



**An Investigation into Professional Practical Knowledge of
EFL Experienced Teachers in Egypt: Implications for
Pre-service and In-service Teacher Learning**

Submitted by

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*to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Education*

In September 2010

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate what constituted the professional practical knowledge of EFL experienced teachers in the Egyptian context and what the sources of their knowledge were. It also aimed to examine the relationship between the teachers' knowledge and the contextual factors intervening in action. By delineating its focus as such, the study responds to call for reconceptualising the core of the knowledge base of teaching to focus on teaching as a knowledge-based activity and an act of common sense and reasoning, the pedagogy by which teaching is done, and the context in which it is done.

The study was carried out using multiple methods for collecting qualitative and quantitative data. This design was chosen to investigate the participants' views of professional practical knowledge and to construct their different understandings and interpretations which they brought with them. Questionnaires completed by 236 EFL experienced teachers, semi-structured interviews conducted with 14 of them and stimulated recall classroom observation data with three of them were the data collected for the current study. Although it provided a parsimonious view, quantitative questionnaire data made an important contribution to the bricolage of information built up during the study. A more in-depth understanding was gained from qualitative data using responses to the open-ended section of the questionnaire, interviews and classroom observation.

Based on quantitative and qualitative data analyses, six core areas of teacher knowledge were constructed from the participants' responses and accounts. These were: subject matter, pedagogy, students, classroom learning environment, curriculum and self. The findings also revealed a variety of sources which shaped the teachers' professional practical knowledge including: experience, teacher education, university study in the subject department, student and peer feedback, in-service training, expert advice, student output and postgraduate study. The findings also revealed that the relationship between teacher knowledge and practice was reflected in two ways. The first was that teacher knowledge represented an operative model which underpinned practice. The second was that

it informed the classroom decisions. However, not all teacher knowledge found application in practice. A variety of intervening contextual challenges were revealed to deter the actualisation of teacher knowledge in action such as the EFL exam policy, lack of time, support and resources, mismatch between teacher purposes and students' expectations and needs, and large class size. These findings were discussed in relation to existing research evidence and context. Implications for pre-service and in-service teacher learning were also drawn based on the findings of the study.

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