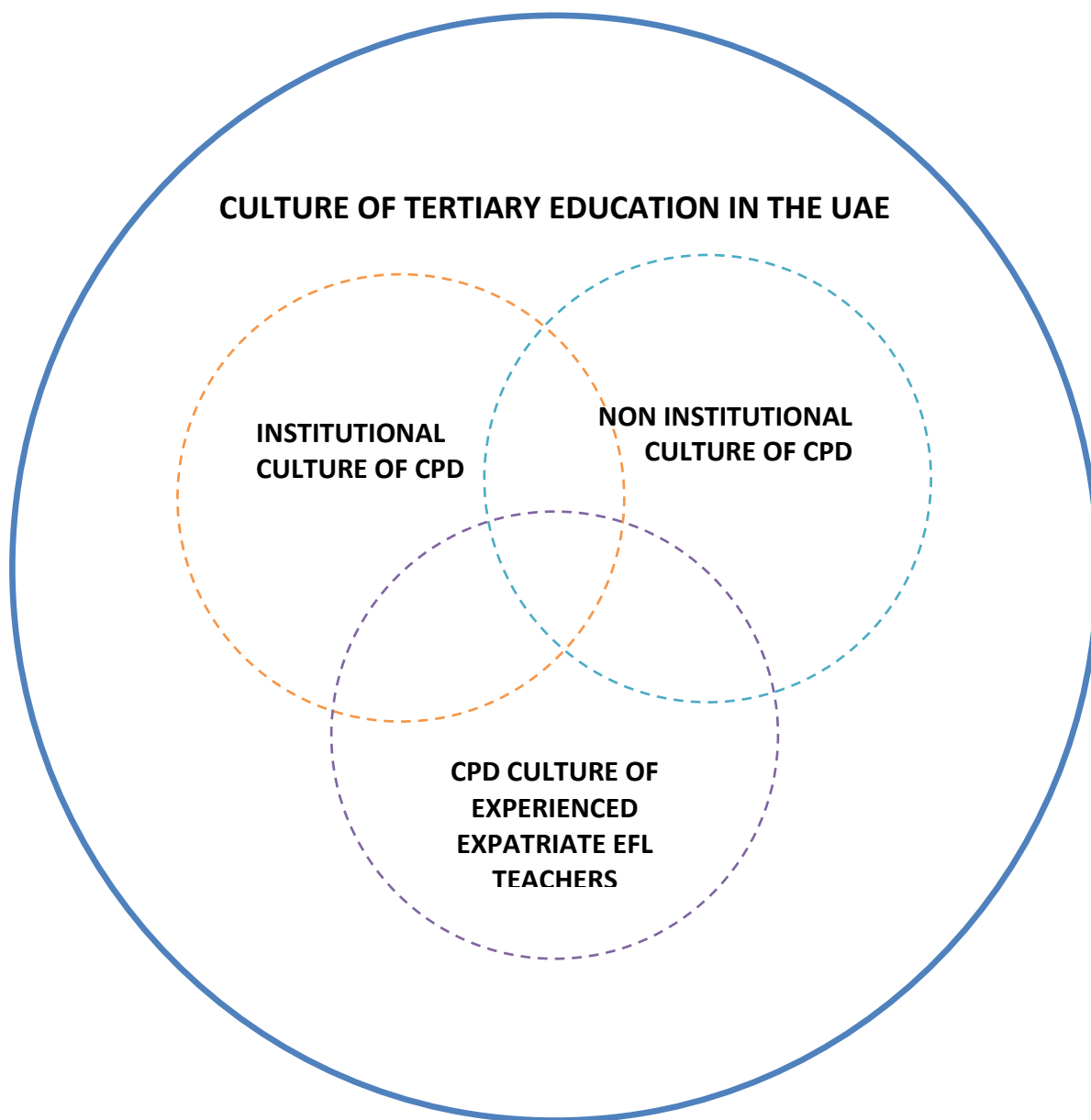
CULTURE OF TERTIARY EDUCATION IN THE UAE

INSTITUTIONAL
CULTURE OF CPD

NON INSTITUTIONAL
CULTURE OF CPD

CPD CULTURE OF
EXPERIENCED
EXPATRIATE EFL
TEACHERS

Figure 6.2: The interactions between institutional, non-institutional and experienced expatriate teacher cultures of CPD.

There is an interesting and complicated interplay between the shared understandings about CPD of each of the small cultures illustrated in figure 6.2. Institutional culture of CPD refers to the teacher development culture in federal universities in UAE. Experienced expatriate EFL teachers are members of both the institutional and non-institutional cultures of CPD. Whereas EFL teachers who are members of the federal

institutional culture are necessarily experienced, those who are members of the non-institutional culture are a mix of experienced and non-experienced teachers and include expatriates as well as non-expatriate teachers of EFL. In figure 6.3 as follows, I have attempted to illustrate my understanding of elements comprising the small cultures.

INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE OF CPD	NON INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE OF CPD	CULTURE OF EXPERIENCED EXPATRIATE EFL TEACHERS
MOHESR directives	Supporting members in career development	Networking is key
Performance evaluation of teachers	Variety in CPD	Individuals with a variety of professional experiences
Accreditation requirements	Provide a non-institutional forum for teachers	Focus on specializations
		Potential to contribute to existing cultures of CPD
		Learning can extend beyond geographical boundaries

Figure 6.3: Features of institutional, non-institutional and experienced expatriate teachers' cultures in the UAE.

Whereas the institutional CPD culture is MOHESR directed and focused on performance evaluation for accreditation of the institution, the non-institutional culture of CPD is intended to support members in career development and provide them with a forum for specific interests. In a way it is also indicative of informal CPD that institutional cultures rarely acknowledge. It is the last column referring to the culture of experienced expatriate EFL teachers in the UAE that is of particular interest to my study. Scollon (2001) refers to this group of teachers as the nomadic tribe of ESL teachers generally traveling and teaching and in the later stages of their careers. In my

diagram (figure 6.2) the foundation English teachers who are the participants of my study can be seen to occupy the space where the three small cultures intersect.

As part of the institutional discourse system, they go through the motions of CPD that are part of the institutional culture. When the provisions cease to match their CPD needs, teachers move towards non-institutional communities such as TESOL Arabia that originate as a result of individual teachers with mutual interests and share common understandings enacting their sense of CPD. Having originated as a very small professional group by a small group of EFL teachers within the UAE University almost two decades ago, TESOL Arabia has grown to a dimensional professional organization with thousands of members worldwide, seven local chapters, eight special interest groups, multiple monthly professional development events taking place all year round and a sizeable annual conference (more details appear in chapter two).Hence, over a period of time the CPD activities of TESOL Arabia have come to be recognized as formal off-site provision which forms part of institutional CPD requirements and is accounted for during the performance appraisals of their teachers.

Reification of non-institutional communities

A problem with professional development organisations that grow to the dimensions of TESOL Arabia is that over time they inevitably evolve with a unique culture of their own. In the case of TESOL Arabia what originated as an informal teacher initiated forum has gradually come to be characterised with internal power struggles, politics, and individual agendas overriding each other's' agendas. As a result of these features, the culture of the forum has not remained democratic anymore and teachers who are members do not feel a sense of ownership of the community with which they expect to identify.

Wenger (1998) uses the term 'reified' to describe how communities get formalised and stabilized. An immediate consequence of the transition to such non-democratic forums is likely to be that members become alienated from the professional organization just as they do from the institutional culture that does not provide them with a voice. In the case of teachers in my study, their professional development needs as experienced teachers are not catered to anymore because the base of CPD provision is becoming standardized to cater to less experienced teachers. As a result experienced teachers do not want to be part of the organization any longer. Some of these experienced teachers

start to negotiate their way through the various cultures that they belong to in order to find alternative ways to develop.

6.2.5   Virtual communities of practice

Experiencing the constraints to their development from both institutional communities of practice and from professional organisations had led EFL professionals in the UAE to find innovative approaches for CPD in the form of alternative virtual communities of practice. At the time of this study (2007-08), teachers in the UAE had access to two local online discussion communities (see chapter two, section 2.4.2) that are also part of TESOL Arabia. However, over the course of completion of my thesis (2009-10), I observed the emergence of several such online communities. Some of these are mentioned below;

a) Second Life, which is in use by the HCT as a TEFL tool allowing students to create avatars for virtual classrooms and allowing teachers to create avatars for virtual conferences

b) Twitter and Facebook for teaching English and for sharing professional information

c) Various personal blogs by individual teachers

d) 'Ning' groups set up by IATEFL Business English SIG and individual teachers in UAE

More recently, TESOL Arabia has also set up an online conference forum similar to IATEFL online where teachers can interact before the conference and presenters can upload presentation slides and materials following the conference.

The unique and differentiating aspect of spontaneously set up communities is that they are neither institutional provisions nor that of CPD providers (except the conference or SIG groups mentioned). Instead, such communities of practice are set up by individual teachers or groups of teachers who simultaneously belong to the other two communities of practice as well (institutional and professional organisations). The prime intention that drives the teachers involved is the need to set up a democratic forum that allows teachers to share their voice, experiences and expertise from a common platform and with a global community of teachers facing the same situation.

6.3   Emerging culture of CPD

In the discussion of communities in this chapter, it has become evident that teacher development is not static and cannot be contained or even constrained as long as teachers are in the profession. Evolution emerges as key in the profession and constraining EFL teachers in one area results in teachers inevitably finding another alternative approach for continual professional development. This also explains the massive proliferation of spontaneously set up communities of practice that are characteristic of EFL teachers in the UAE.

Within and as part of these communities of practice there is a growing culture of EFL teachers identifying more with other EFL teachers in other countries across the globe rather than with other teachers in the same institution, or in other federal institutions or in the UAE. As Scollon (2001) argues, EFL teachers around the world perceive themselves as members of the same professional discourse system based on the characteristics they share, such as their expatriate status, membership of professional organisations, and engagement in activities of that professional organization.

However, the degree to which teachers identify with the professional discourse system varies which explains why some teachers are prominent in a variety of CPD communities and others are not. As part of their self-initiated development, this community of EFL teachers is therefore looking for opportunities to form alternative communities with others in their primary reference group of EFL teachers who they identify with. It provides them with freer unrestrained access to a broader base of members in their professional discourse system.

The awareness of such alternatives as Scollon (2001) perceives is likely to make these teachers, who are also foundation EFL teachers, more resistant to internal pressures to conform to the corporate culture within their institution of employment. Interestingly though, in federal universities in the UAE, the community of such EFL teachers tends to constructively utilize their dislike of conformity to their advantage. It is precisely this group of teachers who have ventured into setting up alternative communities of practice by making effective use of the technological advantages that their institutional communities provide them with. This in turn also provides democratic forums of informal CPD for other teachers in their community.

169

The emerging culture of CPD that appears to be independent of the institutional culture within which teachers work has so far been relatively little explored. There is potential for further research into the identity of the teachers involved, what differentiates them from other EFL teachers who are part of the same institutional culture and the implications of membership of alternative communities of practice for the teacher, the institution to which these teachers belong and for the non-institutional CPD organisations that currently exist.

6.4   Summary

In this chapter I have discussed the findings from my study in detail followed by developing a cultural understanding of foundation EFL teachers' experiences of CPD. I have discussed in detail the existence of foundation teachers as a 'micro-culture' within the institutional culture and the tensions and resulting alienation they experience as members of the institutional culture of CPD. Following this I have also discussed the non-institutional culture of CPD in the UAE and the development of alternative communities of practice as a result of reification of non-institutional professional development organisations. Finally, I have highlighted the currently popular virtual communities of practice in the UAE which form part of an emergent culture of CPD in the UAE and the potential for further research into involvement with these communities. In the final chapter I will discuss the implications of my study for future research into the CPD of experienced teachers and close the thesis with some personal reflections on my experiences through the thesis.

CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSION

7   Introduction

In this final chapter, I will first summarise the critical points emerging from my thesis and then discuss how the knowledge of these critical points can help improve CPD of mid to later career tertiary teachers in the UAE. Following this I will explore how the findings from my thesis contribute to a deeper understanding of the notion of CPD for teachers further on in their careers, and how the notion of communities of practice which is key in their CPD, resonates with and contributes to existing literature on communities of practice. Towards the end of the chapter I will include some ideas for future research that emerge from my thesis and finally, I will conclude the chapter with personal reflections on my journey through my research for the EdD thesis.

7.1   Key ideas emerging from my thesis

Findings from my study can be broadly categorised into five key ideas; that of CPD being socially situated in the practice context, the impact of institutional discourse systems on teacher development, the nature of professional development communities in the UAE, the emergence of alternative communities of practice and the emergent culture of CPD in the UAE.

CPD is socially situated

Primarily, findings from my thesis illuminate that teacher development is situated socially so that the manner in which teachers professionally develop in the UAE is quite distinct and different from the manner in which teachers elsewhere develop in their profession. In addition to being situated in specific contexts CPD is also non-static and rather complicated as a process. It depends on the views of teacher education that teachers, professional development organisations and institutions bring or have. It also depends on who the teachers are, where they currently are (geographically) and where they are coming from as well as what is available in terms of CPD in their current context.

Institutional discourse systems inhibit independent CPD

Secondly, the thesis also highlights the restrictive nature of institutions as occupational discourse systems when it comes to the CPD. The human resource development approach of institutions impacts greatly on mid to later career teachers who have also spent several years at the institution. Experienced teachers have very individual professional development and career development views and interests which tend to be left out of focus within the institutional context.

As a result of imposed institutional development agendas, teachers' voices tend to be neglected and they end up being peripheral participants in their own CPD. In this situation, knowledge tends to be transmitted rather than collectively explored and disseminated. As a reaction to the institutions' standardized approaches to CPD, experienced teachers are beginning to reject the system and venturing in search of alternative venues to develop.

The formal nature of professional communities of practice

In the midst of the formal CPD scenario in UAE there also exist professional development organisations that apparently are committed to the development of TESOL/EFL teachers in the region. An exploration of the history of one such organization in the UAE (TESOL Arabia) reveals that while it may have originated as a spontaneous and informal initiative, as Grossman et al (2001) argue about such communities, over time it has grown tremendously.

In its expansion and growth as the sole CPD organization of its stature, TESOL Arabia has come to be acknowledged by federal universities and its activities are regarded as formal CPD provision. In a way institutionalization of TESOL Arabia has enabled majority of the teachers to fulfill their performance appraisal requirements through participation in its once a year conference. However, in terms of involvement of experienced teachers, it seems to have given rise to similar issues as teachers have with their institutional discourse systems. In its recognition as a formal system, TESOL Arabia seems to no longer be the democratic forum where 'voice' was key for the cohorts of experienced teachers. As a result, teachers are becoming alienated from the CPD organization that is now a professional body with its own rules and regulations for CPD. Additionally, in order to cater to the masses of EFL teachers, the agenda of

TESOL Arabia appears to remain standard and too basic for most of the experienced teachers who have been associated with the organization since its conception.

While there have been other efforts over time to set up other physical communities of practice in the UAE, they have been short-lived and the communities in question never garnered much participation. It is likely that institutional support may have been one factor that is likely to have aided the growth of TESOL Arabia and diminished the growth of others. However, this is open to research.

Emergence of alternative communities of practice

Disappointment with both institutional and professional discourse systems has led experienced teachers to move into an altogether different sphere of CPD. In order to cater to their specific and specialized interests in aspects of TESOL/TEFL, several teachers are either unanimously or collaboratively beginning to form alternative virtual communities of practice.

What distinguishes these alternative venues from institutional discourse systems is that they are being set up spontaneously and informally between groups of colleagues with similar interest. Alternative communities are increasingly providing teachers with a platform where they can collaborate in an informal environment, retain democracy among members of the community, engage in shared discussions and decision making and yet remain focused on the specific subject of mutual interest. Participation in these communities is not linked to formal performance appraisals and they enable teachers in one geographical context to reach out to and engage in shared discussions with teachers in another part of the world minus the boundaries of time.

While virtual communities of practice may currently be the most appealing alternative for CPD, there is not much known as of yet about the sustainability of such initiatives as members can join and leave the 'discourse' at will and as Grossman et al. (2001) point out, at 'whim'.

The emergent culture of CPD in the UAE

The CPD environment in the UAE is made up of three communities or discourse systems as Scollon (2001) refers to them. These are institutional communities of practice, professional development organisations and the community of EFL teachers –

in this case experienced EFL teachers as they are the focus of my thesis. What emerges as common between the three communities is they are all professional entities, and have their own professional development agendas and discourse systems.

However, what is also common is that each of three communities are in collision with the other two based on their personal professional agendas as a result of which the benefits are withering away. Whereas in principle they share a common vision, that of CPD of the members of that community, in practice they do not actually have a shared vision. In practice institutions are committed to standardized development of their human resource potential to operate effectively within their technical environment. On the other hand, professional development organisations are committed to mass appeal by offering standard basic CPD opportunities to teachers in the region, and EFL teachers who are part of each of the other two discourse systems are alienated and disinterested in what is available in their situated context. Instead, they are turning to other alternatives that they can find and sharing their knowledge and expertise in these other alternative systems.

To summarise then, it emerges from my study that CPD is socially situated in the culture of practice where teachers exist. Within the sphere of the professional context, teachers operate in multiple communities, i.e., institutions, professional development organisations and their own communities of EFL teachers. The more experienced teachers are the more they feel restricted by institutional discourse systems and the standard professional development organizational offerings. The lack of voice and their own CPD has led teachers to develop alternative communities and along with it a new culture of CPD in the UAE that is focused more on experienced teachers' interests.

7.2   Recommendations for improving the CPD of experienced teachers in the UAE

Improving the CPD of experienced teachers in the UAE is dependent on how the communities to which they belong work in tandem to alleviate the existing tensions between the communities. Considering that teachers simultaneously belong to the federal universities' community of experienced teachers, professional development organizations such as TESOL Arabia and the community of expatriate EFL teachers in UAE, a hand in hand approach between the three groups is recommended to gain a win-win solution for all.

174

Institutional contexts

The institutional context is where teachers spend most of their professional time and lives; hence, it becomes incumbent upon institutions to make the workplace environment conducive to meaningful learning and development of the teachers they employ. Based on the findings from my study, it is recommended that federal universities reconsider their 'man-power' development policies in order to support teachers and sustain their CPD through retention of expertise.

While it may not be practically possible for institutions to attend to individual needs, they can provide space and time within the institution for teachers to voluntarily set up autonomous professional sub-communities based on mutual work interests. A community of practitioners is best placed within their community of practice so that learning can possibly occur within the context where it will be practiced and with focus on the improvement of the immediate context. It will not result in what Sarason (1990) (in Grossman et al., 2001) perceives as changing the individual without changing the workplace.

In acknowledging the less formal means of development and re-evaluating their policies pertaining to CPD tied with performance evaluation, institutions will also open doors for uninhibited creation of self-initiated interpersonal networks between other institutional communities of practice in other federal universities in the UAE. Additionally, and most importantly as well, federal institutions would greatly benefit if the invaluable in-house research that is being carried out is archived within the individual institution's repositories and also disseminated between institutions through their recently set up shared network of libraries. Shared dissemination of knowledge between the federal universities can only enrich the context that experienced teachers are in and to some extent divert their expertise where it is needed most. This is not to say that their participation in alternative communities of practice is valued any less; knowing the underlying reasons for teachers to engage in alternative outlets implies reform is needed in the institution's policies pertaining to employing the experience and knowledge of the teaching workforce that they are so keen to develop and retain.

EFL teachers

A significant aspect of my study involved exploring the reasons that teachers accepted or rejected certain forms of development and a discussion of the factors that impacted on their growth in the context. Hence, an awareness of the tensions and collisions between the micro and macro cultures that teachers belong to enables me to deduce that some amount of initiative has to come from teachers themselves who are members of institutions, professional development organizations and the community of expatriate EFL teachers.

As members of the TEFL community, teachers can take the initiative to make their voices heard constructively. An example is that of the focus group discussions that were conducted for this study and that were self-reported by participants as more valuable than going to attend sessions organized by TESOL Arabia for instance. Groups of teachers belonging to the same community (such as foundation English teachers) could possibly get together to meet in something like a focused panel discussion or group discussion on teaching, learning and/or development. It could be something like what Crane (1994:11, cited in Holliday, 1999) describes as a social 'tool-kit' to 'solve problems' when required.

Interestingly, as my study reveals, there are a handful of expatriate EFL teachers who have self-initiated such efforts to benefit their community of practitioners. Two such examples are of a teacher who reveals that he has set up a website for discussion among teachers using exploratory practice and another teacher who revealed she was trying (at the time of the study) to set up a local chapter of an international organisation as a forum for non-formal discussions among educators.

CPD organizations

Finally, CPD organizations in the UAE have a role to play too. As TESOL Arabia is by far the oldest and largest professional development organisation in the UAE, it also bears a certain amount of professional credibility with institutional authorities especially because members of TESOL Arabia management are also TEFL professionals in federal universities.

The organisation can bank on its professional status within universities by working in collaboration with them to establish localized communities of practice that are situated within the federal universities and that are based on specific EFL interests. By utilizing the expertise of teachers within the institution itself TESOL Arabia can play a major role in bridging the tension between teachers and their institutional communities.

Hence, what comes through these suggestions is that it is possible to set up and develop alternative communities of practice that are closer to the context of practice. While virtual communities of practice have their own use in breaking out of the monotony of regular teaching dilemmas, physical communities of practice that are part of the daily work environment are more practical in dealing with day to day concerns of the teaching context. It is possible for the three communities (institutions, professional organizations and teachers) to work together to enhance teacher development and eventually the context in which they work. The initiative of enabling access to institutional premises for establishing in-house communities of practice however has to come from federal universities.

7.3 Contribution to the CPD of experienced teachers in general

The professional identities of teachers who are in the later stages of their careers appear to be in conflict with their social contextual identities. The tension becomes more apparent when the CPD offered or advocated by their occupational discourse context is imposed and contrary to the professional needs of experienced teachers.

The top-down CPD culture that exists within the occupational contexts is in direct collision with the professional culture of EFL teachers who believe in the social construction of learning and development within communities of practice. In becoming alienated from existing communities of practice, the change driven community of teachers will inevitably continue to find other ways to develop as long as they are in the profession. As well as that experienced teachers tend to thrive in communities of practice which afford them the possibility of dialogue and exploration and communication of issues in TEFL/TESOL.

Another reality of the professional lives of teachers is that their professional practice and development is ever constrained by the institutional/occupational discourse system.

Hence, an appropriate recommendation for existing within their situated context would be to find opportunities to develop in professional learning communities within the context. However, it is not possible to manufacture learning communities of practice with teachers at the level of experience that is considered in this study. Instead, what has emerged as phenomenal through this study is the building of spontaneous communities of practice by experienced teachers in order to fill the gaps that they see in their own CPD.

Through this study the realization has emerged that experienced teachers will continually look for ways to develop themselves and if their needs do not comply with the institutions they work for, they will look for external ways of developing. Since, dialogue and social engagement feature high in CPD, it appears imperative to argue that (as suggested for teachers in the UAE) experienced teachers can tap into their expertise and utilize to their advantage the experience of being within the institutional discourse for a prolonged period.

While external alternatives are an attractive proposition for CPD, it is worthwhile to explore internal avenues by establishing communities of practice within the institutional discourse system. Likewise, institutions can mutually and probably greatly benefit by relaxing their formal CPD policies to encourage the growth of autonomous communities of practice within the institutional environment as these will be specifically focused on exploring and improving the occupational context itself.

7.4   Contribution to/Resonance with existing literature on communities of practice

Communities of practice are complex and their formation is as yet relatively unexplored. On the other hand, as Grossman et al. (2010) illuminate relatively more research has been carried out on already existing communities. In this section I will illuminate and discuss the ways in which my study contributes to and/or resonates with some of the existing literature on communities of practice. As the key findings emerging from my thesis are about spontaneous communities of practice, I intend to look at the contributions from study in terms of these.

Westheimer (1998) identifies five common themes that comprise communities of practice; interdependence, interaction, shared interests, concern for the individual and

meaningful relationships. While that holds along with the view that communities of practice provide an ongoing venue for teacher learning (in Grossman et al., 2001), it also becomes evident that when spontaneous communities of practice grow to the dimensions of TESOL Arabia and become formal professional development organizations, there is a tendency of 'waning' concern for the individual teacher. It would do justice to further explore this with respect to organizations of the nature of TESOL Arabia.

Additionally, my research reveals that spontaneous communities of practice are formed as a result of teachers with mutual interests identifying a gap in their CPD needs' fulfilment. However, what remains to be explored is the process by which such communities are formed and the factors that sustain some communities of practice and do not sustain others (also Westheimer, 1998) (in Grossman et al., 2001). In this respect, 'institutional support' emerges from my thesis as at least one prime factor that plays a role in sustenance of spontaneous communities of practice as well as the fact that spontaneous virtual communities of practice as fast becoming a trend in regions such as the UAE . It can be argued that there is tremendous potential for further research into the role of virtual communities as a platform for CPD in areas where expatriate teachers form the major TEFL/TESOL population.

Another aspect in the literature that is confirmed in my research is the existing model of teachers being taken out of their workplace context, transformed through external CPD and then returned to an unchanged context in the workplace to battle status quo (Sarason, 1990) (in Grossman et al., 2001). There are implications of learning being a 'free-time' activity (ibid.) with the result that CPD may change the individual and not the workplace. This consequently makes stronger the argument for professional communities of practice being located within the workplace thus allowing the possibility of transforming the individual in collaboration with the social setting in which the teacher works (ibid.)

7.5   Ideas for future research emerging from my thesis
Through the process of my research, literature review, data collection and analysis several other areas of potential research were generated that are mentioned in this section. Considering the nature of my study to explore teachers' understanding and experiences of CPD and the cope of this thesis, these are areas that could not be

explored in the current study. However, based on the emergent findings that place communities of practice as a strategic phenomenon in teacher development, I have summarized in this section some potential areas for further research that would be invaluable in understanding the role of communities of practice in the CPD of experienced teachers.

While a lot of research has been carried on existing communities, very little is known about how communities develop (Grossman et al., 2001). Hence, on of the areas that requires to be further explored is about how communities of practice are built, developed and sustained. It might be worth looking at long existing communities that have developed into larger bodies of professional development (such as TESOL Arabia, IATEFL or TESOL International) as well as those which are probably locally set up and may or may not last very long. This also raises another potential area for exploring the reasons behind why some communities of practice outlast others as well as why some communities tend to get fossilized.

Another major thought provoking area that is under researched and could provide invaluable insights is investigation into how communities of practice contribute to teacher development in general. Within these I have identifies four areas that could be explored in terms of how teachers develop as members of these communities;

a) Institutional communities of practice

b) Professional development organizations

c) Spontaneously set up alternative communities of practice

d) Virtual communities of practice

Additionally, I also think it would be interesting to investigate the role of these communities of practice in the development of expatriate teachers of EFL. It has become apparent through my thesis that development in communities of shared practices is greatly valued among expatriate teachers. Nevertheless, with so many genres of communities emerging, each with its won distinctive culture, it seems necessary to understand the role that each type of community plays in the development of teachers who are contributing members of the unit.

Finally, because informal CPD is deemed as considerably significant in shaping teacher development and informal communities are perceived as a need, it would be worth exploring the role of informal communities of practice in teacher development as well as the interplay between formal and informal communities of practice. While the questions that I have put forward may be the starting point in exploring some aspects of teacher development in communities of practice, there are likely to be numerous aspects associated with community practices that may emerge from future research in the area of CPD in communities of practice.

7.6   Personal reflections

I started my research with the intent to explore and understand CPD from the perspectives of foundation EFL teachers in federal universities. Over the period that I gathered data for the study and analysed it, I was faced with an overwhelming amount of information that took me more than a year to analyse, interpret and re-interpret. What amazes me is that the more I engaged with my data the newer sense it continued to make and the more literature I exposed myself to the deeper my understanding about teacher development became.

As I conclude the thesis, I definitely feel more informed about teacher development among expatriate teachers than I was at the beginning of my study. I would like to revisit the aims of my study in this section to illuminate my sense of CPD as informed by the process of my research.

7.4.1   What does this mean to me?

In understanding the CPD experiences of expatriate EFL teachers in federal universities I became aware of their conception of CPD as lifelong professional evolution that is not only shaped by the culture of the context that they are in but also by their individual dispositions of past-life histories and depending on how further on in their career these teachers are.

As these teachers as aware of other teachers in their professional discourse who have similarly travelled and taught , the form of CPD that most appeals to them is where teachers can meet and share collective understandings of their professional discourse systems. However, in their current situations as simultaneous members of their

institutional discourse system and their professional discourse systems, these teachers experience a sort of tension between their roles, needs and understandings in the two systems. Within this scenario it is the teachers themselves who are most affected as their voices remain unheard.

However, as teachers are non-static in their evolution, they tend to find other means to meet their needs. The suggestions made by teachers in my study and the initiatives that some of them undertook are suggestive of the ways in which growth is a phenomenon that teachers easily associate with and when done collaboratively with people who share mutual understandings and interests, it is even more dynamic and valuable. In fact, over the course of my study as I engaged with my own professional discourse system as an EFL teacher, I experienced the growth of my own professional network. It has been my intention through this research to be able to create newer understandings not only for myself but also with the individuals that I engaged with (irrespective of whether they were informants in my study or colleagues who I discussed my work with or even my supervisors who so patiently accompanied me to the end of my thesis providing valuable insights)

7.4.2   Where is this research and understanding going to take me?
At the outset of this study I was in some vague way interested in the overall development of experienced expatriate EFL teachers in the UAE. My interest has furthered into understanding the development of teacher initiated teacher communities. In the future I would like to gain a deeper understanding of how these spontaneous communities develop, why is it that they are generally 'virtual', and what may be the reasons that the newer communities very often traverse geographical boundaries. Additionally, the research has led me to want to understand the kind of 'identities' expatriate teachers bring to their communities that they develop, and whether these communities are designed to outlast the presence of their initiators.

As I continue to reflect, there are several questions pertaining to the development of teachers' communities that this study has left me with and that I intend to explore in the future possibly with other teachers who share mutual understandings.

7.7 Summary

In this final chapter, I have presented a summary of the critical findings that emerge from my thesis followed by a discussion of how these critical points can help improve CPD of mid to later career tertiary teachers in the UAE. I have also explored how the findings from my thesis contribute to a deeper understanding of the notion of CPD for teachers further on in their careers, and explored how the notion of communities of practice which is key in CPD, resonates with and contributes to existing literature on communities of practice. Towards the end of the chapter I have discussed some areas for future research that emerge from my thesis and finally, I have concluded the chapter with personal reflections on my journey through my research for the EdD thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

Institution	Emirate	Campuses (men & women)	Undergraduate/graduate programmes
Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT)	Abu Dhabi (including Al Ain & Madinat Zayed)	6	Business Applied Communications Education Engineering Technology General Education Health Sciences Information Technology
	Dubai	2	
	Sharjah (including Ajman & Um Al Quwain)	2	
	Ras Al Khaimah	2	
	Fujairah	2	
United Arab Emirates University (UAEU)	Abu Dhabi	2	Humanities & Social Sciences Education Business & Economics Law Food & Agriculture Engineering Medicine & Health Sciences Information Technology
Zayed University (ZU)	Abu Dhabi	1*	Fine Arts & Sciences Business Studies Communication Media Sciences Education Information Technology
	Dubai	1*	

Fig 2.1   Details of federal universities in the UAE

At the time of this study ZU had one campus each in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, both catering to female students only.

Institution	Foundation programme	English Language courses	Other courses
Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT)	General Education Division (GED)	Diploma Four courses of intensive English	Four courses of personal & professional development Numeracy Computer literacy
		Higher Diploma Intensive English Language (Academic, General & Vocational)	Mathematics Computing Arabic language Health Science
		Work Readiness English Communication Skills	Mathematics Computer Skills Arabic Communication Skills Work Skills
United Arab Emirates University (UAEU)	University General Requirements Unit (UGRU)	Four levels of communication skills in English ESP	Math Information Technology Islamic Thought UAE Society Courses Arabic Communication Skills
Zayed University (ZU)	Academic Bridge Programme (ABP)	Eight levels of intensive English courses	

Fig 2.2   Foundation programmes offered by federal universities in the UAE

APPENDIX 2

CHAPTER FOUR

UNIVERSITY OF
E**X**ETER

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of this project that intends to explore the motivations and concerns about continuing professional development of English Language Teachers employed in the federal higher educational context in UAE.

I understand that there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

If applicable, the information which I give may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

All information I give will be treated as confidential

The researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

Participant ....………………..   Researcher

Date: 17th March 2008

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

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Dear Colleague,

I am a doctoral candidate working on a thesis that explores the Professional Development of ELT professionals in the UAE.

I would appreciate if you could kindly take the time to fill out this short questionnaire. It should really take you only 12 minutes maximum. Your contributions will be collected and utilized as anonymously submitted data. Your participation in this little task will be a small but significant addition to the data being collected from all over the UAE in order to explore the choices that we make for our own professional development as English Language Teachers employed in the federal context.

Here is a link to the survey:
http://www.surveyshare.com/survey/take/?sid=66895

Should you have any concerns/queries, please feel free to contact me via phone or e-mail.

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation,

Regards

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E-MAIL TO SUPERVISORS

Dear Peter,

Thank you so much for willing to help me with my doctoral research. As discussed over the phone today, please read below some details about my research.

I am working on a doctor of education (EdD) thesis for the University of Exeter and part of my data collection involves conducting focus group interviews in federal universities around UAE. The subject of my research is continuing professional development experienced by EFL faculty in the context. The interviews comprise 4-5 participants at a time depending on availability of volunteers and are scheduled to last only an hour and a half at a time that is convenient to everyone. The venue is most definitely your own workplace so that working schedules remain unaffected.

I am attaching a consent form and the pre interview schedule for perusal and reflection so that participants may get an idea of the discussion. It will also enable them to reflect on the subject of CPD before the actual meeting.

Participation by EFL faculty is greatly valued in this study that explores their perceptions of CPD and their experiences with the kind of opportunities that are available in the UAE. You have my complete assurance that all data collected will remain confidential, will be made available only to participants for perusal and is not intended to reflect any institution or individual in any way.

Volunteers can direct willingness to participate either directly to myself or to you Peter. Should you require more information, I am happy to call you anytime that you suggest.

Once again, thank you so much for helping me with organizing this.

Best regards

Naziha

Naziha Ali Raza

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PRELIMINARY (ELECTRONIC) SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ELT

This short survey consists of 8 questions about the professional development experiences of tertiary level ELT professionals in the UAE. It will take you only 10 minutes to complete the 8 questions. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Thank you. Please note that the survey is not evaluative and the results will solely be used for the completion of a doctoral thesis.

1. Please provide the following information about yourself:

Age	
Sex	
Teaching experience in years	
Years of service in UAE	
Emirate	

2. Briefly describe what professional development means to you

3. What kind of professional development have you recently been interested/engaged in? Choose all that apply

☐ Attending conferences/events   ☐ Forming a teachers' group/cluster with colleagues

☐ Peer observation   ☐ Presenting at ELT professional development events

☐ Reading in your area of interest   ☐ Researching your teaching practice

☐ Team teaching with peers   ☐ Writing papers/articles for ELT journals

☐ Taking up a study programme(Degree, Diploma or Certificate Training Courses)

Other (please specify)

4. Rate the given items according to your interest.	Extremely interested	Quite interested	Interested	Not so interested	Not interested at all
Techniques for teaching skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for teaching vocabulary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for teaching pronunciation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for teaching grammar	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for developing and conducting assessments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Techniques for motivating students to learn English	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Classroom management skills/techniques	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using games in the EFL/ESL classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
EFL/ESL teacher research	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using technology to teach EFL/ESL or Computer Assisted Language Learning Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">5.   **The ELT professional development events that you participate in are always/usually hosted by: (Please tick all that apply)**</td></tr>
<tr><td>☐ Your institution</td><td>☐ TESOL Arabia</td></tr>
<tr><td>☐ British Council</td><td>☐ Cambridge University Press</td></tr>
<tr><td>☐ Local Ministry of Education/Educational Zone</td><td>☐ Magrudy's Educational Resource Centres</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Other (Pease specify)</td></tr>
</table>

6. **Please choose reasons why you prefer to participate in these events. You may tick them in order of preference from the 1st most preferred to the 5th most preferred.**	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
You are required by your institution to attend these events	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your attendance is part of your own professional development agenda	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Participating in these events increases promotion prospects at your current workplace	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Participating in these events holds relevance for future job prospects	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
You are a speaker/presenter at these events	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
You attend these events because of personal interest	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
You attend these events because they provide social networking opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)					

7. **How have your professional development initiatives helped you? Choose and rank them in order, from 1st most helpful to 5th most helpful.**	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
I have better employment opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can teach more effectively	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can manage my classroom more effectively	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have developed certain teaching skills that are crucial for my work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have made up for lack of formal teacher training	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have managed to raise my profile at my current workplace	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have developed the courage to try new techniques in the classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have developed greater interest in current ELT developments in UAE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)					

8. **Please state (briefly and specifically) what the following institutions can do to help the development of ELT practitioners (in your region).**
(a) Your institution
(b) TEFL/TESOL Professional development providers in UAE

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. Our interview should last about an hour and a half. Please feel free to ask for any clarifications if the need arises.

1. Please tell me a bit about the nature of your current job.

2. How long have you lived here? Where were you before you came to the UAE?

3. How do the two contexts differ?

4. What is your perspective of PD?

5. Please differentiate between the kind of PD opportunities available in UAE and your previous context

6. What sort of PD (in house and external) have you availed of recently? Why?

7. What sort of PD would you rather avoid? Why?

8. How has the field of ELT PD changed since you first arrived in UAE? (What is missing in the UAE ELT PD?)

9. What does your institution expect of you in terms of PD?

10. What allowances do they make for you to allow PD?

11. What are your expectations from your workplace in terms of PD?

12. What are your views on the local PD bodies?

13. What do the terms 'teacher education' and 'teacher development' mean to you? Explain.

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. Our interview should last about an hour and a half to two hours. Please feel free to ask for any clarifications if the need arises.

1. What is your perspective of Professional development?

2. Please comment on the importance of PD in your professional context.

3. What kind of in-house PD have you engaged in over the last one year or recently? What was your motivation to participate in these events that you've mentioned?

4. What sort of in-house PD are you generally expected to undertake over a year?

5. What kinds of opportunities are generally made available to you?

6. How are your PD goals determined? Who determines these?

7. What allowances are made by the institution to encourage participation in institutional or external PD?

8. What kind of external (outside your institution) PD have you engaged in recently?

9. What was your motivation to participate in the external events?

10. Generally, what are your expectations from any PD event that you participate in?

11. What are your expectations from your institution in terms of PD support?

12. Reflecting on the last one year, what seems to have discouraged/demotivated you from participating in certain PD events (both in-house & external)? *Personal professional or both.*

13. What gaps, if any, do you notice in the kind of PD available in the UAE?

14. Do you have any suggestions/recommendations to improve the PD scene in UAE?

15. Teacher Training vs. Teacher Development – Please give your perspective on the two and the importance of these.

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