

AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION ON THE EFFECTS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ON THE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN.

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ABSTRACT

Language instructors face fresh difficulties every day. Their solution is to make sure that their courses are packed with the best learning strategies, technologies, resources, and aids to help students build contextualised knowledge. By taking his co-workers' expertise into account, he was able to think through challenges and issues and come up with answers. As a result, they are able to integrate the knowledge of their co-workers with their own. Studying how to teach a second or foreign language requires scholars to be resilient in the face of emotional and social setbacks. This exercise is done often by the researcher for this reason. Many factors contributed to their decision to do this in order to facilitate his pupils' language acquisition. The participants do this by using the study's findings as a guide while also engaging in independent research, reading relevant scientific papers, and participating in job-specific training. By reflecting on their own teaching practices, educators may expand their own understanding while simultaneously drawing on their extensive background knowledge, practical experience, and theoretical frameworks. It is common practise for language instructors to keep track of their students' answers in class, evaluate the results, and then use the information to inform future classes aimed at helping their students improve their language abilities. The instructor decides that the chosen theory need some revisions after giving it considerable consideration. It is reasonable to compare a classroom to a laboratory in this way since it was in the classroom that teachers put their theoretical understanding about teaching into practice. Instructors were not only recording important information, but they were also closely monitoring their students' responses.

Keywords: Professional development, Early childhood education, English pedagogy, Comparative study.

INTRODUCTION

Their acquaintance with and comprehension of reflection, its various facets, and the several ways in which instructional reflection might be facilitated were all deepened as a result of the process of explaining the subject matter. Researchers, educator trainees, and classroom instructors are all in agreement that reflective teaching is

essential to effective teaching. This is truer than it has ever been. (Appleton et al., 2021), it is possible that the idea of reflection was already present in the oldest forms of educational inquiry. Because it assists them in recognising and addressing issues that may occur in their classrooms or during their professional development, it is simply impossible for educators to do their professions effectively without it. In the event that this occurred, they would be unable to do the task to the best of their abilities. It would be impossible for educators to do their duties in an acceptable manner if they did not have access to financial support. In order for them to carry out their responsibilities in a conscientious manner, they need to have access to it. Although the practice of instructors participating in self-reflection was not a new phenomenon, the development of this practice into a coherent theoretical framework within the area of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) was a trend that emerged relatively recently. Despite the fact that introspection is not a novel idea; it has been practicing for a considerable amount of time, this is the case. In spite of the fact that educators have been engaging in the practice of self-reflection for a very long time, this is still true in the present day. According to the author, Because of current empirical study on the topic, teachers of English as a second language (ESL) have gained a better understanding of reflective practice thanks to this research. It has not been too long since these investigations were last carried out. This is directly connected to the efforts that have been taken to encourage teachers to consistently participate in some kind of reflective practice (Ryan et al., 2020).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

During the early 1900s, a significant amount of time and effort was invested by a variety of individuals, including applied linguists, in the process of developing methodologies and frameworks for the development of instructional strategies and material. Richards and Rodgers's writings were the ones that were mentioned in this instance. When everything was said and done, this resulted in the development of the foundation upon which modern language instruction was based. The number of individuals who speak English as their first language is now higher than that of any other language being spoken anywhere in the globe. There has been a significant amount of acceptance for the concept that its speakers were positioned in different parts of the world. Given this, one can have the misconception that English is the worldwide language, rather than a language that is only spoken by native speakers. It was hoped that every single person on the planet would have at least a fundamental understanding of the English language (Blasé, 2019). This was due to the fact that English was used in a wide variety of contexts and for a wide variety of reasons. Currently, it is being taught in a wide variety of contexts, including as a foreign language or a second language, in a significant number of nations all over the globe. The English Language Teaching (ELT) profession in China has a long and illustrious history that extends back over 150 years. This industry is known for its rich and distinguished heritage. Classes are currently offered as an extra language

option for pupils in a wide variety of educational institutions, ranging from elementary schools to colleges. There were a great number of other nations where the situation was fairly similar. At this point in time, the English language is used in almost every academic institution and professional area. Politics, business, education, information technology, and science are just some of the many other fields that might potentially benefit from its use. As a whole, it contributes to the education of the general public by bringing to light the events that are taking place in many regions of the globe at the present moment. The majority of individuals all around the globe call English their second language. This is true for the majority of people. There was one thing that was completely certain: it encompasses a far wider portion of human history than was previously believed. As a result of this, students of all grade levels are now required to actively seek out English language instruction and endeavour to enhance their language abilities. During the course of teacher training programs, the practice of reflecting on one's actions and experiences gained popularity (He & Bagwell, 2023).

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

This research aims to find how, based on professional development programs focussing cooperative learning, instructional tactics employed by English language teachers engaging with elementary school pupils alter. The main objective of this research is to assess the efficiency of cooperative professional development programs for teachers, therefore improving overall quality of education, student participation, and teaching capacities. One technique to handle this is thinking about the dynamics of teacher collaboration. This research aims to identify the most crucial components of professional development so that instructors may enhance at their respective fields and provide more exciting and targeted lectures targeted on the needs of individual students. The conclusions on how to sustainably increase the number of instructors in the field and how to improve the results of language acquisition for early children would be useful knowledge for lawmakers, educators, and training institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conversely, although much research has focused on English Language Teaching (ELT), the issue of teacher development has garnered somewhat less attention (Chaula, 2019). Action must be taken to improve this situation. Any advancement towards the objective was required to be the focal point. This conclusion aligned with the bulk of research on ELT conducted in recent years, which was quite unexpected. Fortunately, the researcher located many scholarly publications authored by the educators themselves as a kind of self-reflective pedagogy. These articles were published in academic journals. The primary audience for these works was scholarly journals. Richards's work was first published in 1991 under the title "Towards Reflective Teaching," so introducing it to readers and the public for the

first time. Richards's work was publicly shown for the first time in 1991 (Carl, 2019). Initially, it was titled *Towards Reflective Teaching*. Richards' 1991 article, originally titled "Towards Reflective Teaching," has been republished many times since its first publication. The research examines the different methods for fostering a reflective approach to teaching. The first publication was a 1991 version of Richards's article entitled "Towards Reflective Teaching." Throughout his study, he found many significant tactics that a teacher may use. Examples of these measures include self-monitoring and monitoring others, collaborating in groups for educational purposes, exchanging ideas on education, and analogous strategies. The researcher has also identified many more strategies that are pretty similar. In addition to these strategies, the researcher has identified other more that are similarly equivalent. Additionally, the author has identified other supplementary strategies that were analogous to these. He has discovered many of these ways. Furthermore, the researcher has identified other processes and approaches that are analogous to these methods and procedures. In addition to these procedures, the researcher has identified additional processes and methods that were notably similar. The researcher accomplished this by meticulously analysing the commonalities among the many methodologies and processes. The author has also identified many additional methods that have some resemblance to his observations (Baker, 2019).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How can early childhood English language teachers' pedagogical skills be improved via professional development programs that promote collaborative learning?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The following methodological techniques were used to attain the above specified objectives:

Primary Sources of Data: The primary data sources were English language instructors at the lower secondary level in schools throughout China.

Secondary Sources of Data: Books, journals, papers, articles, research works, and other relevant online resources were combed through by the researcher to compile the data required for the study. The daily management of the research effort was made simpler by doing this. The researcher did this by reviewing a mountain of prior work, including that of Phuyal and others like Wallace Richards and Lockhart Ur.

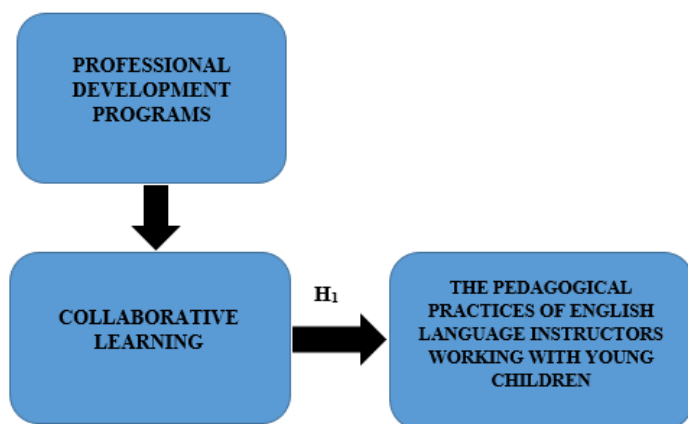
Population of the Study: Volunteers from several Chinese schools that teach English as a second language took part in this study. These people generously offered their skills; they were originally from China. These instructors were entrusted with the responsibility of guiding pupils in lower-level secondary school to improve their command of the English language.

Sampling Procedure: All through the experiment, a selection strategy was used that did not include the use of randomisation in any way. Twelve schools were determined to be the best representation of China's diverse population by the judging panel after much discussion. The open teaching position was filled after twenty applicants from a range of academic disciplines were considered. Each instructor gave a presentation of at least one lesson to the audience. Analysing a total of twenty separate classes was a crucial aspect of the data collection procedure, which was a stage in the strategy.

Tools For Data Collection: Classroom observations, checklists, and questionnaires were the main study instruments used to gather data from the chosen schools.

Process of Data Collection: The researcher got things going by establishing an observation checklist that addressed many potential areas of the curriculum that teachers may focus on first. The researcher was able to set things in motion in the correct way because of this. For this study, they visited to each of the chosen schools and spoke with representatives from the various administrations to get permission to conduct the research on campus. On top of that, they convened a meeting with the chosen educators, where they shared the latest findings from his research and sought to establish a collaborative connection. The researcher went to their courses pretending to be an observer in order to collect data once they had authorisation to do so. Throughout the classroom observation, the checklist served as the primary source of direction and guidance. Notwithstanding this, the study mainly focused on how instructors use reflective teaching strategies in their own classrooms. This led directly to the inclusion of the data collected during the observation in the report. In order to collect data on the instructors' involvement in reflective teaching, the author sent out surveys and emphasised the need of instructors promptly returning them with completed questions. In order to collect the necessary information, this was done. This allowed him to accomplish his goal of amassing information.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



RESULTS

Analysis And Interpretation of Teacher's Views: This section provides extensive coverage of the many aspects of reflective teaching from the perspective of English instructors in lower secondary schools, with an emphasis on those aspects. Teachers of English were the ones who first noticed these features of reflective teaching. The target audience for this section consists of English teachers employed by lower secondary educational institutions. The target audience for this part of the paper consisted of English instructors employed by lower secondary schools. The reasoning for this emphasis is because those aspects constitute the bulk of reflective teaching. The focus was on those areas since they constitute the bulk of it, and the attention was given to them because of that. The writers of this part set out to assist English instructors who were already teaching pupils in lower secondary schools when they set out to compile it. Their tireless efforts were primarily motivated by this. Because their parents were not involved in their schooling, their children had a very hard time catching up in this area of study. Since the questionnaires provided the foundation for the bulk of the data used in the research discussed in this article, they may be considered the most crucial data source. At this same second, an investigation and analysis were being conducted into the teacher participants' survey answers. The goal of this fifteen-item questionnaire was to collect as much data as possible from educators on their experiences with reflective practice activities. Gathering as much data as possible from respondents was the goal of the survey. Two of the most important aspects that were examined in this research study were the level of reflective teaching that English language teachers engaged in and the general strategies that they used to create reflective practice within the context of the classroom. Both of these aspects were considered to be among the most crucial ones that were investigated in this study. All of the research effort went towards answering these two main questions. Additionally, this research aimed to determine if ESL teachers engage in reflective teaching practices with their students. Another aspect that was examined was the extent to which non-English language educators engaged in reflective instruction. Among the items that were examined was this. This object was one of the things that was examined. In relation to this specific matter, this was among the things that were questioned. All of the project's research would take place in the UK as that's where it was determined to be the most suitable setting for the study. Many other parts analyse and evaluate the teachers' perspectives based on the comments they made as a direct and immediate result of this.

Table 1: Information Obtained from Teaching Diary.

Responses	No. of Teacher	Percentage
Not at all	0	0
Very little	2	10
A little	15	75
A lot	3	15
Total	20	

Sharing Experiences: Participation in an activity that promotes the sharing of personal experiences while keeping the focus on the goal of second language acquisition is beneficial for all those involved. Everyone involved in a discourse stands to gain something when one person discusses their own experience and another person shares the experience of someone else. In a discussion when one person shares their story and another person tells the story of another, everyone involved stands to gain something. Participants in this test have the opportunity to get insight into their strengths and areas for improvement, allowing them to better plan for their academic futures. This gave them a chance to prove themselves in each of these categories.

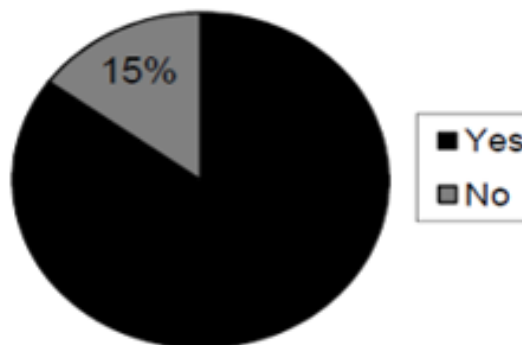


Figure 1: Sharing Experiences as a Language Teacher.

DISCUSSION

It is of the utmost importance to have a solid understanding of the ways in which the engagement of early childhood education teachers in professional development programs influences their pedagogical practices, particularly as regards to the instruction of English. The purpose of these programs is to provide teachers with the information and abilities they need to have a positive impact on the lives of their students via the use of innovative teaching strategies in the classroom. The findings of the study indicated that planned professional development might potentially be beneficial to the techniques used by instructors, the relationships that students have with their instructors, and the learning outcomes of students. One of the most

important aspects of successful professional development is putting some emphasis on actual application. There is a greater likelihood of receiving teachers' endorsement for programs that include real-world situations, collaborative learning, and hands-on activities. Not only do these components provide teachers with the materials they need, but they also cultivate an environment in which teachers are free to experiment with a variety of diverse methods. It is essential for teachers to be in an atmosphere that is supportive because it encourages them to put what they have studied into practice in the classroom, which ultimately leads to an improvement in their teaching abilities. The educational techniques that are used by instructors who have participated in professional development programs and those who have not participated in such programs may be compared in order to get to the meat of a comparative research study. When specific outcomes are considered, such as student involvement, changes in teaching techniques, and overall classroom performance, it is possible to determine which programs have been the most effective. It is possible to do this by looking at the tangible outcomes. After comparing and contrasting the different approaches, it is possible that the specific requirements of early childhood educators might be better satisfied via professional development (Aunola et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

The goal of this study was to provide EFL endorsement class students with tools to enhance their teaching practices via action research. Adding insult to injury, the action research project aimed to enhance existing teaching approaches. The purpose of this study was to document the results of an action research project undertaken to improve the methods of instruction in this particular class. It was intended that the project report would be presented as part of the investigation. It was anticipated that the study would primarily centre on classroom approaches for instruction. Scientists had hoped to go considerably further into these shifts in the study. Finding methods to improve the program's overall approach to teaching was the basic motive for completing this study. This objective was also the main reason for using this strategy. Improving the software was the driving force for this kind of research. This was the main factor that led to the choice to undergo therapy and the procedure. The goal of this study was to find methods to improve the course's pedagogical procedures so that students could have a more personalised learn experience. The major objective of the study was to discover practical ways to enhance the procedure. During the action research, we aimed to identify several ways to enhance the course's pedagogical approaches. It was necessary to identify certain techniques therefore that was done. The goal of the study was to catalogue all the possible ways that teaching strategies may be improved.

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