An inquiry into TESOL teachers' perspectives on professional development in the workplace at a university in Saudi Arabia

Submitted by

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To the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Education in TESOL

In January 2016

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Abstract

This research study aims to explore tertiary TESOL teachers' perspectives on their attitudes towards and engagement with professional development (PD) in an English language institute (ELI) at a university in Saudi Arabia. While there is a global recognition of PD as a vehicle for executing reforms and an increasing interest into how to better support the PD of in-service school teachers, there is also a need to further understanding about the influences on teachers' engagement/disengagement in institutional PD initiatives. Informed by the basic qualitative approach, this study argues that it is important and indeed necessary to inquire into teachers' views and experiences with workplace PD in order to deepen understanding about what influences TESOL teachers' engagement/disengagement in workplace PD. This thesis therefore addresses an under researched topic about the influences on teachers' engagement in institutional PD initiatives. To bridge this gap and contribute more broadly to an enriched understanding of the complexity of PD and teacher engagement in this, a three-dimension understanding of factors influencing teacher orientation to and engagement with workplace PD is employed; comprising micro (or individual teacher) factors, meso (or workplace/ institutional) factors, and macro factors such as sociocultural setting and wider discursive constructions of PD.

The study employed individual semi-structured interviews with 12 teachers' about their experiences of the professional development. Findings showed that teachers expressed negative perceptions about PD at the ELI. Unpacking this reveals a complex dynamic of conflictive discourses at the micro, meso and macro-levels. A number of themes emerged which describe teachers' overwhelmingly negative views on PD in their workplace which are seen as completely the opposite of what they feel PD should comprise. Teachers experienced PD as policed and top-down within a wider culture of compliance at the ELI which leads them to feel professionally compromised and lacking in voice and autonomy. This culture of

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compliance is also seen to generate a culture of mistrust with consequences for the development of the teacher community and collaborative forms of PD.

The study offers a richer and deepened understanding of teachers' experiences with PD influenced by complex web of factors which impinge on their attitudes towards PD. It is argued that revealing this complexity is an important first step to transform institutional PD provision. The study also highlights how an examination of teacher learning as socially constructed requires that due attention must be paid to the understanding of the context in which it takes place, and the impact of this on how teachers engage with PD. Finally the study highlights the importance of understanding teacher and institution perspectives on PD as being informed by and taking place within certain discursive realities which highlight the significance of wider discourses of professionalism to the enactment and engagement with PD in the workplace. A number of recommendations for future research into PD in general and within the Saudi setting are proposed along with a number of practical steps to be taken at the ELI to help raise institutional awareness of effective PD and to encourage teachers to better engage with this.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, praise be to Allah for the blessings He bestowed upon me to complete my doctoral dissertation. I would also like to start by expressing my special appreciation to my supervisor Dr. Sarah Rich for her invaluable mentorship during my research journey. I would like to thank her for encouraging me to grow as a researcher and join the scholars' community in TESOL. Her invaluable insights has helped shape the project and she has also been a source of an unlimited support during my research journey. I would also like to thank my second supervisor, Dr. Philip Durrant for his support. My thanks also go to Professor Anthony Wright who served as my first supervisor for almost a year before he retired.

The journey towards completion of this thesis has not always been an easy or straightforward one. I want to thank the School of Education at the University of Exeter for their support during my times of hardship. I would like to extend my thanks to my sponsors for their commitment to providing me all that I needed during my scholarship. Special thanks also go to my research participants for taking the time to take part in my research study. I extend my appreciation too to the administration and staff of the case institution of this study for granting me access to implement my research.

This journey would not have been possible without the unfailing love and support of my family. A very special thanks go my parents, words cannot express how grateful I am to your priceless sacrifices. To my deceased father for being a true inspiration in my life, and my beloved mother, for all her courageous and marvelous sacrifices to help me grow, learn and become who I am now. Your prayers has sustained me thus far. To you both, may Allah (God) rest your souls in eternal peace. And a very special thank you go to my dearest wife, Mariam, thank you for the sleepless nights you spent with me to go through my research. At the end I would like to extend my appreciation to my children, Yazeed, Raghad, and Ruba for granting me the time away from them to spend on my thesis.

To you all, Thank you.

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Chapter 1. Introduction to the Study

1.1 Introductory overview

The aim of this thesis is to uncover the perspectives of TESOL teachers with regard to the professional development activities they undertake in an English language centre (ELI) in a higher education (HE) institutional setting in Saudi Arabia. Broadly speaking the term professional development hereafter (referred to as PD and also referred to by a variety of other terms including continuous professional development and teacher learning in the literature) 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). However, for reasons I will explain further below, the particular focus of interest in this thesis is on teachers' experiences and reactions to the PD initiatives provided by the ELI, that is PD in the workplace.

In the past thirty years interest in and research into PD has grown considerably, including in the field of TESOL. In part this is because PD is seen as essential to the development of motivated and skilled teachers and has been linked with improvements in students' performance (see for example, Borko, 2004). While PD has long been understood as important for teachers in the early stages of their career and finding ways to support the PD of in-service school teachers is also widely recognised as important in many parts of the world, it is not until relatively recently that attention to PD can be seen to have 'gone global'. Today the explicit articulation of a PD strategy is commonplace in government and also institutional policy documentation in many countries around the world. Moreover, PD is increasingly seen as important in all stages of education - including higher education, where, until recently this was given very limited attention (see Clegg, 2003; 2009, Land, 2001).

The emergence of interest in PD phenomenon in educational systems around the globe is one manifestation of what is often called the global knowledge economy which sets a high store on

a skilled, well-educated, and therefore globally competitive workforce and it is this which is a driver for educational reforms worldwide (See Brennan et al., 2008). Since teachers are seen as pivotal to the success of educational innovations and reforms (Wedell, 2009; Fullan, 2007), finding ways to support teachers with these reforms is seen as an additional reason for the growth of interest in PD worldwide. With regard to higher education in particular, the growth of a knowledge economy has led to a rapid expansion of and reform of the higher education sector in many countries (Knight, 2008). It has also led to a burgeoning industry (primarily driven by the US and UK) devoted to managing, measuring and benchmarking quality and standards of higher educational provision worldwide. As well as organising higher education institutions into internationally comparable league tables, this move towards international standards-setting has contributed to a growth in universities seeking accreditation by western organizations (most commonly by a US based accrediting institutions) as a way of signalling the quality of the teaching and learning provision and increasing the status of the university the development of a PD strategy is typically a stipulated requirement for accreditation and this is the case in the university where the study I report took place. However, even in settings where accreditation is not an explicit driving force for reform, the globalization of education has drawn attention to the need for PD (Leung, 2009).

Given the rise of interest in PD, not surprisingly, a great deal has been written about suitable pedagogic models to promote PD, and there is also a growing literature on what makes PD effective and how this can be measured (Sachs, 2005; Guskey, 2000). As will be discussed at greater length in chapter 3, it is possible to detect a growing move towards an understanding of teacher learning as a socially constructed activity which is enhanced by the opportunities for collaboration and collective inquiry (Johnson, 2006). The emphasis on workplace learning is fuelled by an increasing understanding of the significance of the social world and particularly

the professional community in the workplace to teachers' PD in western contexts (Eaker & Keating, 2008 ; Schmoker , 2006).

From the above, it can be seen as well as a growing imperative for managers in higher educational settings to concentrate on developing a local PD strategy for faculty there is also a growing move to recognise the workplace as a valuable location for effective PD activity (Avolas , 2011). However, while this points to the considerable potential for institutional PD strategies to enhance teacher learning, it is not necessarily a guarantee that this will be the case, particularly as Wright (2010) notes, there is a slow uptake of many of the more collaborative models of PD mentioned above. Moreover as a growing body of research into workplace learning has demonstrated the quality of the 'school' culture is seen to be significant to how teachers work and the sort of PD activities that are advocated (Day & Sachs, 2004)

In recognition of this, there have been an increasing number of calls to better understand the relationship between the context of PD and its influence on what sorts of activities are promoted as well as the ways in which teachers engage in these. With reference to TESOL in particular, as Johnson & Golombek (2002: x) say, much remains hidden about the "social practices and contexts" which influence teaching and teachers' PD. The emphasis on deepening an understanding of the significance of context to the enactment and experience of PD is one that is widely acknowledged in the literature (Johnson, 2006; Kelchtermans, 2004) and is one that the study reported in this thesis hopes to make a contribution to.

1.2 Rationale for the study

The impetus for the research study reported in this thesis reflects my own personal belief in the value of PD borne out of my professional experience as an English language instructor in school and later at the ELI where the study was undertaken. Indeed, my decision to move from my job as a teacher and then a supervisor in the state school system to the ELI institute where

I now work was in no small part due to a desire to increase my access to professional development opportunities and to take advantage of the PD opportunities on offer which are described in more detail in chapter 2 below. In the 1 year I spent at the ELI before embarking on my doctorate, I was surprised (and somewhat disappointed) to discover that many of the ELI teachers who worked there appeared disinterested in PD and did not want to engage in professional discussions about their work.

The opportunity to undertake my doctorate provided a new professional development opportunity and also a chance for me to read around and deepen my understanding of professional development. From my reading and discussions with fellow students, I began to appreciate the importance of professional communities to teachers' work and in particular of the potential of professional learning communities (PLCs) to support teachers with their PD (Zaho, 2013; Snow-Gerono , 2005). Inspired by the work of Little (2004; 1993) and Stoll (2011) I decided that I would endeavour to set up and run a PLC over a period of time with some instructors at the ELI and consider the impact of this on their attitude towards PD and their professional learning as the topic of my doctoral thesis. However, I very quickly came to the realisation that this approach to addressing teachers' disaffection with PD was doomed to failure. First of all, contrary to my expectation, although on reflection perhaps predictable, I found it enormously difficult to find any teachers who were willing to set up and engage in a PLC. The fact that only 3 people initially expressed an interest in working as a learning community and that all of these later dropped out citing work pressures was a critical point of learning for me. Firstly, it made me realise that merely introducing an innovation without a fuller and deeper understanding of why teachers were so disengaged with PD at the ELI was futile. That is , that it is not possible to address PD issues merely by applying a technique or offering some activities divorced from an understanding of how the setting and individual orientations towards this impacts on the ways in PD is experienced.

Armed with this new understanding and based on further reading, I came to appreciate that I had been operating with what Kelchtermans (2004) calls a prescriptive rather than descriptive research agenda, one which seeks to impose an intervention on teachers without first understanding the contextual character of PD in the ELI and teachers orientations and experiences of this. Thus I determined that in order to understand how and why teachers appeared to be disengaged with PD in the ELI, that the focus of my study should be on what Kelchtermans (2004: 82) calls 'the descriptive unravelling of CPD' and in Johnson's (2009: 82) terms that "revealing the status quo is the first step to innovate it". My study also aims to uncover the "structural and contextual issues" that Syed (2003) mentioned, which ELT teachers grapple with on a daily basis in the Arabian Gulf countries. Important among these are the "human resource development, systems and standards and research and the knowledge base" (p.337).

1.3 Aims of the Study

As will be discussed in more detail in chapters 3 and 4 below, in developing my descriptive inquiry stance to better understand teachers' apparent lack of engagement with PD at the ELI, I am naturally interested in understanding *teachers'* perspectives on this or what Crawford (2009) calls 'the voices from below', which, as she points out are often under-represented in research literature. I also adopt a socially-constructed stance (e.g. Burr, 2003) one which views their perspectives as borne out of experience in social worlds which highlights how context, both in the form of current and previous experiences shapes their orientations and reactions to PD. Thus I position myself with the growing number of writers mentioned in the introductory overview in this chapter who view context as significant to accounts of PD. Given the ways in which local decisions in this context regarding the development of a PD strategy were implicated in wider efforts to seek accreditation and the general movement towards a global knowledge economy, I see it as important to understand that context needs to include not only

the institutional setting but also the wider sociocultural, socio-political, economic and historical contexts within which it is situated.

Bearing the above in mind, the aim of the study reported in this thesis is to deepen my understanding of teachers perspectives on PD at the ELI in the belief that this will enable a more nuanced understanding of how best to support teachers with PD in this setting to emerge. To do this I undertake to do the following:

- To identify PD activities that teachers undertake within the ELI

- To explore their experiences of and reactions to these PD activities

- To identify other alternative PD activities they propose

1.4 Significance of the Study

I believe this study has a number of potential significances. My reading of the literature on PD has highlighted two related emerging PD research agendas that are gaining currency and that are relevant to my study. Firstly, there is a growing interest in an examination of the impact of the workplace on teachers' engagement with PD. Secondly, there is a growing appreciation of the importance of teacher perspectives on PD. To date, however, there are a limited number of research studies that have been undertaken into these things, particularly in the field of TESOL. This study with its focus on understanding the teacher experience of PD and social context is one that can potentially contribute to both these emerging areas of interest.

However, operating with an explicit social-constructivist ontological and epistemological stance, the study can be seen to bridge the two different research orientations outlined above. In other words, by viewing perspectives as borne out of experience of social realities it seeks to demonstrate the ways in which teacher perspectives are generated out of the institutional 'culture' and the relationship between this and the institutional vision and practice for PD as well as other alternative experiences and personal visions for PD. I believe that this stance

will contribute to a more complex but also more enriched understanding of PD, something which it is increasingly argued is important for the field and which is overdue (Opfer & Pedder, 2011).

A second significance of the study, lies in its focus on building a thick description of PD and its potential to inform practice. As explained earlier in this chapter, borne out of my own experience, I believe that such an approach is an important way for institutions to identify ways to support teachers in managing PD in a given setting. Problematizing the tensions and issues around which PD operates, but which have been by and large 'obscured' so far in PD research (Little, 2002) is, I believe an essential first step in identifying innovations in a setting such as the one where I work. Moreover, I believe this approach can help stakeholders better understand the challenges of standards-based PD in Saudi Arabia and globally including the ways to manage this at a local level. There is an increasing acknowledgement of the importance of teacher perspectives on the improvement of practice and effective professional development and of identifying ways to support teachers and institutions in managing the in-situ learning in TESOL (Burns & Richards, 2009; Leung, 2009; Cross, 2006). However, there is to date little empirical research which seeks to demonstrate what works and why or why not and how things can be improved and it is hoped that this study will demonstrate a way of undertaking research into this which can yield some valuable practical insights.

1.5 Organisation of the study

Following chapter one which introduces the thesis, the second chapter overviews the contextual background where I carried out my investigation. Chapter three positions my own stance within the relevant literature about teachers' professional development and provide an overview of some of the tensions and evolving understandings in the literature regarding what PD is and how it can best be supported which inform the sorts of PD support activities institutions may offer to teachers. Chapter four introduces the paradigmatic stance and methodological

underpinnings which guides this exploration; the choice of data collection methods, data analysis employed in this study as well as some information about the participants. It also defines the ethical principles and guidelines which were implemented in this study. Chapter 5 presents the findings and following on from this in chapter six, an in-depth discussion of the findings and implications of the study will be presented with reference to the relevant literature. It also concludes the thesis by outlining and considering the contribution of the study and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2. Context of the Study

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a contextual background to the study into teachers perspectives on PD activities at a university in Saudi Arabia reported in this thesis. The first part of the chapter provides an overview of higher education in Saudi Arabia. I will discuss the rapid and exponential growth of higher education in Saudi Arabia, recent reforms (including the English as a medium of instruction movement (EMI), and the increasing emphasis on PD for academic staff within a broader quality assurance framework for higher education, such as members of English language centres. In the second part of the chapter, I demonstrate the interconnection between the general overview in the first part of the chapter and the particularities of the ELI which is the focus of my study – with a particular focus on the sorts of PD support activities that are offered.

2.2 Higher education in Saudi Arabia

Higher education (HE) in Saudi Arabia enjoys quite a recent history. It was the 1950's oil-based economy in Saudi Arabia that led to the opening of the first post-secondary institution in 1957 (Saleh , 1986) this also provided the impetus for the growth of post-secondary education over time (Elyas , 2008). In response to a steadily growing population, and a desire to ensure an internationally competitive workforce (Al-Musallam , 2007) the number of universities rose to 8 by 2005 and over the past decade a further 150 colleges or tertiary institutions (25 of these are universities) have opened.

HE in general and universities in particular in Saudi Arabia operate in a centralized system within the guidelines of government-led quality assurance measures (Smith & Abouammoh , 2013; Onsman, 2012; 2011). The Ministry of education (MoE) controls policies and economies of universities, oversees how universities are run and ensures that quality assurance guidelines

are implemented and its objectives achieved. Achieving excellence has been placed the top priority for the MoE. Strategic plans have been put in place to transform HE into knowledge-based society and economic system (MoE, 2013). Billions of dollars have been generously dispensed to universities to achieve such ambitions albeit under the supervision of MoE. As in many other parts of the world, in line with its interests in building a knowledge society, Saudi Arabia, recognises the importance of high quality teaching and in 2004 a National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) was established (Darandari et al., 2009). The NCAAA is "responsible for the academic accreditation of all post-secondary institutions and programmes" (Al-Musallam, 2007: 4). The rationale behind such interventions is to transform the essence of teaching and the role of academic professional from one that is rooted in cultural and religious symbolism (Elyas, 2008; Mazawi, 2005) to professional practice and professional roles that are enshrined in standards-based and quality assurance measures.

2.2.1 The impact of the global knowledge economy on Saudi university policy and practice

As explained in chapter 1, the global knowledge economy is impacting on policy reforms in many countries around the world and across all stages of the educational sector. The development of the NCAAA mentioned above, which is informed by internationally recognized standards of quality can be seen as one response to this. In line with the move to an accreditation educational 'culture' in Saudi Arabia, as elsewhere in the Arabian Gulf, most universities are engaged in or have recently completed international accreditation processes, typically with the support of American accrediting bodies (See Onsman, 2012; Raza, 2010; Mazawi, 2005). Another impact of the global knowledge economy is the growth of English as a medium of instruction in educational systems around the world, reflecting the fact that English has a prominent place in the global knowledge economy and for these reasons ensuring

a workforce with a good command of English is seen as very important (Onsman, 2012; Elyas, 2008). Moreover, as Syed (2003: 338) highlights English among Gulf States is implicitly perceived by policy makers as a language of modernisation and therefore is taught at all educational levels. In Saudi Arabia, this has had a major impact on the tertiary educational sector with the majority of universities employ English as a medium of instruction for most of the subject areas (Onsman, 2012). English language centres are found in all universities, their role being to provide a foundation year to help students transition into English medium instruction in their faculty (Al-Khairy, 2013). Entry into faculties is secured through an IELTs or TOEFL score, students are enrolled in a compulsory year-long foundation programme to enable them achieve the equivalent of IELTS or TOEFL (each university decides on the minimum requirement).

Although British English textbooks are often used in English language systems, for various political and historical reasons, Saudi Arabian universities tend to adopt American university structures and administrative systems and as part of a process referred to by Elyas (2008) as the Americanization of the education system in Saudi Arabia, it is not surprising that the accreditation of English language centres has largely been overseen by American institutions.

From the above, it is clear that Saudi Arabian universities are involved in a process of internationalization as a response to global trends and demands. This means that local institutional policy and practice is heavily influenced by external bodies who provide a mechanism for demonstrating quality, including as stated in Chapter 1, the use of league tables. Professional development which has only very recently gained currency in Saudi higher educational institutions can be seen as one by-product of the internationalization agenda. As I will propose in chapter 3, it is useful to be aware of this relationship between the institutional PD strategy and wider external influencing factors in analysing the relationship between context and teacher perspectives of PD.

2.3 The English language institute

The English Language Institute that is the focus of this study is located in a university in a large city in the west of Saudi Arabia. The programme at this university was originally established in 1975 by the British Council to teach English to almost 500 undergraduate students in the colleges of Medicine and Engineering. However, by 2007, the ELI's role and mission have shifted from providing only English language subject in specific colleges to the authority of administering and securing the required English proficiency to almost 15,000 undergraduate students each year. In line with the competitive discourses of internationalisation prevalent in the Saudi HE, the ELI set its vision to "to be the premier, internationally-oriented English language institute of tertiary education in the Middle East" (FH, 2013: 13).

In Saudi Arabia for religious and cultural reasons all education is gender segregated (Onsman, 2012). The ELI operates two centres, one on the men's campus and one on the woman's campus. The ELI employs around 600 qualified faculty across the Men's and Women's Campuses. The teachers who participated in this study are located on the men's campus which houses 274 faculty members. Following a longstanding practice in Saudi Arabia, the vast majority of teachers at the ELI are drawn from a range of countries and as such comprise both first and second language speakers of English.

As can be seen from Appendix 1, the first category comprises Saudi nationals, Arabs mainly from the Middle East (Jordon, Morocco, Tunisia, Syria, Egypt, Algeria, Yemen and Sudan), non-Arabs (India, Pakistan, and Sweden). The Anglo-Saxon group comprises people form the UK, USA, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, and South Africa. As also graph (1) below indicates, the native English language teachers represent only one third of the academic faculty which is equal to %33 of the total number of the ELI teachers. Non-native English speakers formulate the majority of the staff, nearly 67%. Currently, as is evident from graph (2) below

Saudi nationals represent only a little over 4 percent of the total academic staff, although considerable efforts are being made to increase this number year on year.
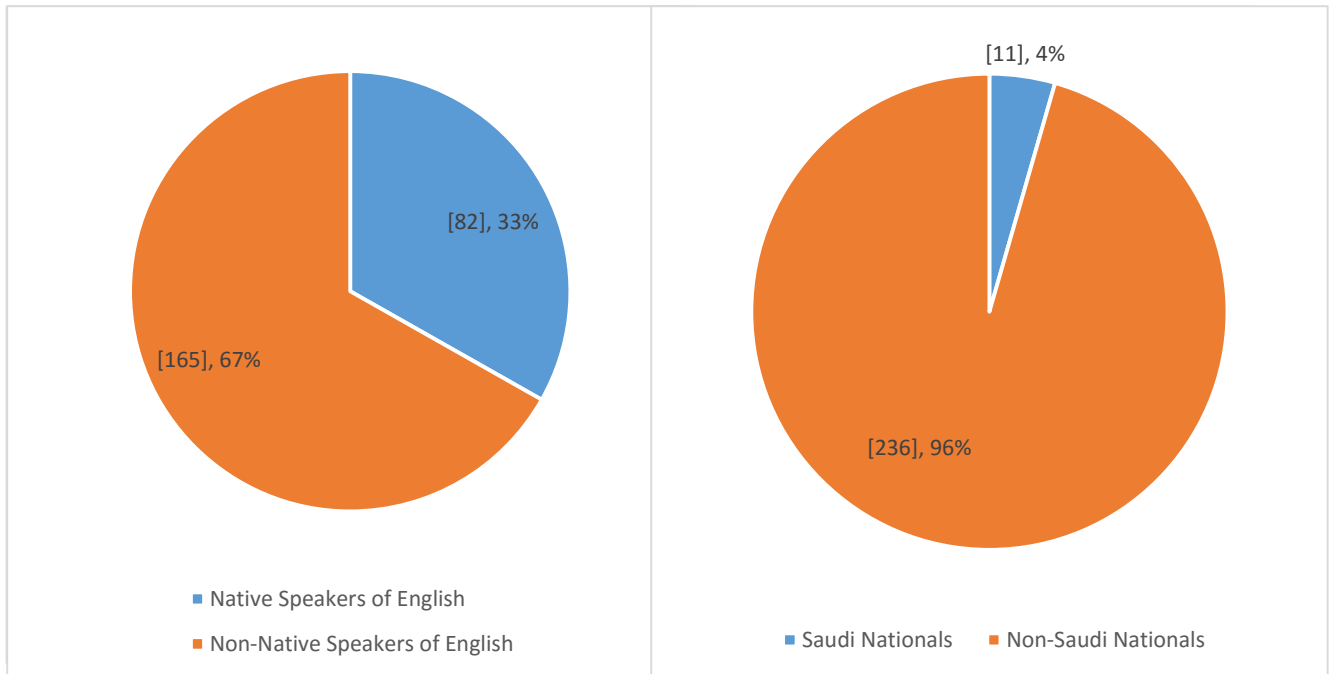
Figure (1): Percentage of TESOL teachers by spoken language and nationality

The small percentage of teachers who are Saudi nationals shown in the right chart in Fig 1 above reflects Syed's (2003: 338) observation that "the single most striking feature of English language teaching (ELT) in the Gulf is the number of expatriate teachers". As he goes on to say, however, expatriate teachers receive "differential treatment based on native speaker status and nationality, resulting in very different remuneration packages and working conditions". Although not explicitly mentioned or immediately visible in key documentation such as the recruitment criteria advertised on the ELI website (see Appendix 11) this is also the case in the ELI which forms the focus of this study (see chapter 5). As Syed (2003) indicated some of the institutional conditions have bearings on teachers' orientations to the PD made available to them. As they stated, teachers communities in the Gulf are characterised by status divide in the workplace between native (defined as contracted expatriates) and non-native teachers

(described as EFL teachers), in terms of packages and working conditions which continues as he described to be an issue for many EFL teachers. He highlighted that there is an implicit image of 'foreign language teachers or native speakers' as competent teachers in the gulf and that due to their huge numbers compared to nationals teachers, the latter loses genuine training or development opportunities. These issues warrant attention as they are not explicitly mentioned in the documents available in the ELI (see 2.5).

In terms of employment status, it is important to note that non-Saudi nationals "represent a rigidly-defined legal and administrative category of academic workers. They cannot acquire tenure or Saudi Arabian citizenship" (Mazawi, 2005: 237). By contrast, Saudi nationals are recruited into tenured tracks (known as academic cadre) and hold higher political or administrative positions. This is one of the reasons for the higher turnover of non-Saudi staff (ibid).

The ELI, like the university within which it is based, subscribes to and seeks to meet the concept of quality in higher education evidenced in the internationalization of higher education movement including seeking international accreditation. In recent years this has led to a number of reforms in the organization and policy at the ELI. The Faculty Handbook (FH) (2011-2013) provides details of the ELI vision which the organizational and policy reforms have been developed to address. As part of the ELI vision, there is a heightened emphasis on achieving professionalism by academic staff. The administrative structures of the ELI are organized into a clear hierarchy to carefully monitor how the ELI vision can be achieved (See appendix 2). The administration comprises the Dean and six Vice-Deans. The Vice-Dean Development (VDD) administers five units: The Academic Coordination Unit, The Professional Development Unit (PDU), The Curriculum Unit, The Recruitment Unit, and the Academic Accreditation Unit.

The assinged hierarchy (appendix 2) reflects how PD interconnects with the other units in a top-down manner. The academic coordination unit which comes first under the vice-dean for developemnt, is supposed to outline and oversee how the standards are met through the institutional adminsitrative units. Subsequent to this, The PDU can be considered as the excuctive unit which excuetes the institutional policies vested in the accreditation schemes. Thus both development and evaluation are the main purposes of the PDU and academic coordination units respectively. The curriculum unit comes the third in hierarchy and sets the parameteres or criteriria that make up its part of the overall standardisation policy. Thus, it puroprts to outline the learning objectives of each module and monitors this through various meansures including the Pacing guide, and the extracuuricular activities such as the reading circles and portfloios (FH, 2013).

The pacing guide for example sets the time frame and stages teachers have to go through in planning and carrying out their lessons in order to ensure conformity and compliance to the set standards. Thus it was indicated in 2.4 of the pacing guide (FH, 2013:16) that:

"With the beginning of each module, faculty are provided with a detailed curriculum and course description with expected Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) for courses they are assigned to teach at the ELI. They are also given a detailed Pacing Guide for each course containing day-to-day lesson planning guides. This details exactly how many textbook units and language items are to be presented and practiced during a specified time frame. It is an invaluable lesson-by-lesson guide, along with outlined lesson plans in the Teacher's Book for each class covered in the syllabi".

The recruitment unit also ensures that the sort of teachers to be recruited have the aptitude and ambition and who are "qualified instructors" (FH: 2013: 13) to meet the instutional policies and vision in the comepetetive market in HE (see also Onsman, 2012 for relationship between knwoledge economy and competetive recruitment market). Finally, the academic accredittaion

unit outlines the accreditation schemes such as the Common European Frameowork of Reference (CEFR) for students learning, and how the faculty can be monitored to achive these. Thus, the ELI is accredited by the "Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) [which is] recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a national accrediting agency for English language programs and institutions" (FH, 2013: 17). The accreditation covers 10 categories and outlines 52 standards for the policiy of the ELI. These include, "mission, curriculum, faculty, facilities, adminsitrative and fiscal capacity, student services, recruiting, length and structure of programme study, student achievemnt, and finally student compliants" (FH: 18). From the above it can be seen that there is a hierarchical positioning of PD which is assigend to two overseeing bodies, the PDU and the coordination unit to ensure conformity to the set standards vested in the accreditation schemes. It can also be seen that conformity is ensured through the evaluation scheme (see 2.4) which also intersects with other other dimesnions such as the curriculum and students' complaints.

2.3.1 Professional development in the ELI

Within the case institution of this study (ELI), PD is introduced as a component of the standards of 'professionalism' as described in the ELI FH. Although this was not precisely stated, it was enunciated therein that ELI staff should demonstrate professionalism (based on academic knowledge, performance, and behaviour outside the classroom as outlined in section 7.2 in the FH: 50).

The first component of the prescribed professionalism, 'academic knowledge and performance' can be enhanced through PD offered by the ELI to teachers.

"Faculty members are encouraged to pursue professional development offered at the ELI through which faculty members can enhance their teaching skills and knowledge" (FH, 2013: 44).

The professional development unit is responsible for planning and monitoring PD at the ELI and as indicated in appendix 2, comes the second in order (preceded by the Academic Accreditation Unit) which is headed by the Vice-Dean of Development. The FH provides a clear indication of the ELI's vision for PD and the sorts of activities that are deemed to provide professional development opportunities for staff. It is indicated in the FH for example that ELI teachers are expected to be long-life learners and hence are required to submit an annual professional development plan form (see appendix 9). In an attempt to develop the enunciated professionalism, faculty are "encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities at the ELI as a means of enhancing their teaching skills and increasing their knowledge of the field to achieve the ELI's Mission" (FH, 2013: 44). A number of different ways in which teachers are supported with their PD are mentioned in the FH. As will be discussed below, these include professional networking, research, training workshops and peer observation. As will be seen, despite a seemingly wide array of PD support opportunities, the dominant strategies are training and observation and as will also be discussed in 2.4 below the emphasis on these can be seen to align with the careful monitoring of reforms and policy brought in as part of the efforts to seek international accreditation meaning that PD is closely linked to the process of performance review of teachers.

2.3.1.1 Professional networking

Professional networking is considered one aspect of the professional support that teachers should expect the ELI to provide as described in the ELI FH. Thus the ELI encourages teachers to participate and attend "conferences relevant to the field of English language teaching, fostering professional development and networking" p.40. Subsidies are offered for conference attendants or participants based on formal application process regulated by the University's Vice-Presidency of Graduate Studies and Scholarly research. The electronic library is also identified as one channel for professional networking whereby "faculty are expected and

encouraged to stay up-to-date with research developments in the field" p.40. There is also the end of the year ELI annual symposium where ELI senior coordinators and invited speakers can present talks and workshops in different topics. Moreover, professional networking is enhanced by the ELI by means of keeping teachers up to date with knowledge through circulating research articles suggested primarily by coordinators or faculty members. As stated in the FH that the ELI faculty members are also 'professionally supported and guided' "through professional development specialists, coordinators, senior colleagues, and weekly research updates on current trends and practices in the field" p.40.

It is interesting to note that there are other dimensions of professional networking that were mentioned in the FH but are not considered as PD activities required by the ELI at least. Online networking activities such as the ELI Facebook page and the University's online blog are plotted under chapter 14 and are entitled as campus services rather than grouped under professional development activities. It was indicated for example that "ELI regularly publishes its news and events at [the university's website] and welcomes instructors to join its Facebook page [….]. (FH: 76) (Parts of the quotes are removed to anonymise the case institution). While it might be suggested that plotting such activities in a separate section from PD shows the extent to which the ELI gives freedom to its employees to choose from the available range of PD activities, it can be argued that this indicates the peripheral positions of informal PD activities such as the online activities in the ELI PD policy.

2.3.1.2 Faculty research

Research is also encouraged among the faculty as a PD initiative promoted at the ELI. While there is no indication in the FH as to what extent and how research is supported or enhanced, there are some guidelines which regulate how faculty can conduct research. For example, "the research topic and methodology must be agreed on and accepted by the Vice-Dean for Graduate Studies, ... and all ELI resources must be acknowledged" p. 40. In addition, research that

focuses on the enhancement of ELI's "fulfilment of its mission will be favourably regarded and encouraged" (ibid). However, despite this presumed enhancement of research among ELI teachers, it is not known to what extent faculty engage in this and what topics have been researched so far at the ELI.

2.3.1.3 Training opportunities

The ELI PDU provides opportunities for the ELI Teachers in the form of training workshops offered by outside providers designed specifically to help teachers enact the curricular reforms. In order to ensure successful implementation of curricular initiatives, PD primarily takes the form of in-service training or workshops conducted by external /internal 'professional' experts provided at the beginning of the academic year as an induction programme. Since students' textbooks and teachers' guidebooks are designed by the Oxford University Press, they are considered the main source of providing training for teachers throughout the academic year, usually as an induction programme

"All faculty receive training provided by OUP (Oxford University Press) in classroom methodology and new language teaching technology using the New Headway Plus Special Edition series prior to the start of the academic year" (FH, 2013: 39).

In addition, PDU ensures that teachers are supported throughout the academic year via the Oxford Teaching Academy (OTA) which "provides ELI faculty members with courses focusing on practical teaching methodology in ELI classrooms" (p.39).

It appears that there is an assumption that providing teachers with training workshops delivered by renowned training agencies will result in achieving the ELI mission. Hence, OTA also provided training courses in management, which was deemed beneficial in "fulfilling' the ELI's Mission. One training event that was clearly stated in the FH was "Train the Trainer" professional development course was run by The British Council in June 2009 [which] was

designed for program coordinators whose performance is crucial to the achievement of the program's goals" [FH, 2011: 40]

Hence it appears that PD operates under the assumption that mastery of the knowledge provided in training sessions entails culmination of satisfactory or desired performance.

"Effective training builds skills, encourages reflection and helps increase employee satisfaction" p. 51.

2.3.1.4 Classroom Observation

Classroom observation as indicated above reflects one aspect of the 'professional' indicators of professionalism set by the ELI. In order to conduct observation to achieve those 'professional' parameters, it is believed that "competent professional development specialists are the primary classroom performance evaluators" who are "trained to evaluate performance of faculty inside the classroom and to provide mentoring support and training for faculty with developmental issues" (FH, 2013: 52). Classroom observation takes two forms: formal and informal observations. The informal classroom observation is conducted during the first academic semester and is considered "more casual, non-intrusive, informative, and supportive" to "give each instructor preliminary assessments of classroom performance and to identify key strengths and possible weaknesses" (ibid). It is usually announced in the sense that teachers expect the coordinator to visit them in a specific agreed upon date to provide teachers with a "first look" situation by a PDU "specialist" who defines "areas of weakness" and "assist the instructor in setting goals to prepare for the formal observation" (p.47)

The formal observations on the other hand are both announced and unannounced and hence, in the name of performance management and improvement, teachers expect coordinators to show up any time. They are announced in the sense that instructors will be given the "professional courtesy" at least three days prior to visit, but may expect "unannounced visits" p.48. Formal

observation is mostly conducted in the second semester and is regarded "an official visit and its findings are incorporated in the Annual Faculty Evaluation Form (FH, 2013: 53). To conduct the observations 'objectively' by coordinators, "teachers must submit a lesson plan for the formal observation to the observer at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled observation date" which will be "evaluated as closely as other items" listed in the Classroom Observation Evaluation Report.

Observation follows a three-step consultation process: pre-observation discussion, the class visit and what to expect, and post-observation session. The pre-consultation session is conducted by the coordinator and the *vistee* to help the coordinator obtain "information from the instructor concerning his class goals, students, and particular teaching style" (p.49). The class visit will be conducted by the coordinator "who will take notes of what takes place during the class session" on interaction between teachers and students and the '*efficiency*' of teaching methods. After the class, a session is allocated for the teacher to be given feedback on questions such as ""What worked well and why?" "What didn't work well and why?" "What will I change the next time I teach this topic?" and "How did I do in the areas of teaching I was concerned about?" (ibid). Finally, the post observation discussion is a dialog by both the teacher and the coordinator "as an opportunity to improve teaching" and devise specific strategies or techniques that the instructor can use". Based on this 'dialogue' the coordinator will determine whether the instructor needs an "additional observation" or further "in-house training" (FH, 2013: 50)

2.4 Professional Development and Evaluation

Faculty evaluation can be considered as one of the main dimensions of professionalism that the ELI capitalise on to improve the 'performance' of the ELI faculty. Indeed, Chapter 7 of the ELI FH clearly states that observation and evaluation reflect the philosophy of the ELI to improve its performance. Thus, evaluation and observation are rooted in "the philosophy ...

that the overall professional evaluation, coupled with classroom observations, is the most powerful tool for improving performance" (FH, 2013: 50). Thus, observation and evaluation are considered integral to the professional development of the ELI faculty in the sense that it provides framework for quality teaching and implementation of the ELI mission. Indeed it was stipulated that observation is tantamount to performance management and at the same is a professional developmental activity. It is highlighted that observation aims to provide "successful performance management" which is "an ongoing and continuous process involving interactive and open communication between the evaluator and faculty" (ibid). Despite this flagrant contention that observation is a conduit for evaluation, it is nonetheless emphasised that evaluation and observation processes are "dialogical rather than hierarchical" and that these are "designed to be transparent, systematic, regular, fair and objective with a strong focus on improving learning opportunities for each individual instructor and the faculty as a whole" p.44. This description of how evaluation and observation should improve the performance of the staff as a whole is enshrined in the belief that "development should flow from the evaluation process, which should enhance ELI's ability to fulfil its stated mission" (p.50). This aim is further reiterated in the guidelines for 'establishing a successful evaluation programme' which indicate that evaluation should be 'linked to professional development' in the sense that it is regarded as a "learning opportunity to help identify performance strengths that can be capitalized upon and developed further" (FH, 2013: 50).

Two administrative units execute observation and evaluation. The PDU unit conducts the classroom observation whereas the coordination unit conduct faculty evaluation. The difference is that PDU conducts evaluative observations to assess the needs of faculty members for further developmental processes, whereas faculty evaluation focuses on the overall 'professional performance' of the teacher which they receive at the end of the academic year.

"Generally, the role of the PDU lies in conducting classroom observations to evaluate performance for developmental purposes, while the Academic Coordination Unit's role lies in evaluating overall professional execution of assigned duties, communication, commitment to the job, and service to the ELI for management purposes" p.50

Whilst observation and evaluation operate individually, they are both considered "important aspects of the annual evaluation process". It was indicated in the FH that evaluation enhances teachers' professional growth.

"This management tool enriches productivity and increases instructor satisfaction by providing constructive performance feedback. Feedback is a key driver for continuous development, creativity, and, ultimately, student satisfaction".

From the above, it can be seen that evaluation and observation go hand in hand to evaluate the performance of the ELI faculty but at the same time serve as developmental activities imposed by the ELI. In 2.5 below, I will discuss how these PD activities can be seen to impose compliance on teachers despite its developmental purposes.

2.4.1 Criteria for evaluation

In order to help teachers undertake their 'professional roles' set by the ELI, the PDU and coordination units established a criteria for conducting faculty evaluations annexed to classroom observations. The process of evaluation is carefully designed to monitor and evaluate teachers' performance and hold them accountable for administrative control. Three parties are involved in teachers' evaluation: the PD Unit, the Coordination Unit and students. Evaluators (coordinators and students) are supplied with the detailed evaluation forms which they can "fill out in the most comprehensive way possible" (FH, 2013: 45). Thus, teachers' performance is judged based on five criteria:

- Instructional skills (based on classroom observation);

- Professionalism (based on academic knowledge, performance, and behaviour outside the classroom);

- Professional development (undertaken during the current academic year and based on submitting a personal PD plan for the upcoming academic year);

- Service to ELI (based on involvement, committee involvement in extra-curricular activities, materials development, etc.);

- Student evaluations (information obtained from student evaluation forms).

Whilst as indicated in the above sections that observation is only intended to assist the professional developmental of the faculty members, it is stipulated that evaluation which is conducted in classroom observation sessions can be used to "make the instructor accountable" and "foster the competency of the instructor" p.51. Evaluation (even observation) can be used to identify "marginal" instructors those teachers who show "poor language proficiency" and receive "complaints from students" (p.52). Eventually, the assessment procedures influence and may inform administrative decisions about the employment future of the faculty. Specifically, "the outcome of these assessment procedures is used by ELI management to aid in decision making issues concerning each instructor's future role at the Institute" (FE, 2013: 51).

2.5 Conclusion

It can be seen as introduced in this chapter that PD is taken as a conduit for achieving the proposed 'professional' indicators of being a professional teacher at the ELI. The process is carefully architected to result in full compliance to the desired ends set by the ELI. It appears that every dimension of teachers' lives in the ELI is entirely controlled by setting parameters that teacher must fulfil. Hence, in the name of 'professionalism' teaching and professional development appear to be broken down into observable components that can be selectively

assembled and disassembled to verify and justify the proposed professionalism criteria. The language of the ELI FH appears to be too deterministic of what education and being professional might mean at the ELI. A rosy view of how setting goals for students learning, providing the most effective "research-evidenced" textbooks to meet the CEFR aided by very detailed and structured professional development activities and evaluation criteria for instructors to help them stay on track and maintain full compliance to the enunciated professionalism, will lead to "successful achievement' of the desired reforms and 'effective' students' learning.

Bearing in mind the discourses of managerial and independent professionalism (Day & Sachs; 2004; Evans, 2008) as discussed in 3.2.1 below, which I consider as the overarching frames of reference through which I examined the Faculty Handbook, I was not able to place the word 'professionalism' under any of these discourses. The reason is that the mentioning of the word 'professionalism' was "reiterated" in several sections of the text, but it was not explicitly defined. However, this discourse can be understood as being "situated more broadly in genre chain of accountability and regulation" (Ryan & Bourke, 2013: 417). It as Foucault (1980) explains "governs what can be said, thought and done" by teachers in the ELI with regards to professional development and their professionalism. Thus since these texts "make explicit the knowledge, practice and professional engagement" (Fairclough; 2003: 2), the themes outlined above can be considered as explicit discursive practices of the overarching discourse of managerial professionalism and will be considered as one of the orientating stances to be taken into consideration when approaching the interviews.

However, as will be revealed in chapter (5), this rosy view of educating the nation is experienced differently by the ELI teachers. Indeed, it appears that there is a conflict of interest between the administration and the ELI instructors over what a professional teacher might look like, how his professional growth can be enhanced and sustained and how students' learning

can be approached within this context. As Kelchtermans (2004) notes that tying professional development agendas to instrumentalist educational ends results in conflicting climate for teachers' professional growth. Hence, the development of academic TESOL teachers operates within two forces; the state and the teacher within the linguistic realities of learners in the classroom. PD is something teachers are required to do but, as discussed in chapter 1 is something that it appears teachers feel disaffected about and disengaged from. Uncovering how far and in what ways the PD 'culture' described in this chapter impacts on teachers perspectives on PD is what the study reported in this thesis seeks to uncover

2.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have introduced the socio-political context of this research study. In particular, this chapter presented the major discourses around which PD has evolved in the ELI. It overviewed the structure of higher education and how universities operate within this system. It highlighted how the internationalisation discourses and how it impinges on the policies of the language institutes in the Kingdom in general and within the context of this study in particular. PD is seen as a manifestation of the employers' interest in ensuring the implementation of promulgated internationally oriented reforms. This instrumental goal impinges on PD offered to teachers and expected of them. In the following chapter, I will interrogate the literature.

Chapter 3. Literature review

3.1 Introduction

In chapter 1 of this thesis, I have indicated an interest to explore teachers' perspectives on professional development in an English language centre at a university in Saudi Arabia. In Chapter 2, I have described the institute and information on the institutional professional development strategy as well as an indication of the teacher population for whom this is intended. In this chapter my focus is on conceptualising the understanding of PD I bring to this study. To do this, I first provide an overview of some of the tensions and evolving understandings in the literature regarding what PD is and how it can best be supported which inform the sorts of PD support activities institutions may offer to teachers. I then move to consider the growing appreciation of a need to examine the ways in which teachers engage with institutional PD support initiatives as a way of evaluating their merit and improving their likely impact.

In line with a number of writers, I argue for a socially constructed understanding of PD. This is one which recognises a need to understand a number of different dimensions of PD (micro, meso and macro) that should be taken into account in examining teacher perspectives on PD opportunities in the workplace and the ways in which these dimensions intersect. As I propose, this provides a more complex but also richer account of teachers' reactions to and experiences of PD. I will suggest that particular attention be paid to the explanatory power of wider meta-discourses (a macro dimension) which can be seen to frame individual (micro) and community/workplace (meso) dimensions. I end the chapter by using this conceptual framework to critically review the limited research literature relevant to my study.

3.2 Towards a definition of Professional development

An important starting point in this chapter is to consider what I mean by the term PD in this thesis. There are a number of different (and sometimes competing) terms in use in the literature to describe the processes and activities that teachers engage in themselves or others provide for them to further their knowledge and understanding of their work, including but not limited to professional development, teacher development or learning and continuing professional development (or CPD). In this thesis I will employ the term professional development, in part because it is one that is widely employed in the literature, but also because, for reasons I explain below I believe it best describes the phenomenon I am investigating in my study; teachers' perspectives of PD in an institution in Saudi Arabia.

3.2.1 A critical consideration of terminology

On the surface, the term professional development and associated terms used to describe this with reference to teachers are self-explanatory. For example, as Villegas-Reimers (2003:11) propose, PD can be defined as "the development of a person in his or her professional role" or as Day and Sachs (2004: 4) offer with respect to CPD:

> Continuing professional development (CPD) is a term used to describe all
> the activities in which teachers engage during the course of a career which
> are designed to enhance their work.

Nevertheless, a reading of the literature on the professional development of teachers shows that many writers find these definitions to be far from unproblematic. On the one hand, as Day and Sachs (2004) observe, these sorts of definitions are deceptively simplistic and do not address the complexities inherent in the process of teacher learning. Unravelling these complexities lies at the heart of this thesis and developing a conceptual understanding of PD which acknowledges these is one of the aims of this chapter. On the other hand, the terms PD, teacher professional development and CPD are themselves seen as problematic by many writers who

seek to distance themselves from them. In what follows I will examine reasons why some writers choose to use different terms and consider why as Glover and Law (1996) observed almost 20 years ago there appears to be so little unanimity on a specific term for PD. To do so, requires close scrutiny of the two words that comprise the term professional development; *professional* and *development.* I will first concentrate on an examination of the term professional*,* why this term is seen as increasingly compromised by some writers and why, despite this I feel it is important to continue to use it.

In line with a number of others, Mann (2005: 104) explains his rejection of the term professional in his discussion of TESOL practitioners preferring instead to use the term *teacher development* as he understands the term professional to apply to institutional efforts to provide CPD opportunities or requirements which are not necessarily in line with teachers' own developmental or learning agendas or needs. He describes the goals of professional development as narrower in scope than teacher development and as associated with "instrumental and utilitarian" p.104 agendas for promoting teacher development. In contrast, *Teacher* development as a term is, he argues broader in scope and highlights the personal and autonomous dimensions of a teacher's development borne out of emotional and moral understandings of their work and generated from informal as well as formal learning opportunities (Mann, 2005). In taking this stance, Mann can be seen to raise widespread concerns about the growth of what Evans (2008 ; 2011) calls the "new professionalism" increasingly evident in educational systems in the 21st century and which links the requirement for CPD (often in the form of a top-down imposition) to the implementation of educational reform processes as discussed in Chapter 1 above.

As Evans (2008) explains, this new professionalism, also referred to as managerial professionalism (Day and Sachs 2004, Sachs 2005), is understood to involve a greater control and management of professional development activities by those who are not the teachers

themselves. It is typically driven by institutional and government desire to improve professional standards, that is to improve the "quality of service" in educational institutions (Hoyle , 2001:146). The term 'new' by implication suggests that this is potentially replacing another 'old' way of thinking about professionalism, namely teacher professionalism as autonomous and something that should be generated and in response to agendas for professional development teachers set themselves based on their own personal learning needs (Whitty , 2006; Kennedy , 2005). Thus it is a desire by some writers to distance themselves from this perceived shift in the locus of control of teacher development away from teachers and on to the institutions themselves (and the use of the term PD and CPD to describe the opportunities that are offered by institutions) that informs their decision to distance themselves from the term professional as Mann himself explained (Mann, 2005).

Nevertheless it is also the case that other writers argue that the term professionalism still has a relevance and important place in discussion of teacher development. Bolam and McMahon (2004) argue for example that the focus, content and mode of PD are all underpinned and influenced by assumptions and visions of what a professional teacher looks like. More generally, Evans (2008) points out that applying the label professional to the work of teachers is one of the ways we align ourselves with other professions and ensure that teaching continues to have a high social status. In addition, drawing upon a distinction originally made by Hoyle and Johns (1995), Evans argues that despite the ways in which the term has been co-opted by those who seek to impose a particular vision of professional development on teachers enshrined in this new professionalism, many teachers continue to see themselves as professionals and approach their work from a stance of professionality. Namely, as she explains:

> " an ideologically-, attitudinally-, intellectually-, and epistemologically-based stance on the part of an individual, in relation to the practice of the profession to which s/he belongs and which influences her/his professional practice." (Evans, 2002: 6-7).

What the points above highlight is that there is a lack of consensus relating to the meaning of professional (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). McCulloch et al (2000: 6) observe, the term profession (and thereby what it means to be professional) is a socially constructed term and reflects "the different stances of different people and groups in society" as well as "judgements that are specific to time and contexts". In the TESOL literature, while questions have been raised about the extent to which TESOL teachers have careers (see Johnston, 2003) and thereby whether the term professional is relevant, as the field has evolved it is possible to discern an awareness of the need to engage with the debates about professionalism highlighted by Evans above. See for example, Burns and Richards (2009:2) and Leung (2009). Leung (2009) proposes a distinction is drawn between "sponsored professionalism" and "independent professionalism" in his discussion of teacher development; a distinction which has much in common with the one offered by Evan's (2008) above.

Following Evans and Leung, I believe that it is important to retain the term professional in my inquiry into teachers' perspectives on their development. Firstly, because debates about what it means to be a professional are part of the contextual backdrop that informs the institution's agenda for PD where the teachers work as well as teachers' perceptions and experiences of this. Secondly, because any clashes and contradictions between institutional and individual teachers' visions for PD are likely, in part to reflect different understandings of what it means to be a professional.

As explained earlier the use of the term *development* is also one that some writers feel should be used with caution. Words which are sometimes used instead of development include learning, change and growth. As Fraser et al (2007) point out preferences are motivated by several things including the orientating stance of the writer. As Fraser et al (2007) also highlight one reason writers may reject the term development (echoing the reason for rejection of the term professional discussed above) is that the term development is assumed by some writers to

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refer to activities which are introduced by those who are not the teachers themselves in the interest of improving standards. In contrast the term learning places an emphasis on individual teacher change agendas and teachers' own efforts to improve themselves. From another perspective, Knapp (2003) understands professional *development* to include 'the full range of activities, formal and informal, that engage teachers in new learning about their professional practice' (p.112), while professional *learning* is understood to refer to 'changes in the thinking, knowledge, skills, and approaches to instruction that form practicing teachers' repertoire' (pp. 112- 113). For yet other writers, who are interested in the process of learning teachers go through, the term learning is preferred to development by those who want to disassociate themselves from an understanding of teacher learning as a cognitive and psychological process which stressed the growth of teacher knowledge and understanding as a process of individual development. For these writers, as will be discussed further in section 3.3.3.2 below, the term learning is often used as a way of recognising the importance of the social world in the ways teachers evolve their professional knowledge.

What is evident from the above, is that while some writers share the view that a distinction needs to be made between development and learning they do so for different reasons. The result is a complex picture with different writers employing slightly different interpretations of the two terms with some seeing the term development in a more positive light than others. It is important to note that the picture is made even more complicated with regard to the way in which the term teacher development is also used in a *positive* way to describe a pedagogic approach to PD which is contrast to teacher training (see Section 3.3.4 below for further discussion of this). The different understandings of this word and negative as well as positive associations the word has suggest that if it is to be used (as is the case in this thesis) that what is intended by this term should be clearly stated. In this thesis, I continue to use the term development to emphasise the process of change that teachers go through on the basis of their

experiences of teaching and of activities undertaken to help them with this. Since I feel the process of development entails learning, growth and transformation, I do not find it necessary to distinguish between them. I therefore use the term development to imply all of these things and following a number of other writers (see for example Phillips et al. in Friedman , 2005: 57) I use them interchangeably to refer to the same process.

3.2.2 Defining the parameters of this study into PD

Broadly speaking PD is understood to encompass any activity designed to help teachers become better at their job, as the following definition proposed by Day (1999:4) highlights:

> Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and
> those conscious and planned activities which are intended to benefit the
> individual, group or school and which contribute, through these, to the
> quality of education in the classroom.

From this quote it is clear that a huge range of activities and opportunities might be understood to comprise PD. This adds further to the complexity in defining PD but also highlights the need for the scope of a study and its focus of interest to be clearly stated. In doing this it is helpful to draw upon a number of different ways of classifying PD activities. One of these developed by Reid (reported in Fraser et al, 2007) is to plot activities onto a PD quadrant in which activities can be classified along a continuum ranging from planned to incidental on one axis and from formal to informal on another. With formal used to refer to those PD activities explicitly established by an agent other than a teacher and informal referring to those sought by the teacher himself (Fraser et al 2007).

Another important distinction drawn in definitions of PD is whether this refers to an activity undertaken in or out of the workplace. Lieberman (1996, cited in Day and Sachs, 2004) identifies a number of dimensions of PD. She suggests that PD can take the form of

- **Direct learning** (for example through attending conferences, workshops or seeking further qualifications)

- **Learning in school** (for example through institutional generated CPD initiatives as well as mentoring, team planning and critical friendships)

- **Learning out of school** (for example through professional networks and professional development centres).

Day and Sachs (2004) argue, it is important to recognise these different sources of PD and to realise that teachers will potentially draw upon all three to support their development as teachers. In this thesis the PD focus is on the second of Leiberman's dimensions, school or workplace learning. Moreover, as explained in chapter 1 above, a central focus of interest is on the formal and planned institutional efforts to promote PD and teachers' reactions to and experiences of these. However, also of (secondary) interest is any incidental and informal PD activities that teachers are engaged in (whether in or outside of the institution) as these are likely to inform how teachers engage with institutional provision. Uncovering these things is one of the ways in which the study in this thesis is seeking to build a richer but more complex understanding of PD.

In recent years, in line with a growth of interest in the significance of social worlds and people within them to teacher development, school or workplace learning has been the focus of increased attention in the literature (see for example Murray et al., 2014; Day & Sachs 2004). This has helped highlight how PD can be understood as "a process whereby teachers may be *helped* to become more professional" (Livingson & Robertson , 2001: 187) and to the realisation that while PD can be successfully undertaken by teachers independently of others, that it can be considerably enhanced with the right sort of support from the school or institution (Underhill , 1999: 9). More broadly there is a growing recognition that PD does not take place in a vacuum (Kelchtermans, 2004). In other words that to understand motivations towards and

engagement in PD activity by teachers requires that attention be paid to the influence that contextual factors will have on the uptake of PD and what sorts of PD activities teachers will engage in. The focus of my inquiry in this thesis is on PD in the workplace and particularly on how uncovering the perspectives of teachers in the institution where I work, can provide a more informed understanding of how far and in what ways the current support mechanisms for PD in this institution are seen as helpful to teachers and what alternatives might be considered.

What is evident from the discussion in this section is that there are many overlapping and competing terms to describe PD in the literature. This "conceptual" pluralism as Bolam and MacMahon (2004) explain is one of the things that makes it difficult to discuss the topic without clearly establishing what the term PD means. Given my interest in understanding the relationship between individuals and their engagement in PD in a particular sociocultural and institutional setting, drawing upon Kelchtermans (2004: 220) I understand PD to be a learning process resulting from meaningful interaction with the context leading to changes in teachers' professional practice and their thinking about that practice.

In what follows I will consider how this understanding of PD as a social and situated practice has gradually come to occupy an increasingly central place in the literature on PD and what the pedagogical implications for those supporting teachers' PD are considered to be.

3.3 Evolving understandings of how to support teachers' professional development

Underpinning the design of PD initiatives to support teachers are assumptions about two closely linked perspectives on teaching: what teachers need to know to be effective in their job (the knowledge-base of teaching) and how teachers can best be helped to develop this (the nature of teacher learning). I will consider these two perspectives in turn and the ways in which evolving understandings of these is reflected in the different ways in which PD support is envisaged in the literature and promoted.

3.3.1 Changing understandings of the nature and location of teacher knowledge

A knowledge base refers to the information and the content of knowledge, expertise and skills that teachers possess and refer to in their decisions regarding teaching and students' learning (Freeman, 2002; Richards, 1998). As Johnson (2009: 11) argues this knowledge base is "in essence a professional self-definition". The focus on the knowledge base can be assigned to the argument that the development of expertise in the teaching profession would be incomplete without sufficient awareness of the knowledge base and the theories that inform it (Gatbonton, 2008: Johnston & Goettsch; 2008). As Richards (1998: 33) posits "underlying any approach to the pre-service or in-service development of second language teachers is a conception of what good teaching is and what the essential knowledge and skills of teachers are". Given this, many writers have focused on articulating this knowledge-base in order to understand what the focus and content of PD activities should be.

The conceptualization of the knowledge base of TESOL teachers and thereby what should be the focus of efforts to support teachers with their work has gradually transformed over the last 30 years (Johnson and Golombek, 2002) and today there is broad agreement of the need to view this knowledge base as complex and teachers' ways of knowing as wide-ranging. An examination of the literature shows that different attempts to describe the knowledge-base have resulted in a number of different typologies which can be drawn on to develop principles and procedures for PD support initiatives. First of all, for some writers (most notably, Shulman, the focus has been primarily on describing the different *types* of knowledge needed for effective teaching. Broadly speaking, these can be classified into two major dimensions of teacher knowledge; *know about* versus *know how* (Burns & Richards, 2009). 'Know about' refers to the subject knowledge that teachers need referred to by Freeman (2001; 2002) as disciplinary knowledge. In contrast, 'know how' refers to pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986) or procedural knowledge that teachers need to deliver their subject effectively.

Other typologies of teacher knowledge have focused more on where teachers get their teaching knowledge from. One distinction that is drawn is between received and experiential knowledge (Wallace, 1991). Received knowledge is often the sort of knowledge described above as subject knowledge which is passed to teachers by 'experts' and which is also sometimes called theoretical or academic knowledge. However, there is widespread recognition in the literature that a great deal of teacher knowledge is actually produced by teachers themselves through the course of their work. This knowledge is understood to be not only experiential but also personal and local (Freeman, 2009; 2002) as it is gradually built up by individual teachers over time as a result of their efforts to address practical problems within their classrooms. This kind of knowledge has led to a growing appreciation of teachers as not just consumers of knowledge but as active participants in knowledge generation and creation (Kumaravadivelu , 2012; Pennycook , 1989). A final distinction drawn in the literature with regard to teacher knowledge (one that builds upon the distinction between received and experiential knowledge) is the idea of some forms of knowledge being more visible or explicit and others being more implicit or tacit (Burns & Richards, 2009). Whereas received knowledge is explicit and public knowledge, teachers' personal, experiential and practical knowledge is often viewed as implicit, operating at a sub-conscious level. As will be discussed in more detail below in 3.3.4, these different conceptualizations of knowledge have been influential in the development of different sorts of pedagogies to help support teachers with their professional learning.

3.3.2. Changing understandings of the nature of teacher learning

The gradual move in recent years from a view of knowledge as a discreet entity which teachers receive towards one where knowledge is understood to be an outcome grounded in teachers' practice of teaching has been mirrored by a gradual shift in the understanding of teachers "as doers and implementers of other people's ideas" (Freeman, 2002: 5) and learning as a process involving the acquisition of knowledge from others, through to understanding of teachers as

"knowing professionals" (Johnson & Golombek , 2002: 1) with the capability to construct their own independent understandings of their work based on their lived experiences.

3.3.2.1 From behaviourist to constructivist understandings of teacher knowledge.

For those who see teacher knowledge as a discrete set of external facts and skills, learning is often seen as a process of internalization and imitation, that is as underpinned by behaviourist learning theory (Johnson, 2006; Freeman, 2002; Wright , 2010). However, for those who appreciate that teachers' knowledge is also experiential and personal, then a constructivist theory of learning, one which highlights individuals as actively engaged in making sense of organising and generating knowledge rather than passive absorbers of knowledge held by others, would as Hoban (2002) argues seem to provide a better account of how teachers acquire their skills and understanding of their profession. It is this view of teacher learning that has been influential in developing the reflective practitioner model of PD (see 3.3.4.2 below for further discussion of this) which is widely advocated in the literature on teacher education. It is also a desire to expand this constructivist view of learning to include greater appreciation of the role of the social world in learning that underpins the gradual evolution of social constructivist accounts of teacher learning (see for example Johnson, 2006) which I will discuss further below.

3.3.2.2 The Teacher Cognition movement

Constructivism, one of the central movements within cognitive psychology, has been influential in shifting research attention away from teachers' external behaviours to their inner behaviour of thinking in accounts of teacher learning (Kaufman & Crandall, 2005 ; Kaufman , 2004). It has, in particular, been a major stimulus to the growth of the teacher cognition research which, as Johnson (2006) observes, has made an important contribution to our understanding of teacher learning. Teacher cognition provides a cognitive model for studying teachers'

beliefs, assumptions and knowledge (Woods, 1996) that is for examining what teachers think, know and believe and how these relate to what they do (Borg, 2009a; 2006). As the use of the term cognition illustrates, this emphasises the importance of teachers as holders of knowledge in their own right and of teacher learning as a process of construction. That is an individualised and active process of meaning making through processing and reflection (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Johnson (2006:400) states that teacher cognition as a research field explores the "the actual thought processes that teachers engage in as they plan and carry out their lessons". Research also showed that teachers could not merely be understood with reference to their behaviours but that there was a need to appreciate the richer and wider mental context which underpinned their work. In other words, as Borg (2006), one of the main figures within the teacher cognition research movement in second language teacher education indicates, teacher cognition has provided important insights into the complexity of "who teachers are, what they know and believe, how they learn to teach, and how they carry out their work in diverse contexts throughout their careers" (p.236). Teacher cognition research has helped contribute to an understanding of teacher learning as a personal, life-long process of knowledge-accumulation (Hoban, 2002) involving the complex cyclical relationship between knowing and doing (Eraut, 1994: 14). Research on teacher cognition has also highlighted the importance of the influence of belief systems (Pajares, 1992), built up over time, including through teachers' experiences as students in school which provides "an apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975: 62) as well as the role of experiential knowledge or personal practical knowledge on teacher thinking (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). It has therefore played an important role in supporting the need to understand teachers as 'knowing subjects' in teacher education programmes (Johnston & Goettsch; 2000).

3.3.3 Challenges to teacher cognition as an account of teacher learning

Those working within a teacher cognition tradition have, and continue to make, important contributions to understanding teacher knowledge and learning. However, there are two main drawbacks identified with cognitive models of teacher learning. These are discussed in turn below.

3.3.3.1 The emotional, ethical and relational dimensions of teacher learning

One of the concerns raised in teacher learning research is the need to appreciate that teachers are not merely thinking beings but that emotions and a sense of self interrelate with cognition in complex ways, something that Borg, one of those who has written extensively on teacher cognition acknowledges needs to be given more attention in accounts of teacher learning (Borg, 2009b).

Although the importance of emotions to teacher learning has received limited attention in accounts of second and foreign language teacher learning to date (see Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002), the importance of emotions in teaching has been emphasised by a number of those writing about teachers in mainstream education (see for example, Zembylas ,2007 and Hargreaves, 1998). As Hargreaves (1998), for example argues: "good teaching is charged with positive emotion. It is not just a matter of knowing ones subject, being efficient, having the correct competences, or learning all the right techniques" (Hargreaves, 1998: 835 cited in Day & Sachs, 2004). As Day and Sachs maintain these emotional aspects of effective teaching are closely linked to ethical and relational dimensions of being a teacher and part of the ways in which quality teaching is distinguished from poor teaching. Similarly Buzzelli and Johnston (2002: 2) while their focus is on moral meaning in classroom interactions, they acknowledge that "the moral significance of education also resides in structures beyond the classroom."

As well as being an integral part of teachers' work, emotions are likely to also affect the ways in which teachers orientate themselves to professional learning opportunities and the extent and ways in which they engage in them (Evans, 2008). In other words, teachers' emotional reactions need to be taken seriously in accounts of how teachers learn and there is a need to recognise that these are closely linked to their sense of professional self (Kelchtermans, 2004) or what many writers (see for example Varghese , 2004; Varghese, Morgan, Johnston and Johnson , 2005) refer to as their professional identity and which is discussed in more detail in 3.4.1 below. Kelchtermans (2004) highlights a number of components that need to be accommodated in a theory of teacher learning. Namely, teacher self-image, self-esteem, perception of what the task of being a teacher entails and future perspective, or how teachers understand the possibilities for their professional future. The implication of these perspectives is that teachers need to be approached as more than merely 'knowers' but as complex multidimensional subjects. Moreover, as such, efforts to support teachers to develop as professionals needs to acknowledge that a teachers' sense of professional self can be seen to orientate them to the learning opportunities they encounter and the way they engage with these (Hoban, 2002).

3.3.3.2 The significance of the social world to teacher learning

The second major challenge to teacher cognition as a way to understand teacher learning is one which resonates with the move to see knowledge as local, or situated in particular settings (Canagarajah , 2012). That is, it is one that argues for the need to recognize and acknowledge the ways in which interaction in social worlds with others impacts on teacher learning. The social level of cognition is largely neglected in teacher cognition research. For example, while Borg (2003) acknowledges that context plays a role in developing cognition, this is understood to be a backdrop to the development of cognition rather than as integral to it as a number of writers on language teacher education are increasingly arguing is actually the case (see for

example, Johnson, 2006 and Hawkins, 2004). These writers take their inspiration from an emerging paradigm in learning theory, a social 'turn' (Johnson, 2006; Johnson & Golombek, 2002; Block , 2003; Freeman & Johnson , 1998) one which argues for a need to appreciate the fundamentally social nature of cognition, that is, to engage with socially constructed nature of how understandings are developed.

Among a number of different ways in theorising learning as a social phenomenon, the social constructivist theory of learning developed by Vygotsky and his followers, often referred to as sociocultural theory in discussions of second language learning (Lantolf , 2003), has been most influential in the field of education in general and in developing social accounts of teacher learning in particular. Vygotsky's social constructivist model of learning has as its central tenet the idea of the mediated mind, or an understanding of human cognition as first and foremost an intermental resulting from participation in activities with others in cultural worlds (Lantolf, 2003; Johnson & Golombek, 2002). As such the development of cognition over time is closely connected to the affordances and constraints of the learning environment (Johnson & Golombek, 2002). Vygotsky's ideas represent a radical departure from the constructivist model underpinning the teacher cognition perspective on teacher learning as it emphasises that it "is not that social activity influences cognition but that social activity is the process through which human cognition is formed" (Lantolf and Johnson , 2007: 878).

As a developmental psychologist, Vygotsky's work focused primarily on understanding how knowledge acquired with others in the social world becomes part of an individual's knowledge system. He emphasised the importance of significant others to this endeavour in helping to structure or scaffold a flexible learning space (which he called the zone of proximal development) to provide the right levels of support (or assisted performance) through which individuals are able to ultimately function independently, that is to internalise new ideas and make them part of their own cognitive repertoire (Lantolf, 2003).

While for Vygotsky learning with others is central to understanding how individuals come to operate as autonomous thinkers, it is also important to appreciate his emphasis on how learning is ultimately a process of socialisation, and therefore primarily a process of becoming a more effective and fully-functioning member of a given social reality. Inspired by this emphasis on the situated nature of cognition in Vygotsky's work, some writers (most notably Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) have sought to develop a model of learning which stresses that cognition is better understood as a social phenomenon and that learning is the result of and intimately connected to individuals participation in the world. In a radical departure from Vygotsky's work, Lave and Wenger propose that people experience the world at the level of community and that learning is a collaborative process which entails a process of acquiring the norms, values and practices of the communities of practice they seek to gain membership of and/or are socialised into. For them, communities of practice comprise, "groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis" (Lave and Wenger, 1991: 4).

In line with those who call for a need to include a more multifaceted understanding of what teachers bring to their work, Lave and Wenger (1991), argue that a situated view of learning requires we view individuals as participating as fully embodied subjects who engage and learn at an emotional as well as cognitive level and with reference to their personal and professional beliefs and values built up from their experiences over time. That is, as" fully cultural-historical participants in the world" (Ibid: 32). In contrast to Vygotsky, those working within a community of practice tradition, are interested to describe the process whereby individuals move from the place of legitimate peripheral participants in a community to full membership (Wenger, 1998). In doing this, they have helped highlight the importance of the situation or context for learning (Hoban, 2002: 54) and this has helped draw attention in particular to the

role of community in teacher learning and the impact of institutional and other forms of professional community on teacher learning.

3.3.4 The relationship between different knowledge and learning perspectives and formal support for teacher PD

The different understandings of the nature of teacher knowledge and teacher learning discussed above can be seen to underpin a number of different traditions regarding the best sort of pedagogical provisions to promote and support teachers with their development. A major distinction that is drawn in the literature and that is visible in the labels assigned to PD support is between what is widely referred to as *training* and *development* which operate with very different assumptions about teacher knowledge and learning and how this is best supported and by whom as I will discuss below. Although it is possible to track a gradual shift in the understanding of effective pedagogy to support teachers over the past two decades which echoes changing understandings of the knowledge base of teaching and how teachers learn, both training and development perspectives on teacher support are still very much actively promoted in PD programmes in many contexts. Moreover, both of these different understandings of teacher support may be drawn upon in the design of a teacher support strategy at an institutional or government level. Given this the term teacher education is often preferred as an umbrella term in discussion of teacher support initiatives (Freeman, 2009).

Drawing upon a number of writers including, Mann (2005), Bailey et al., (2001), Wallace , (1991) and Day and Sachs (2004), Table 1 below provides an overview of the main differences between the training and development models of teacher support. The table includes a number of alternative terms employed to describe these, theoretical orientations, the locus of control over the process of PD envisaged by each and the implicit stance towards teachers that each promotes. Following on from this I will describe each of these models of pedagogic support for teacher growth in turn.

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Table 1. Different pedagogical models of teacher support: training versus development

Models of teachers support	Also referred to as:	View of Knowledge	View of Learning	Locus of control	Role of PD support activity
TRAINING	Technical rationalist Applied-science	Received External	Behaviourist	Other directed (Top-down)	Equipping teachers with new knowledge and skills
DEVELOPMENT	Normative - reeducative	Experiential Local	Constructivist and/or social constructivist	Self-directed (Bottom up)	Enabling teachers to become better at what they do.

3.3.4.1 A training model of teacher education

Guskey and Huberman (1995) view training as operating with a deficit model of teachers, as training is concerned with addressing presumed gaps in teachers' disciplinary or procedural knowledge. Training can be seen to evolve out of an earlier 'craft model' of education which ascribes the expertise or 'wisdom' of the profession to an experienced professional practitioner in the craft (Wallace, 1991). Training shares this emphasis on professional development as other directed, but departs from the view that teachers will learn merely through mimicking the techniques presented by the expert, and by following his advice (Ibid). Rather it is interested in the transmission of discrete chunks of knowledge, skills, and behaviours that teachers can apply at a future date in their classrooms (Wright, 2010; Johnson, 2006).

The origins of a training perspective can be traced back to attempts to legitimise the teaching profession by drawing upon principles of scientific rigor referred to variously as a technical-rationale approach to teaching (Schon, 1983; 1987) and training as an applied science model of teacher education which seeks to 'engineer' teaching by solving problems by implementing solutions generated from scientific research (Wallace 1991). Thus training is part of a systematic process of identifying effective teacher behaviour through research, imparting an understanding of how to apply this to teachers in the form of sets of discreet skills and examining the impact of these on measurable learner outcomes. As Hunter (1982) (Cited in Johnson, 2006: 236) notes the purpose of training was "ensuring that teachers had mastered the content they were expected to teach and could deliver this through efficient methods that lead to greater gains in student achievement". As part of systematic approach to teacher education and because of its focus on discreet pieces of knowledge, skill and behaviour, the impact of training can be easily measured by means of observation and any issues can be subsequently addressed (Kennedy, 2005).

There are a number of challenges to the training model of teacher education which the developmental model of teacher education seeks to address. Chief among these is the failure to acknowledge teachers as active knowing subjects. As Freeman and Johnsons (1998: 398) put it, training typically focuses more on what teachers need to know than on what they actually know, and how this shapes what they do. Moreover, by keeping the focus on the technical aspects of teaching and not paying attention to the moral and emotional dimensions of teachers work means that teachers may experience training as de-professionalising (Day, 1999) since training often takes place away from the workplace and comprises de-contextualised one shot workshops this can lead teachers to feel training is irrelevant and at times too theoretical as well (Richards, 1998; Brown, 1983; Brumfit, 1983).

3.3.4.2 Development models of teacher education

Development models of teacher education are ones which seek to address many of the drawbacks of training models. In other words, drawing upon constructivist learning theory, they emphasise the development of an aspirational approach to teacher education (Buchanan , 2013) one that focuses on enabling teachers to build and elaborate and improve on what they are already doing. A development model is therefore a personal growth model of teacher education seeking to build activist professionals who can become better at making informed educational judgements and at setting their own learning agendas (Crandall , 2000). In contrast to the decontextualized one-shot workshops that are often the means through which training is delivered, developmental approaches to teacher education are concerned much more with teacher education as a long-term process and therefore the most important goal of this sort of approach is to undertake activities which help raise teachers awareness of aspects of their work that need improvement and to introduce them to sets of tools which can help them identify solutions to these.

The main pedagogic support strategies associated with a development model of PD are ones which help teachers develop as reflective practitioners (Wallace 1991; Farrell , 2007) and as a component of this, those which promote small-scale classroom inquiry or research (see for example, Burns (1999) on action research and Allwright (1997) on exploratory practice). Reflection can be understood as a process of inner dialogue and 'conversation with the self' (Prawat, 1991, cited in Mann, 2005: 108) and in a development model of PD finding ways to help teachers reflect on their beliefs and current practice is a key step in getting them to engage in learning and to identify personal developmental action plans. Through a process of reflection, teachers can be helped to uncover hidden or tacit beliefs and assumptions about teaching which may be implicit in their classroom routines. Making this implicit knowledge explicit (Hiebert et al., 2002) enables it to be worked on and for learning to take place with an

awareness of practice. Inquiry can be used at different stages of the reflection process; to help deepen an understanding of an issue or to try out a new idea and evaluate its impact (Farrell, 2007).

In the early versions of a teacher development model of PD, in line with the emphasis on construction as an individual cognitive process, attention was often placed on individual self-reflexive activities (such as keeping a reflective diary, see for example, Richards and Farrell , 2005) however, fuelled in large part by the growing influence of social constructivist models of teacher learning there has been a growing emphasis on the significance of others to teacher learning, and of the valuable development opportunities provided by collaboration, teacher networks, including critical friendships, and virtual and face to face professional learning communities (see for example, Edge ,2002; Mitchell and Sackney , 2000; Farrell, 2007). The emphasis on teachers working to better learn from their own practice has led to a steady and growing interest in school-based or workplace PD (see for example, Legutke & Schocker v. Ditfurth , 2009) and through this to a critical consideration of the workplace conditions and the impact that these can have on teachers PD as I will discuss further in 3.4 below and which served as the motivation for this study as discussed in chapter 1.

3.3.5 The persistence of training as a model of PD worldwide

The discussion of the different understandings of teacher knowledge and learning discussed above have highlighted various points of departure in theoretical understandings of this, but also how over time there has been a growing appreciation of professional development as being an achievement of individuals within social worlds (see for example, Day,1999; Kelchtermans, 2004). These changing understandings have, as was discussed above, led to a number of different models of pedagogical support for teachers with the social collaborative and community-orientated approach to PD gaining ground in the PD literature in recent years.

Reflecting these changes, it has also been possible to detect a general move away from a training to a development model of PD over the past 30 years which has highlighted the potential for institutions to develop new models of PD support for teachers and which recognises a need to accommodate a sense of teachers as legitimate holders of knowledge and to see helping teachers evolve their understandings as the primary focus of PD provision (Johnson, 2006). However, as several writers have observed, training has not been entirely eclipsed by a development model of PD (Freeman, 2009; Kennedy, 2005; Parker, 2004 (cited in Mann, 2005). Freeman (2009) suggests that in part, this is because training is viewed as a useful way to impart procedural knowledge and skills which can complement a broader reflective inquiry and problem-solving approach to PD. Wright (2010) also points out how despite the shift towards an emphasis on reflective and collaborative models of PD in the literature as discussed above, there has been slow uptake of this as a support strategy for PD in the real contexts of language teaching. As Johnson (2009:21) notes this lack of uptake highlights the multitude of social, institutional and political constraints that can work against the creation of professional development opportunities which reflect a more social constructivist understanding of PD. It is also the case that a training model of PD works well with the increasing emphasis on accountability and managerialism in education (Kennedy, 2005; Day and Sachs, 2004). This means that while teachers may complain that the training they receive is irrelevant and disconnected from their own teaching realities (Brown, 1983) training may continue to be promoted as a dominant model of PD by administrators in the belief that this is the most systematic efficient and cost-effective way to bring about teacher change (Day & Sachs, 2004).

3.4 The importance of teacher perspectives to developing an understanding of the success of PD initiatives

As discussed in the introduction to this thesis in Chapter 1, I believe that it is important for institutions to critically reflect on the ways in which they promote PD; especially if teachers do not seem to engage with these. I also believe that one of the best ways to do this, one that remains largely underexplored in the research literature, is to find out what the teachers think of these. Developing an understanding of PD from teacher perspectives, as was the aim of the study reported in this thesis can provide valuable insights which can not only help administrators evaluate their institutional PD strategy but can also help them identify suitable PD support innovations, more closely aligned with the needs and wants of teachers.

PD support is essentially aimed at transformation or change in teachers (Wedell, 2009; Kennedy, 2005). However, as is well-documented in the literature merely providing teachers with an opportunity to change is not necessarily any guarantee that they will experience these initiatives in the way they were intended. Until relatively recently, little attention has been paid to what teachers think about and experience change initiatives (Wedell, 2009) and as Bore and Wright (2009) report as I will report in 3.7 below, there is still a limited amount of research literature on the ways in which teachers orientate themselves to and engage in PD initiatives in particular. To put this another way as Opfer and Pedder (2011) point out, discussions of PD are still often based around decontextualized and overly-simplistic conceptualizations of PD which do not consider how learning is embedded in professional lives and working conditions. Finding ways to address these requires that attention be paid to identifying what some of the individual and contextual mediating factors might be (Kelchtermans, 2004; Opfer & Pedder, 2011).

Following Opfer & Pedder (2011) I believe it is helpful to adopt a three dimensional understanding of what some of these mediating factors are. This includes uncovering *micro*

factors, or factors which relate to the individual teacher, such as attitudes, beliefs and sense of professional self (or professional identity) borne out of their experiences over the course of their career (Kelchtermans, 2004). In addition, it is also important to examine the institutional 'culture, including the PD culture that is promoted (or *meso* factors) which can play an important role in the ways that teachers view and engage with PD support initiatives that are offered. In what follows, I will consider these micro and meso factors in turn before going on to consider the third perspective on teacher engagement with PD opportunities, one that emphasises a need to consider **macro** factors, that is things over and beyond the institution such as sociocultural setting, educational policies and wider discursive constructions of PD at a national and international level and which underpin the ways in which teachers orientate themselves towards PD opportunities they encounter in the workplace and their experience of these in the workplace. As I will argue, I believe that the individual (micro), institutional (meso) and discursive (macro) dimensions of PD provide 3 different but complementary perspectives on the ways teachers perceive and engage with institutional PD initiatives and as such can provide a rich description of PD, one that can more clearly reveal issues and challenges in institutional efforts to promote teachers' PD as well as ways in which these challenges can be improved.

3.4.1 The micro dimension: teacher biography and professional identity

As was evidenced in 3.3.4 above, the importance of a micro (teacher) perspective in understanding teacher learning has and continues to be given a great deal of emphasis in the literature. As was also discussed, there has been a growing appreciation of the need to accommodate an understanding of teachers as bringing their full sense of themselves as knowing but also emotional and moral subjects. Finally, it was also pointed out that this professional sense of self (or professional identity) is understood to be socially constructed, or shaped by experiences with others in social worlds. As Kelchtermans (2004: 224) argues, based

on these experiences, teachers will develop "personal interpretative frameworks", sets of beliefs and attitudes which will orientate themselves towards new experiences in certain ways and which are dynamic and subject to change in positive or negative ways on the basis of further experiences they have.

In light of the above, a number of writers (see for example, Goodson , 2000) have argued for the need to examine how teachers' beliefs, attitudes and behaviours evolve over time, and the importance of understanding teachers' historical trajectories as a means to understand current attitudes and behaviours, including the ways in which this informs their orientation towards PD support initiatives they encounter in more or less positive ways. One of the ways in which teachers have been examined as historical subjects among those writing about PD has been through attention to career stages (see for example Burden, 1990 cited in Bolam & McMahon, 2004). Moreover, a teachers' personal perspective on the stage in their career they perceive themselves to be at can be one of the factors which affect their engagement in a particular PD initiative as Bolam & McMahon (2004) observe. More broadly, as Huberman (1995) found in his study, the stage and position teachers have reached in their career is linked to their motivation for undertaking PD.

However, career as a unit of analysis for examining teacher history has also been called into question as this is seen to provide too linear and uni-dimensional an understanding of teacher's historical trajectories, and therefore to be overly-simplistic as well (Kelchtermans, 2004, Day, 1999). This has led to a greater emphasis on narrative biographical approach to understanding career which seeks to capture the ways in which teachers make sense of their experiences during their career to date (referred to as life history research by Goodson, 2000). There is also a growing emphasis on teacher identity as a more comprehensive way of discussing and analysing teacher perspectives on PD. One of the most comprehensive and prominent accounts of identity construction in the TESOL literature is the one provided by Norton (2000) and as

Miller (2009) indicates, her emphasis on identity as socially constructed and therefore as relational transforming, transitional and negotiated is one that underpins most of the proposed definitions of teacher identity (see for example, Johnson , 2009; Varghese et al, 2005).

In keeping with career and life history perspectives, on the one hand these definitions acknowledge the ways in which identity is constructed out of the accumulation of life experiences over time. However, in contrast to these perspectives, personal identity is not only understood to reflect individual history but it is also future-referenced or reflecting aspirations and an imagined future self (Norton, 2000: 5) which can have a positive or negative washback effect on how individuals act in a given situation. However, as well as a temporal dimension, identity is understood to have spatial dimensions too, that is to say the experiences of the social worlds within which an individual lives and works offer a range of opportunities as well as constraints on the identity construction process, leading individuals to re-negotiate their identities (Miller, 2009; Norton, 2000).

As such teacher identity can be understood as the negotiated outcome of both the sense of professional self a teacher brings to a setting and the ways in which others (such as institutional administrators) seek to position us. In other words, as Clarke (2008) argues, teacher identity not only "references individuals' knowledge and naming of themselves" but also "others' recognition of them as a particular sort of person" (p.168). As Norton (2000) points out, where there is a good degree of fit between self-identity and others sense of who we are, identity remains unproblematic, however, where it is experienced as a 'site of struggle' (p. 127), this is likely to impact on the degree to which individuals (such as teachers) invest in the norms and practices of a given community, including the extent to which they may engage in institutional PD support initiatives.

As Beijaard et al (2000) indicate identities are closely connected to learning, including teacher learning or development. In other words, teacher identity affects teachers "efficacy and

professional development as well as their ability and willingness to cope with educational change and to implement innovations in their own teaching practice" (p.749). Teacher identity offers a useful framework to explore the actions that teachers take in the workplace. In particular, how in an institutional context, such as the one that is the setting for the study in my thesis, a teacher's sense of who they see themselves can underpin whether or how far teachers engage in the CPD opportunities they encounter.

3.4.2 The meso dimension: professional community and institutional factors

Developing a more socially constructed account of individual learning has led to a growing awareness of the role of professional or workplace communities on this. Tsui (2006: 1) for example argues that, "context as a major source of influence must not be ignored or dismissed", a point that is reiterated by the vast majority of those writing about PD today both in mainstream education (see for example Day & Sachs, 2004; Bolam & MacMahon, 2004; Opfer & Pedder, 2011) and in TESOL in particular (Burns and Richards, 2009, Freeman, 2009, Johnson, 2006). As was discussed earlier (see 3.3.3.2), this can be evidenced by the emphasis on the importance of community to teacher learning highlighted by learning theory (see Lave and Wenger, 1991, for example) and by those who advocate for the development of PLCs as a way to support teachers' PD (e.g., Schmoker; 2006; DuFour & Eaker, 2005; Little, 2002; Hord, 1997). However, this is also evident in a growing body of work which has sought to identify what sorts of institutional conditions are seen to provide the most supportive environment for teachers' PD.

3.4.2.1 Institutional factors impacting on teachers' orientation to and experience of PD.

While the bulk of the research which has examined the institutional factors in teacher learning has examined schools rather than higher educational institutions such as the one that forms the setting for my study, and has mainly been done outside of TEOL, many of the insights from this research are ones that are likely to be important in higher educational settings, such as in

the ELI which forms the setting for this study. The impetus for much of this work has been on identifying what sorts of workplace conditions are most supportive of teacher PD activities. A central focus of this has been on the quality of the school or institutional culture or the "framework of beliefs which provides a normative basis for action" in an institution (Grimmmett & Crehan, 1992, in Pennington, 1995: 707) and which sets parameters for the expected behaviours of teachers and learners (Beijard et al. 2000).

In their examinations of the institutional factors that impact on teachers' professional and personal lives and that are therefore likely to impact on teachers' engagement with PD, Pennington (1991; 1995) and Johnston (1997) highlight such things as heavy workload, lack of time, job stability and low pay. These findings resonate with many other studies undertaken in this way and it is clear that organizational culture can create a poor professional atmosphere which can impact negatively on teachers' motivation towards and engagement with PD (Fullan, 2007). Smylie (1995) is one of a number of writers who have focused on identifying the qualities of institutions which teachers find most supportive. He argues that these include

- Opportunities to learn from colleagues

- Open communication

- Experimentation and feedback

These were found to be more prevalent in "learning-enriched" than "learning-impoverished" schools" (Rosenholtz, 1989 cited in Fullan, 2005: 55). Moreover, their presence was closely linked to two central elements of institutional culture; collegiality and leadership. It is indicated that PD within collaborative professional cultures "give rise to a sense of empowerment and confidence building" among teachers (Fraser et al. 2007: 145). With regard to leadership, where this is deemed to be effective, this can enhance teachers' motivation and participation in PD activities. Some components of effective leadership with regard to supporting PD in the workplace include making sure there is adequate time for teachers to do this, both individually and collectively (Adey et. al, 2004). In addition, creating the conditions that help teachers to

build collegial culture also lies for the most part on the school leadership (Rosenholtz's, 1989, in Adey et. al, 2004). It follows from this that the institutional vision for PD is also likely to have an impact on the sorts of activities that are offered to teachers which, if at odds with the individual vision will potentially lead to reluctance on the part of teachers to engage with this and possibly also to low uptake as well (Bolam & MacMahon, 2004).

3.4.3 Macro perspectives on PD: discourse and power

In recent years there has been a growing appreciation of the need to understand PD as, to use Johnson's term, 'located' (Johnson, 2006: 235). Johnson uses this term to refer to aspects of context over and above the norms and values and features of the immediate professional community or institution where PD is being undertaken. The concept of located PD is therefore used to stress the importance of understanding the impact of macro-structures such as educational policies and professional associations on PD and also to understand context at a macro level as more than merely geographical, but also as having cultural, economic, political and historical dimensions (Cross, 2006). Recently, technological advances and increasing globalization have also highlighted the interconnectivity between once distant locations, meaning that a consideration of macro dimensions of PD needs to accommodate an understanding of the ways in which 'local' institutional and teacher visions for PD visions may draw upon and be shaped by ideas of what constitutes effective PD that have been developed elsewhere. Johnson (2009) is one of a growing number of writers (see also Crawford, 2009; Berry, 2007 for example) who stress the importance of accommodating a macro dimension into a discussion of PD, because as Wideen et al. (1998: 168) note: "features of a larger system must be recognized as also significant, and addressed, if research and practice in teacher education are to be improved".

3. 4.3.1 Macro perspectives and discursive realities

Johnson (2009) argues that attention to macro dimensions of PD is part of the move discussed earlier in the chapter to appreciate the socially constructed nature of teacher learning. As was discussed Vygotskian sociocultural theory with its interest in understanding how people learn from social worlds has provided much of the impetus for understanding teacher learning as socially constructed. However, another group of theorists, post-strucutralists and critical social theorists, draw upon a different strand of social constructivist epistemology and a different point of departure in understanding the relationship between the social world and individual learning. This is one which has emerged from a sociological rather than psychological academic tradition and which seeks to understand the way the social world shapes and imposes order on human action and thought (Burr, 2003) and which proposes that this is best explained with reference to the concept of discourse.

One of the most prominent figures within this branch of social constructivism is the post-structuralist Michel Foucault (2002) who as Burr (2003) points out argues that what we see as realities are actually constructions produced by language (or discourse), so our 'realities' should be better understood as discursive realities. For Foucault and other post-structuralists, however, while discursive realities are ultimately produced by language, they come to take on forms that may not necessarily be only manifest in language. Thus, as Burr (2003) argues a discourse is a, "a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories and statements that in some way produce a particular version of events." (Burr, 2003: 64) and can also be seen in the broadest sense to form ideological positions about phenomenon (Clarke , 2008). As Hall (2001: 72) argues discourses are significant to understanding what individuals do as well as to understanding community norms and values because discourses "govern the ways in which topics can be meaningfully talked about by individuals and also influences how ideas are put into practice" and educational practices and policies, including those relating to PD and ways

to promote this discussed earlier in this chapter can be seen to reflect different discursive stances on the purposes of PD, who should direct this and how .

Foucault argues that discourses are 'political' as over time, certain discursively constructed views of the world come to dominate as they become more established and imbued with more authority or legitimacy than others. However, since there are always a variety of discourses surrounding a particular event or object each with its own way of representing it (Burr: 2003: 64), other possible alternative or competing discourses surrounding certain events or objects in the world are always present (ibid: 66).

On the basis of the above, examining PD from a macro dimension, is essentially to engage with the different discourses circulating with regard to a phenomenon. With respect to PD in particular, the term discourse is widely invoked to discuss the different and competing understandings of what it means to be a professional discussed at the start of this chapter and the implications of this for identity construction and institutional culture have been discussed (see for example, Day & Sachs, 2004; Sachs, 2005). However, from my reading discourse has been used primarily as a heuristic device to discuss teachers and teacher education, and I am not aware of any attempts to use this to undertake explicit empirical research into PD.

3.5 Towards a conceptualization of teachers' perspectives on PD.

Bearing all of the above in mind, in this section of the chapter, I attempt to pull the insights from the literature reviewed above to describe my articulation of the conceptualization of PD underpinning this thesis.

3.5.1 The significance of context to PD: temporal and spatial dimensions

A first point to stress is that the experiences and reactions to PD that are of interest in the study reported are understood to be socially constructed or grounded in teachers' experiences of PD in their lived realities (their professional and personal contexts) and from which their

understandings, choices and positions with regard to PD are derived. This means that PD should be understood as intimately connected to context.

Following (Kelchtermans 2004: 221) I understand context to have both spatial and temporal dimensions. Thus, on the one hand, teachers' orientations towards PD activities and their experience of these can be seen to reflect their professional and personal understanding of what constitutes effective PD borne out of their different and accumulated experience of teaching and PD overtime. On the other hand, context can be seen to have a spatial quality as well. Most immediately it refers to the professional community and organizational environment teachers are working in. However, it also includes wider cultural norms and values, educational policies and structures and, as these are underpinned by a number of complimentary or competing discourses, context is also understood to comprise discursive realities which can transcend and cut across geographically bound 'contexts', particularly with respect to the interconnected nature of life in the 21st century and the growth of electronic media.

3.5.2 Attention to the dynamic interplay between micro, meso and macro dimensions of PD

The different dimensions of context outlined above can be correlated to the three dimensions of PD discussed earlier (micro, meso and macro). These represent three different but complementary lens for looking at teachers' orientation and experience of PD. However, on their own each only provides a partial account of teacher engagement with PD (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). With regard to a micro perspective, for example, the fact that teacher identity research has become the dominant way in which inquiry is undertaken into teacher professionalism is problematic as this stance means that "that the wider institutional conditions and features which shape the work and learning experience of these groups fade into the background … and their influence in shaping the learning process is only dimly perceived" (Ashton , 2004: 44). Similarly, with regard to those research perspectives which focus on identifying institutional

'culture', these are also only partial as well, because, as Smylie (1995) points out, simply identifying workplace conditions without some consideration of the relationship between these and teachers' own orientating and experiential stance towards PD does not necessarily explain why and how these work in positive or negative ways with respect to teacher engagement in PD activities. Finally, research which might seek to consider the impact of discourse on teacher perspectives of PD would also provide a partial account unless efforts are made to show the connections between discourses and teacher reactions and experiences.

I believe therefore that a robust account of PD and teachers' engagement with this is one that requires an understanding of the ways in which the micro, meso and macro interact in discussions of teacher learning, something that has been recently advocated by Opfer and Pedder (2011) and Crawford (2009). This requires a move away from a simplistic cause and effect approach to understanding teacher perspectives on PD which attributes engagement to one element (such as motivation or time) towards a more complex but also richer account of PD which would provide the basis for more informed decision-making regarding PD initiatives. Day (1997: 4) proposes that this requires a recognition of PD as a "multidimensional dynamic interplay between teachers' stages of biographical and situated experience, environmental factors, career, life and lifelong learning phases".

3.6 The explanatory power of discourse in understanding teachers' reactions and experiences of PD.

While Day's definition of PD above is helpful, it is also limited in some ways as it stresses the interplay between micro and meso dimensions of PD but does not acknowledge the significance of the macro discursive dimension to understanding teacher reactions and experiences with PD. I believe it is important to include a macro discursive dimension into any discussion of PD because, as Burr (2003: 66) observes a discourse provides a frame of reference or "a conceptual backcloth against which actions can be interpreted". As such, it is implicit in the ways in which

individuals and institutions think and act with regard to PD. With respect the micro level, for example, since discourses offer particular kinds of subject positions through which people come to view their relationship with different loci of power (Clarke and Newman, 1997:92, cited in Day & Sachs, 2004), it is likely that in individual accounts of PD teachers will draw upon those discourses which they see as positioning them in a favorable light and contesting those that don't. Moreover, since as Johnson (2006: 23) notes discourse is also implicated in the meso dimension of PD, whereby social activities (such as for example institutional PD support initiatives) manifest and reproduce "historically situated ways of knowing, social relations, and material conditions".

Given this situation, it is important to also realise that a macro-discursive dimension of PD as can be seen as a way of signalling the interconnections between micro and meso dimensions of PD. In other words as Forman & McCormick (1995: 151 cited in Clarke 2008), discourses (such as those relating to professionalism) are overarching frames of reference which bridge meso and micro understandings and behaviours with respect to a phenomenon like PD.

The relationship between micro, meso and macro dimensions of PD that forms the conceptual understanding of PD I bring to my study is summarised in Figure 2 below. This illustrates how teachers' perspectives on PD, the focus of my research inquiry are understood to be shaped by a number of intersecting micro and meso factors which are themselves embedded in and underpinned by a number of different discourses which are drawn upon by those constructing institutional visions and of PD and, on the other hand by the way this is enacted on the one hand and by teachers in constructing their own conceptualizations of PD and preferences for the ways in which this is enacted. Examining teachers' perspectives on PD with reference to the three dimensions discussed above it is hoped to better understand the apparent disengagement with PD noted in chapter 1.
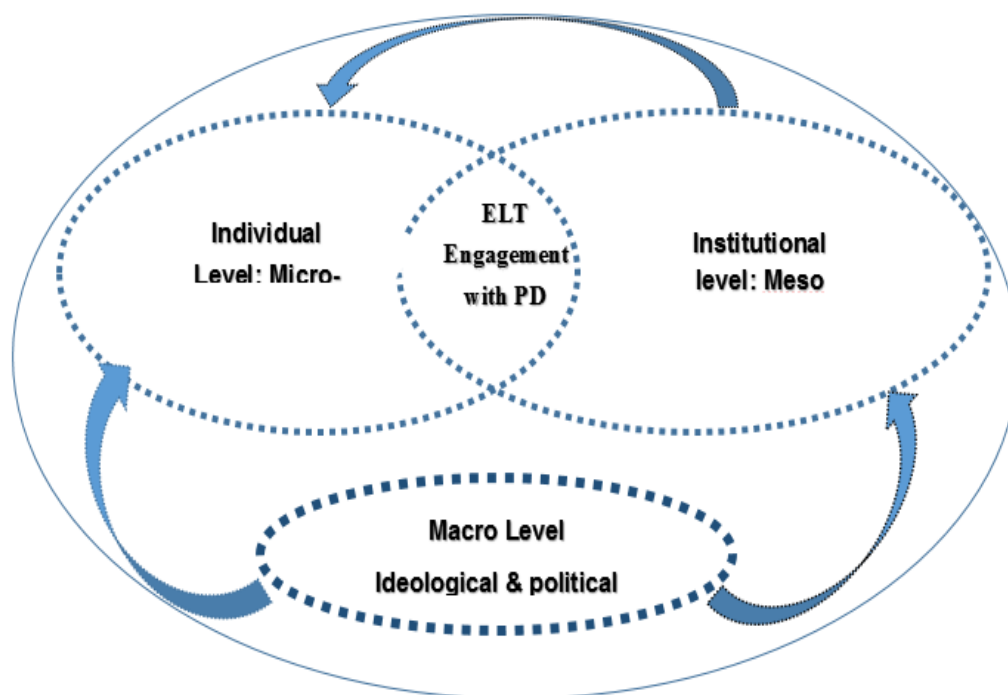
Figure 2. Locus of engagement with PD at the workplace

3.7 Insights from previous research studies on teachers experiences with PD

As I observed earlier in the chapter (see 3.4) examining teacher's perspectives on PD is still a comparatively rare phenomenon. Following an extensive literature search I have only been able to locate a handful of studies which endeavor to examine teachers' orientations to and experiences of in-service as opposed to pre-service PD support initiatives. Of these, very few have looked at teachers perspectives of PD in higher education. Among this group, only one, undertaken by Raza (2010) has examined teachers and their perspectives on PD within the Arabian Gulf countries.

Among those studies that I have located, the interface between individual (micro) dimensions of PD and contextual (meso and/or macro) dimensions of PD is largely under developed. In other words, in most studies while teacher learning is understood to be a social endeavor, social context is typically implicit in rather than an explicit focus of research inquiry. Thus most concentrate on teachers' attitudes and opinions of PD activities they encounter and in this way only partial (and in passing) understandings of the social context and its relationship to teacher

perspectives is revealed. Thus for example, Yurtsever (2013) who conducted a quantitative study in Turkey to investigate 91 tertiary English language teachers' beliefs on professional development models and preferences found a high preference for self-directed PD models (79%) and peer-coaching model (70.8%), in contrast to the institutional support through a mentoring model and training model which only 56% and 55.9% of participants respectively indicated a positive preference for. On the basis of these findings, Yurtsever (2013) proposed that the degree of freedom of choice highly likely influences the uptake of PD among teachers. Yet, the study did not establish the extent to which teachers' preferences reflected their negative experiences and attitudes towards the training and mentoring model offered by the institution where they worked or what some of the constraints and affordances of the institutional setting were.

Another study which also provided a limited account of the impact of social context on teacher perspectives of PD was one undertaken by Fraser (2011) who explored the professional identity of 14 EFL teachers of English in Japanese higher education institutions. Through semi-structured interviews he identified that the main influences on these teachers' professional identity were related to their beliefs about student learning, their histories and formal and informal PD activities. Among these he found formal PD opportunities were perceived to have the least impact on their evolving understanding of themselves as teachers. Fraser concluded that in terms of PD activities, commitment to self-initiated PD as opposed to other-initiated was the form of PD most likely to help teachers develop as professionals and was most closely aligned to their understanding of their professional identity. While Fraser acknowledges implicitly the role of teachers' understanding of themselves as professionals to how they perceive of PD, the extent to which different understandings of professionalism between themselves and the institution underpin their lack of engagement in PD is not explored.

Raza's (2010) study with its focus on the perceptions about continuing professional development of expatriate EFL teachers employed in the foundation English language programme of federal universities in the United Arab Emirates is one which shares a similar focus to the one reported in this thesis. Raza used face to face individual and focus group interviews with two groups of experienced teachers. While her main focus was on understanding teachers' perceptions of PD in general she did indicate a relationship between CPD preferences and institutional setting. Thus, she found that teachers valued CPD but chose to continue their professional development outside the professional communities in their workplace for a number of reasons, many of which pointed to the constraints of the workplace such as the limited number of PD ventures offered to them, their perceived inappropriacy in terms of their perceived experience level, a lack of allocated time for PD and workload, lack of collegiality and pressures related to annual performance evaluation. Many of these factors mirror those identified in other schools or workplace learning studies outlined in 3.2.2 above, but they may also point to some potential wider discursive construction of education and PD in the Gulf (such as the imposition of an audit culture; See also Mazawi (2005), Elyas (2008)) which may be duplicated in my own research findings. In addition to attention to some of the immediate contextual constraints on PD in teachers' workplace, Raza also identified the theme 'perceptions of professionalism' which highlighted a perceived tension between how teachers understood themselves as professionals (defined as their vested interest in their profession) versus how far they were seen as professionals but was superficially discussed. That is, professionalism was perceived in terms of teachers 'interest in TESOL", and the society's consideration of whether TESOL is a profession. However, this theme with its focus on a meta-discursive understanding of their perceptions on PD is not fully developed and the relationship between this macro dimension of PD and their own perspectives and contextual realities is not explored.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the intention of this thesis is to extend out from Raza's work by placing more emphasis on the inter-connections between the different dimensions of PD that are signaled in her study. In this way I hope to develop a fuller picture of tertiary teachers' perspectives on PD in the region in the belief that this can help institutions develop a more nuanced understanding of their PD support initiatives and the ways teachers engage with these, which as mentioned in chapter 1, I see as a first step to reforming these. While, I have not found any empirical studies which seek to show the interconnections between the different dimensions of PD mentioned above, it is worth reporting on two additional studies (Crawford, 2009; O'Connell, 2010) here which have explicitly framed their understanding of teachers and PD as requiring attention to macro, meso and micro dimensions of PD.

Crawford (2009) examined faculty-based academics' perspectives on the things that influence their understandings, behaviours, and attitudes towards CPD in two higher educational institutions in the UK. Crawford's appreciation of the need to listen to academic teachers' voices as a way of deepening an understanding of how CPD could be operationalized and supported in higher education, is one that echoes my own position. She also shares my own view on the importance of micro, meso and macro factors in building a thick picture of teachers' perspectives on PD referring to these as individual (agential) concerns, intra-institutional influences and extra-institutional influences respectively. Through semi-structured interviews with participants and the collection of documentary evidence, she identified four main themes of influence on participants' perspectives on PD. Namely, the influences of meaning, the influence of professionalism and academic values, the influence of incompatible initiatives and priorities between individuals and institutional and extra-institutional CPD policy, the influence of supportive networks and emergent personal individual concerns. Although these findings were identified with teachers working in a different geographical context to the one where the study I report was undertaken, these findings point to the

complexity of understanding teacher perspectives on PD and contribute to a richer understanding of the different influences that need to be taken into consideration in discussions of PD for academics in higher education institutions.

Although not concerned with PD in higher education, O'Connell's (2010) study which was undertaken in Ireland through semi-structured individual interviews with 18 secondary school teachers and group interviews with senior management teams in two schools, is another study which sought to use a three dimensional understanding of teacher perspectives on PD. It is also the only study I have been able to locate which has explicitly examined teacher engagement from a socially constructed perspective on teacher learning. O'Connell develops a conceptualization of 6 micro dimensions proposed in my own conceptual framework. Using this framework, O'Connell is able to deepen an understanding of teacher engagement with PD. O'Connell argues that engagement can be understood as the result of a "situated assessment" of the PD opportunities (including whether this is mandatory or elective and the perceived intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of engagement) leading to different levels of participation, commitment, enthusiasm and scepticism and from there to further engagement, disengagement or non-engagement. As with Crawford's (2009) study, O'Connell's (2010) account of teacher engagement provides a valuable set of insights into teacher perspectives on PD in my own research and provides a useful way for me to create a link between these and the reasons for the ways they disengage with PD. While both studies demonstrate the value of a multidimensional approach to understanding teacher perspectives on PD, the interconnection between micro, meso and macro factors that are identified is not a focus as is intended in my study and in particular the lack of reference to macro discourses which can help deepen an understanding of the reasons why teachers may disengage is missing. The frameworks adopted in both studies also focus on the factors that influence teachers' decision making and engagement towards 'development' more than offering a complex understanding of the

influences on 'professional development' with the focus on both concepts, professional and development as outlined in chapter 3 in this thesis.

3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted to problematize the literature on teachers' engagement with PD in the workplace. I have illustrated some of the issues I believe are problematic, specifically how the meso, micro and macro collectively rather than individually influence how teachers engage with institutional PD initiatives. I have also illustrated how the dominant PD models (training model or professional learning community model) appear to take reductionist view on professionalism with their focus on micro and meso discourses and how as a result we have insufficient knowledge about how the macro discourses influence the interrelated discourses and position teachers in disinterested roles. In the following chapter, I will discuss the philosophical and methodological underpinnings of the study which guided my approach to data collection methods and analysis. I will also discuss the ethical guidelines and the quality measures I undertook to ensure that my inquiry in trustworthy.

Chapter 4. The Design of the Study

4.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to describe the design of the research study I undertook to examine teachers' perspectives of PD in an ELI in a university in Saudi Arabia. A research project has at its heart some important questions that are intended to be addressed and a research design which aims to collect the right sorts of data to address these questions, aims to describe the relationship between the paradigmatic underpinnings of research, the methodology and the methods of inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

4.1.1 The Research Questions

In the study described in this thesis, as explained in chapter 1, the central aim was to understand why teachers appeared disengaged and disinterested in PD at the ELI through research which could shed light on the following research questions:

What are the TESOL teachers' perspectives on professional development in a HE institution in Saudi Arabia?

a- What professional development activities do teachers engage in at the ELI?

b- What are their experiences of and reactions to these professional development activities?

c- What alternative PD activities do teachers propose, if any?

In order to address these questions, as will be discussed further below, in the first part of this chapter I will describe the interpretivist stance I adopted in this thesis, the methodology employed within this and the data collection methods I used. Following on from this I will provide information about the participants in the study and the ways in which I analysed the

data. I will then reflect on the ways I ensured data quality and addressed ethical issues including anything arising from my own positionality as a former ELI teacher.

4.2. The philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of the study

Underpinning any research project are certain philosophical assumptions that guide the design of the study and inform methodological choices (Crotty, 1998). As explained above the purpose of this research study was to investigate and document tertiary ELT teachers' perspectives on professional development at the ELI and, as I will explain below, this led me to position my work within the interpretive paradigm.

A research paradigm or philosophy is a worldview about the way in which data about a social phenomenon can be gathered, employed and used. In other words, as Bryman (1992: 4) highlights, a research paradigm is a "cluster of beliefs" which informs researchers' approach of "how research should be done [and] how results should be interpreted". Thus a research paradigm offers a theoretical justification of why the researcher utilised certain strategies and how these relate to the research outcomes (Cohen et al., 2010). It implies the philosophical positions of researchers about the nature of matter, what can be known and how this knowledge can be attained (Clark, 1998). Attempts to distinguish one paradigm from another is widely seen to entail the distinction of three elements; ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods. The ontology refers to the "the study of being" (Crotty, 1998: 10) or the "the form and nature of reality" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994: 108). The epistemology is concerned with the nature of knowledge or the "ways of understanding and explaining how we know what we know" (Crotty, 1998: 3). Hence epistemology is concerned with "the views about the ways in which social reality ought to be studied" (Bryman, 1992: 5). Taken together, ontology and epistemology represent the integral components of a research paradigm which inform the research methodology. A research methodology can be described as the plan of action or

strategy which informs the choice of methods of data collection and analysis which are deemed most appropriate to answer the research questions (Crotty, 1998).

Broadly speaking, three paradigms are distinguished in the literature. These are often referred to as a positivist paradigm, interpretivist paradigm and critical paradigm (Crotty, 1998), although they are also known by other names. I will briefly describe all three and explain how my own ontological and epistemological stance means that I see my study as broadly aligned with an interpretivist paradigm.

The positivist or scientific paradigm is underpinned by a philosophical tradition known as positivism which assumes the existence of universal laws and emphasizes the existence of a "common reality on which people can agree" (Newman & Benz, 1998: 2). Moreover, for researchers working within the positivist paradigm, there is an assumption that these realities are meaningful as long as they are observable, replicable and verifiable (Anderson & Anderson, 1998). The ontological assumptions underpinning positivism, (often referred to as objectivism) assumes the existence of independent realities outside the mind (Crotty, 1998). Moreover, the epistemological assumptions of positivism are realist, as meanings are understood to reside within entities as objective truth and to be independent of the human mind (ibid). Bearing these things in mind, researchers whose work is positioned within the positivist or scientific paradigm assume that they should strive to detach themselves from the reality under investigation and distance themselves from those studied in order to prevent or minimize researcher's bias (Cohen et al., 2010).

In contrast to this, the interpretivist paradigm, also sometimes referred to as a constructivist paradigm is underpinned by different philosophical traditions such as subjectivism and has other variants such as phenomenology and hermeneutics which assume that meaning is subjective borne out of interpretations or constructions of our experiences of the world (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In direct contrast to the scientific paradigm, researchers whose philosophical

stance is aligned with interpretivists reject the objectivist view that meaning resides within the world independently of consciousness (Creswell, 2009). In line with an interest in addressing complex questions about the nature of human condition, human interaction or feelings, thoughts and perceptions of people, subjectivism (or relativism) is the ontological stance of interpretivism which views reality as multiple and relative (Holloway & Wheeler, 2003: 24). For interpretivists, reality is "a social construct that embraces multiple interpretations" (Newman & Benz, 1998: 2). From an interpretative perspective, reality is the product of human experience constructed out of the interaction between human beings and their world (Crotty, 1998; Guba; 1990). Constructionism (and social constructionism) are the terms that generally represent interpretivists' epistemological stance which means that knowledge is actively and socially constructed (Cohen et al, 2010). In contrast with the positivism, the interpretative paradigm does not claim a universal truth but embraces the notion of subjectivity of researchers in constructing their knowledge about the world in which they live (Patton, 2002).

Finally, the critical research paradigm assumes that knowledge is "value-laden" and argues for a need to appreciate the role of power in influencing reality (Crotty, 1998; Humphries, 2000). Such knowledge it is argued may be "used in unethical and oppressive ways, or towards, a market orientation, or for ideology ends" (Humphries, 2000: 176). Researchers working within a critical paradigm aim to understand a particular social phenomenon by "uncovering the contradictory conditions of action which are hidden or distorted by everyday understanding" (Comstock, 1982: 371). It thus aims to emancipate "individuals and groups in an egalitarian society" from pertinent power-relations (Cohen et al, 2010: 26). This can be attained by "question[ing], deconstruct[ing], and then reconstruct[ing] knowledge in the interest of emancipation" (Leonardo, 2004: 12). The critical paradigm can be seen to share the ontological and epistemological perspectives of interpretivism in many ways but there are some subtle differences. Firstly, ontologically, researchers working in this tradition take a realist rather than

merely subjectivist understanding of reality, one that emphasises how the understandings we come to form of the world are a product of a reality which is shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, and ethnic and gender values (Cohen et al, 2010; Crotty, 1998). The epistemological assumptions in critical theory are subjective rather than objective whereby knowledge is developed through inquiry. Epistemologically speaking, as with the interpretative paradigm, those working within the critical paradigm embrace constructivism but place a greater emphasis on the way in which interaction in the social world shapes the views and perspectives that people come to form (Comstock, 1982).

4.2.1 Interpretivist underpinnings of this study

As explained earlier, the goal of the study I am reporting in this thesis is to uncover teacher perspectives on the PD opportunities encountered at the ELI, in a bid to better understand the phenomenon that served as an impetus for this study; teachers' resentment of institutional PD as well as the failure of my efforts to build an effective PLC at the ELI. This emphasis on understanding is one that is central to those working within an interpretivist tradition and is one of the reasons why I align myself with interpretivism as opposed to the positivist or scientific paradigm which is more interested to establish cause and effect relationships or the critical paradigm with its interest in emancipation or change. However, as Denzin and Lincoln (2011) note while it is helpful to draw distinctions between different research paradigms and their ontological and epistemological underpinnings, in reality many researchers will find themselves crossing the borderland between them (Merriam, 2002: 3-4) in accordance with their research interests. In my own research study, while I see myself as most interested in participants' subjective understandings of PD at the ELI, I believe these have been socially constructed meanings that I see the wider social world and competing ideological stances as exerting an influence on the understandings that participants bring to PD as well as the way in which this is represented and understood in the ELI. In doing this, I therefore acknowledge the

importance of a critical realist stance, an ontological position held by researchers working within the critical paradigm.

4.3 Undertaking research within the interpretative paradigm

In line with an emphasis on developing an in-depth understanding of phenomena, actions and perspectives, Researchers working within an interpretative tradition employ a number of methodological strategies of inquiry such as grounded theory, ethnography, case study, phenomenology and narrative research (Creswell, 2009) rather than data which can be quantified for the purpose of measurement (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001). These strategies utilise qualitative data collection methods which aim at gaining in-depth accounts of research participants' construction of their daily experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Among these interviews, the data collection strategy chosen in my study, is one of the most common ways of collecting deeper understanding of the participants' views of and stories about social phenomenon (Cohen et al., 2010; Kvale, 2007).

A number of observations can be made with regard to qualitative data collection and analysis procedures. Firstly, interpretivists believe that social phenomenon cannot be explained merely by implementing the methods of the natural sciences, but rather need to be understood with reference to those who perform it and in the context in which it occurs (Meriam, 2009). Therefore, interpretivist researchers favour methods which involve collecting data in situ or through methods which allow participants to share their own experiences and orientations (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2002).

However, there is also a need to appreciate that meanings are dynamic co-constructions between research participants and the researcher (Burr, 2003; Crotty, 1998). On the one hand, this means it is important to appreciate that the 'results' of a study are joint constructions between the research participants and the researcher him or herself (Dunne et al., 2005: 15)

That is, that not only do participants offer their own subjective impressions (or interpretations) of events, but that following on from this researchers reinterpret the phenomena "through the eyes of participants" (Robson, 2002: 25) and then re-reinterpret these through the "theoretical and conceptual framework of the phenomena" (Arsenault & Anderson, 1998:125). Such an approach involves a "double hermeneutics" or interpretation of the participants' interpretation where the end result is an agreement on interpreting the phenomenon in a way that enables the researcher to generate theory inductively out of the dialogic process with the participants (Crotty, 1998: 7). In light of this, and given that the process of interpretation is inevitably a subjective representation on the part of the researcher, the application of procedures for reliability and validity employed in research in the positivist or scientific paradigm are not applicable. However, it is considered important for social researchers working within the interpretive tradition to identify their "subjectivities" and "monitor how they may be shaping the collection and interpretation of data" (Merriam, 2002: 5). Therefore, the issues of trustworthiness, ethics and rigor of the data analysis procedure are still considered very important (Cohen et al., 2010).

On the other hand, particularly with regard to dialogic in situ approaches to interpretative research, such as interviews, there is also a need to appreciate that the data generated is itself co-constructed as it is the result of a dialogic exchange between the researcher and research participant who are engaged in a process of joint meaning-making (Mills et al., 2006) and "reciprocal reshaping" as the interview progresses (Strauss and Corbin, 1994: 280). In this sense the researcher is an active participant in an interview and therefore exerts an influence on the data generation process itself (Mann, 2011). As Mann (2011) among others acknowledges it is therefore important for a researcher to be mindful and make visible to the reader the way in which he is implicated in the production of interview data as well as in its analysis. This entails a reflective process, also known as reflexivity on the part of the researcher

(Mann, 2011). As Berger (2013) observes, this encompasses a process of self-appraisal, " the turning of the researcher lens back onto oneself to recognise and take responsibility for one own situatedness within the research and the effect they may have on the setting and people being studied, questions being asked, data being collected and its interpretation" (Berger, 2013:2).

4.3.1 Implications for my role as a researcher

The points above informed my understanding of my role in data collection and analysis in my own study. First of all, they made me aware of the importance of acknowledging how my orientating stance (or researcher identity) could impinge on the research process. As Bourke observes it is important to acknowledge that my "beliefs, political stance, cultural background (gender, race, class, socioeconomic status, educational background) are important variables that may affect the research process" (Bourke, 2014: 2) – both in terms of the data collection and data analysis and interpretation procedure. As will be evident from chapter 1 where I set out the rationale for this study, my interest in undertaking this study is motivated by a desire to understand the reasons for an apparent disinterest and lack of engagement in the PD opportunities offered by the ELI. I approach this with reference to a conceptual and theoretical orientation to PD in the workplace as comprising a number of micro, meso and macro dimensions which work together to describe reasons for teacher disengagement and draw upon this in approaching my analysis and interpretation of the interview data. It is important that this interpretation does not superimpose or read things into the data which are not necessarily present. To ensure that the results of the study are seen as credible it also highlights the importance of clear documentation of all the steps taken to collect and analyse data and to proceed with due attention to ethical considerations.

I also approach the study as a Saudi, non-native English speaker staff member in the ELI, which as highlighted in chapter 2 (see section 2.3; p.23) affords me a privileged status in the institution

but also positions me as an insider. As Chew-Graham et al., (2002) note, interviewing a member of the same profession or a colleague in a professional context (as is the focus of my study) will potentially make access easier, but power differentials afforded by my status as a Saudi may impinge on the co-construction of knowledge between myself and participants in different ways. In particular, concerns about my links and relationship to those who oversee and evaluate teachers may mean some respondents will be reluctant to speak freely. In addition, as a non-native speaker researcher, it is important to acknowledge that this will position me differently vis a vis non-native speaker and native speaker interview participants which will potentially influence the knowledge that is generated. Being a non-native English language teacher can be considered as a position that might be welcomed by non-native speaker teachers, but at the same time position me as "Othered" by native-language teachers who I will interview. An awareness of these things has informed the way I conducted the interviews discussed in 4.3.3 and 4.3.4. In addition, issues arising regarding my positionality in the interviews and the ways I addressed these are discussed in 4.7 below.

4.3.2 The methodological interpretative stance in my study

A theoretical perspective, as Crotty (2013: 3) highlights, is "the philosophical stance informing the methodology". The research design or methodology that is often referred to within the interpretive theoretical perspective is "*qualitative inquiry*" or "*qualitative research*" (Merriam, 2009: 21, italics in original] and "basic interpretive qualitative study" (Merriam, 2002:6). However, as Merriam indicates, while these terms "remain the umbrella terms" in interpretive research, there are a number of other "baffling choices" (Creswell, 2009:6) that describe the various forms of the qualitative inquiry (as outlined in the above section). It is therefore important to identify the specific approach I utilised in my inquiry to explore TESOL teachers' perspectives of PD experienced in their workplace. Hence, in order not confuse the methodology with the interpretive stance informing my research and following other writers

(see for example, Meriam, 2009: 22), I will use the term *basic qualitative research* approach to describe the methodology informing my inquiry. This is an approach or strategy of inquiry which enables the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of "the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell, 2009:4) such as participants' construction of PD through their experiences of PD in their workplace world. The overall aim, Merriam (2009: 23) indicates, is to "*understand* how people make sense of their lives and their experiences" [Italics in original]

The basic qualitative research approach fits the purpose of the current study as it also facilitates disentangling the complexity of the phenomena under study and reveals the different angles from which researchers can understand the issue holistically. Suter (2006: 327) for example reiterates that the qualitative approach is the "the best methods for understanding the complexity of education in practice" and Sliver (2008: 8) indicates that it is widely used within the postmodern world in which we live today with uncertainties. Hence, this approach will be utilised to explore complex relationship between participants' perspectives, contextual realities and the wider socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-economic setting of the ELI where the study takes place.

4.3.3 Data collection method: Interviews

As Kvale (2007) indicates, interviews remain one of the main channels for data collection methods in qualitative research as it facilitates listening to the participants and encourage them to talk freely about their experiences and views about a social phenomenon. A qualitative research interview has the aim of allowing the researcher to enter the world of the participants and yield what (Patton, 2002: 4) calls "in-depth responses about people's experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings and knowledge". Patton (1990) indicates that interviews, as qualitative methods, are valuable because they involve asking questions about "matters of interest in real-world settings in order to solve problems" (p.89).

Hence the purpose of the interviews in this research study is to find out the how the TESOL teachers experience PD provided to them within their workplace. There is also a practical and theoretical ground for adopting interviews within this research study as it provides the participants with a chance to voice their concerns and reflect on their experiences of their career (Kelchtermans, 2004). In addition, Arksey and Knight (1999) contend that interviews can explore areas of broad cultural consensus and people's more personal private and special understandings. Interviews also focus on distinctive features of situations and events and upon the beliefs of individuals or sub-cultures (Kvale, 2007). Interviews are thus expected to provide data that could illuminate the ways in which teachers experiences of PD are influenced by the professionalization policy of the English language education in the context of this study. As a result, the interviews in this study focused not only on the experiences and perceptions of TESOL teachers of PD but also about the socio-cultural, socio-political and economic factors that impinge on the teachers' attitudes towards and experiences of PD.

There are three types of interviews in social research based on the degree of control by the researcher or structure of format (Bryman, 2004). These are structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. The questions in interviews can be open-ended or close-ended which can be determined according to the research design and the interview schedule (Creswell, 2009). Unstructured and semi-structured interviews are largely used in qualitative research whereas structured interviews are usually implemented in quantitative research (Chase, 2005). The unstructured interview is one in which questions are not pre-determined whereas structured interviews strictly follow pre-arranged questions (Kvale, 2007). In-between these two are semi-structured interviews involving open-ended questions but these questions work as prompts to generate discussion of the issue. Semi-structured interviews align well with the interpretative research as these make flexible framework for the researcher to respond to the voices of the interviewees (Kvale, 2007) and for this reason I chose to use these in my study.

Semi-structured interviews are usually common within grounded theory and follow several principles that require careful preparation by researchers (Kvale, 2007; Charmaz, 2006). These include preparing an 'interview-guide' also known as 'interview schedule', a plan for conducting the interviews, and manners or guidelines for conducting the interviews (Charmaz, 2006). The interview guide should contain topics to cover during the interviews, while the plan for conducting the interviews should focus on the stages of an interview from beginning to end (Kvale, 2007). The plan should yield, as Legard et al., (2003) recommend, four stages; introduction, opening questions, in-depth question and closure. Finally, interviewers should assume the role of a listener to facilitate "directed conversation" with the purpose of being sensitive, encouraging participants to talk, and asking open-ended questions (Charmaz, 2006; Kvale, 2007). Finally, the positionality of researchers using semi-structured interviews needs to be articulated in order to minimise researchers' influence on eliciting views from participants (Kvale, 2007: Patton, 2002). With regard to my positionality vis-à-vis the participants this is discussed further in 4.7 below

4.3.4 Design of the semi-structured interview

In line with the social-constructionist underpinning of the study outlined in 4.3, qualitative interviews seek openness rather than follow prescribed questions to be used to enter into the participant world. For the purposes of this study an interview guide (Patton, 2002) was developed to explore TESOL teachers' lived experiences in their workplace with regards to PD and their reactions to and attitudes towards this (see appendix 5). The interview guide was not intended to be prescriptive but rather to provide a frame of reference. That is, as Kvale (2007: 131-132) observes, it provides a structure for the interview but allows the interview to proceed like a normal conversation. Thus the interview guide provided me with a sense of the major themes to be addressed which were relevant to the study and some of the items under each theme to be picked up on if these were not highlighted by participants during the interview.

But also allowed me to proceed in full recognition of the fact that as Trochim et al., (2015: 196) indicate "every interview is unique, has its own ebb and flow—its own pace". Informed by the conceptual framework developed in 3.6 and the research questions shown in 4.1.1 above, following Crawford (2009), the interviews focused on TESOL teachers' lived experiences with PD in the workplace to unearth their micro perspectives (teachers views and perspectives) as well as meso and macro perspectives such as the 'institutional norms', organisational rules, structures, procedures, culture and discourse" (Crawford, 2009: 91). In line with a view of learning as mediated by the contextual influences and the relationship between micro, meso and macro dimensions of PD, the participants were invited to discuss their experiences about what influences pertinent to their engagement with PD they perceived to be important. As also outlined in 3.6, the interplay between the micro and meso discourses is seen to be influenced by the set of macro discourses The interview guide was designed to cover five dimensions that are related to PD as a complex phenomenon:

- Teachers understanding of PD and their experience of professional development at the ELI
    - Teachers' awareness of ELI policy towards PD
    - Shared decision making in PD
    - Teacher perspectives on the teacher community and collaborative PD
    - Supportive PD conditions.

The first dimension, was seen as the primary focus of the interviews and the subsequent dimensions were used to tease out particular facets of teachers' experiences and perspectives. The first dimension sought to understand how teachers perceive PD to be like and how they experience it in the ELI. The second and third dimensions investigate how the views on PD by teachers as professionals is enacted or enhanced and supported at the ELI. Specifically how teachers take control of their professional development agendas both individually and

collectively and how these reflect other dimensions such as curriculum, and students (Hoban, 2002). The fourth dimension explores how teachers' community influences teachers' professional development and growth. It explores the structure and dynamics of the community and the extent to which teachers' professional community can inform individual and collaborative decision in pursuing professional growth and improving practice. The last dimension relates to the supportive conditions in terms of leadership, autonomy and collegiality. The interview guide was intended to be sufficiently open to explore a host of additional micro and meso factors and to allow teachers to reveal other dimensions that may reveal this complexity and the influences that enable or hinder teachers from pursuing their professional growth, including any explicit connections with macro dimensions such as discourses of professionalism which, as explained in chapter 3 are understood to provide a backdrop to teacher experiences. A copy of the interview guide can be found in appendix 5.

The three dimensional model (3.6) representing the conceptual framework for understanding teachers' perspectives of PD and the factors that influence their engagement with this informed the design of the semi-structured interview and thus was valuable in exploring PD as a complex multidimensional phenomenon. However, given the logistics of this study and the change of its design as mentioned in chapter 1, this was not an easy undertaken. While the interview guide was initially intended to discuss the participants' perspectives on formulating a PLC as outlined in chapter 1, I adopted the factors and conditions that enhance teachers workplace learning to account for the individual, institutional and political dimensions in line with conceptual framework outlined in section (3.6). The interview guide was designed to explore teachers' reactions to PD in its entirety influenced by the political and social realities of the ELI context. It is also open to listen tentatively to teachers who themselves will reveal other dimensions that may uncover this complexity and the influences that enable or hinder them from pursuing their professional growth.

4.4 Conducting the study

In this section I outline the procedures I followed to conduct my research study. These include, the research setting where I conducted my study, the choice and recruitment of research participants, data collection procedures, and data analysis approach I followed in my study.

4.4.1 The research setting and participants

As explained in chapter 1 and described in chapter 2, the study was conducted in the premises of the English language institute at the case university in Saudi Arabia (see chapter 2). Specifically, it focused on the perspectives and experiences of TESOL teachers about their in-service PD.

The total number of participants who took part in this study was 12 tertiary TESOL teachers. These were full-time teachers teaching English for the foundation programme students in the 2011-12 and 2012-2013 academic years. As explained above, a central tenet of a basic qualitative study is to understand the individual perspectives and lived experiences about a specific phenomenon in a given context (such as PD at a Saudi university), and hence a small number of participants is deemed adequate to achieve this purpose (Kvale, 2007). The choice of the participants reflects my interest in revealing the multiple perspectives and experiences with regards to the multidimensional nature of TESOL teachers' professional development at the workplace. For the purpose of this study, my sampling strategy can be considered as convenient sampling since I have focused on a group of TESOL teachers who can reasonably be considered representative of the wider population of TESOL teachers found in Saudi universities. Convenience sampling approach is a commonly used approach in qualitative research (Yates et al, 2012) which unlike the quantitative approaches that focus on randomisation for rigor, it concerns "the selection of the most accessible subjects" based on availability, ease, speed, and low cost (Marshall, 1996: 523). This means that participants who

make up the study sample or subjects of interpretative research studies are selected in small numbers in order to provide the researcher with rich data, thick enough to provide the understanding that is the focus of interest (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2002). As Yates, Partridge and Bruce (2012: 103) explain, the appropriateness of selection of participants in interpretative research should be based on "their appropriateness to the purpose of the research study, that is, they have experience of the phenomenon being explored". Hence, another feature of the appropriateness of the sample of this research study is the different backgrounds that characterise my research participants. They taught in different contexts (since most of them are expatriates) and participated in different PD activities in and outside their workplace context. This means that the diversity of the participants and their wide ranging experiences with PD and their professional lives at the ELI and elsewhere which impinge on their attitudes towards and engagement with PD can deepen my understanding of PD and the influences on teacher's orientations towards it.

My sampling approach can also be considered as theoretical sampling as it was also deemed appropriate to provide new insights of important constructs (Patton, 2002: 238). However, as (Marshall, 1996) highlights convenience samples are non-random and thus not necessarily representative of the whole population.

Table 2 below provides the demographic background of the 12 participants who took part in my research study. All participants' names are pseudonyms to protect their identity. The pseudonyms reflect the preferred names of each cohort. It can be seen that the 12 participants in this research study represent nearly 5% of the total number of 247 male teachers at the ELI. Their countries of origin also indicate that all but one are international TESOL teachers working at the ELI. The reason why the majority of participants are non-Saudis can be attributed to two factors. On the one hand, as outlined in 2.3, this can reflect the small percentage of Saudi teachers in the ELI. On the other hand, while this small number of Saudi

informants implies that there was only one Saudi teacher who showed interest to take part in my study, it could also mean, as argued by Mazawi (2005) in 2.3, that the majority of the small number of Saudi teachers (some of whom I met during my recruitment of participants) hold administrative positions besides their teaching duties implying they have no time to take part in the study.

All participants held postgraduate degrees in English language/teaching and their teaching experiences ranged from 3 to10 years within and outside the ELI. They all taught for more than two years at the case institution and were aware of PD in terms of its policy and practice.

4.4.2 Recruitment of participants

Based on the convenience sampling approach outlined above, the recruitment of my research participants in this exploratory study utilised the following steps. First, I contacted the ELI to obtain permission to access the institution and research participants in order to conduct interviews (See appendix 6). After approval, I e-mailed the professional development unit who forwarded my call for participants and the details of my research to the all the ELI teachers.

To my surprise the response rate was less than I was expecting, only 12 teachers responded to the e-mail expressing their interests to participate in my research study. The difficulty in recruiting participants echoed my earlier experience with the initial study described in Chapter 1. It suggests a reluctance on the part of teachers to take part in research and/or a lack of interest in the topic. This situation created a dilemma for me, whether I should stick to the small number of participants or ask the institution to send another call for teachers who are willing to participate in my research study. Nonetheless, I was concerned that this might lead to teachers' being coerced to take part in the study but since the literature emphasises that the small number of participants is adequate for qualitative research (see for example Kvale, 2007), I decided to work with the 12 teachers who had volunteered.

4.5 Data collection procedures:

4.5.1 Administering semi-structured interviews

As indicated above, one-to-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 participants who work at the ELI. Following the philosophical stance presented above, the researcher assumes that the rich and thick discerption of the nature of professional development could be attained by the semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 2007).

Table 2. Details of research participants

No	Pseudonym	Nationality	Qualification	Experience
1	John	British virgin island	BA English Literature, CELTA	6
2	Anthony	British virgin island	Ma, Linguistics	3
3	David	Republic of Ireland	Master,	7
4	Richards	North America	BA , Applied linguistics, CELTA	5
5	Murad	North Africa	MA Linguistics	5
6	Aidan	North America	MA, TEFL, Education	8
7	Munthir	Gulf Countries	MA, Applied linguistics	4
8	Ayub	South Asian	MA., English Literature, Applied Linguistics,	3
9	Rizwan	South Asia	Masters, English literature, Linguistics	3
10	Haidar	South Asia	Ph.D., TESOL	7
11	Khan	South Asia	MA., English Literature, Applied Linguistics, Celta Certificate	3
12	Jawad	Mediterranean	MA, English Literature	3 years

Data collection in this thesis followed three steps which are mainly related to the interviews (see also 4.8 for preceding procedures I categorised under quality issues). First, after I had received the participants' confirmation that they were interested to take part in my research study, I e-mailed them to thank them for showing interest and to seek more information about

their suitable date, time and place to meet them individually. The purpose of this step was to build rapport with the participants and provide detailed information about my research and answer any queries. In addition, I needed to obtain the participants' informed consent forms which they were given prior to conducting the interviews (see appendix 4). They were also e-mailed some guidelines about the time required for the interview (an hour and a half) and that a follow up interview may be required if the need arose to deepen understanding of any underdeveloped ideas. In the event, no follow up interviews were undertaken.

The first three interviews took place at the last two week of the second semester of the academic year (2011-2012), and the subsequent interviews were conducted at the first 3 weeks of the new academic year (2012-2013). I chose this time because PD usually takes place at this time of the year and more importantly I expected teachers to be less busy with teaching duties so that they have enough time to make the interviews with me. In effect the first two interviews acted as a trial so I could check the suitability of time, coverage of themes and technique of administering the interviews (Kvale, 2007). Trialling was important as it helped me find out weak aspects in administering the interviews and improve these in a better way. I listened to the two interviews, and outlined what I deemed to be the main topics to check for coverage of the provided information or any answers that needed clarification by the participants. I also checked whether time was long enough for the participants to express their experiences with PD. Hence, after the first interview, I found out that the participant struggled to continue the thread of thought in his stories when he pauses after a while for answering the question about a specific theme. I felt I had to intervene by extending or adding fillers to make the story continue, but I noticed that this intervention might have restricted the flow of thought of the participant. Instead, I checked that I had to pause for a while prior to starting the second question or theme to allow my informants ample time to speak their minds. This was verified with a second trial interview. Since these trial interviews were successful in generating rich

data, I decided that these could be included in the data pool and there was no need to look for replacement participants as I had felt might have been the case. After ensuring that the two interviews covered the main topics based on the interview protocol, I then continued conducting the interviews with the remaining ten participants over a period of 3 weeks. These interviews were audio-taped and each interview lasted 1-1.5 hours during which I adhered to the principles of informal conversational interviewing (Chase, 2005). In order to obtain honest and open responses, I undertook the required steps to build rapport with my participants to establish trust and make the interview experience friendlier and more natural for my informants (Kvale, 2007). For example, while I chose the venue for interviews, I left it open for the participants to choose when, where and how (virtually over the phone or face to face) they would like the interview to be conducted. Nonetheless, they all opted to be interviewed in the designated room for conducting the interview but I took all necessary steps to ensure that it was comfortable, quiet and safe. During the interviews I took the role of a listener while the interviewees were leading the story telling of their own experiences (Chase, 2005). I also used the technique of "recapitulation" in intervals to determine accuracy of the probes and keep the interview focused (Kvale, 2007; Creswell, 2009). This I believe made the participants more confident and empowered to lead the interviews and express their own voices at ease. These interviews were digitally recorded and participants' discretion was consulted prior to recoding the interviews as to whether they wish to be recorded or not.

4.6 Approach to data analysis and interpretation

As indicated in section 4.3 above, I approached the data as an interpretative researcher; not as a detached observer but as an active researcher with subjectivities and a certain worldview. In doing this I sought to examine the data with reference to my theoretical understanding of the various dimensions (micro, meso and macro) and the inter-relatedness of these described in chapter 3 that I believe need to be accounted for in building a robust understanding of

professional development activities in the workplace and which can help account for why teachers may be disinclined to engage in these. In doing so, I first undertook a process of detailed analysis of interview transcripts and sought to identify the micro and meso dimensions that they highlighted as significant to participants. I then sought to identify the ways in which the macro discursive dimension was evidenced in participants' accounts by drawing connections between the things they said and wider discourses of professionalism that these invoked. In the presentation of the results of this analysis in chapter 5 below, all reference to empirical data-trivial and non-trivial are therefore the result of the interpretations I made on the basis of my orientating stance as a researcher.

4.6.1 Thematic analysis

Data analysis involves providing "parsimonious categories of description which faithfully describe" the way participants experienced a phenomenon such as PD (Ireland et al. 2009: 8). A 'thematic qualitative data analysis' was implemented in this research study as "a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke; 2006: 70-80). One characteristic of thematic analysis is that, as Ryan and Bernard (2000) note, it is used and "performed within major analytic traditions such as grounded theory (reported in Braun & Clarke; 2006: 78). They also note that one benefit of thematic analysis is its flexibility i.e. it can be used within the theoretical frameworks such interpretative phenomenological analysis and discourse analysis or it can be used independent of the ontological and epistemological approaches. Braun and Clark (2006) add that thematic analysis "provides a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data".

While there are different procedural frameworks for analysing and interpreting the data, this study utilised Radnor's (2002) six-stage technique for topic ordering and constructing categories (see figure 5 below).

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4.6.2 Analysing interviews

In the research study reported in this thesis, thematic analysis approach was used to analyse the transcribed interviews. Data analysis was conducted manually and electronically using the SQR NVIVO software. However, the Nvivo software was used only to store and organise data since it cannot interpret the meaning of the data (Denscombe, 2010). The inductive approach is consonant with the subjective epistemology and constructionist understanding of participants' views of the phenomenon under study 'i.e. PD' within their workplace context (Gray , 2004). It allowed me to approach the data with open-coding technique (Kvale, 2007; Gray, 2004) where I read the transcribed interviews and coded as I read through all the topics that relate to perceptions, experiences of and attitudes towards PD and the world in which teachers live, in order to facilitate topic ordering (See appendix 7).
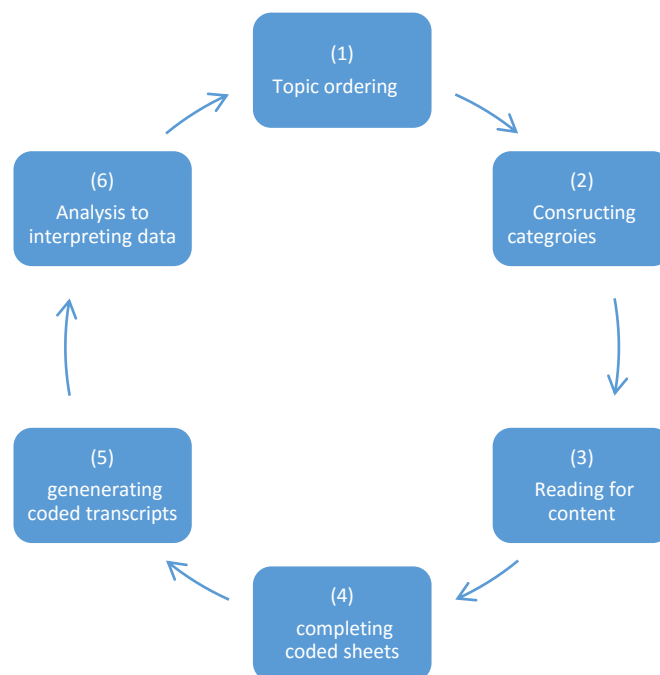
Figure (5): Data analysis process (Radnor, 2002)

Keeping in mind the research questions and my conceptual framework, open-coding technique is also flexible to code the data that is relevant to these. In keeping with Radnor's six-stage approach to data analysis, the first stage commenced with the full transcription of the recorded

interviews to allow for in-depth understanding of the whole interview. This was then followed by a first reading of the transcribed interviews which served to familiarise myself with the topics that appear in the text and become immersed in it. I strived to find topics (e.g. training) and assign the topic an identifiable code (See appendix 8). A central question in this stage is to ask what counts as a theme or 'patterned response' that "captures something important about the data in relation to research question" (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 82). The answer to this question, Braun and Clarke add depends on the "number of instances of the theme across data set", but "there is no hard-and fast answer to the question of what proportion of your data set needs to display evidence of the theme for it to be considered a theme" (p.82). In other words, a researcher's discretion should be consulted on deciding what themes relate to the study questions (ibid). Hence, I reread the transcripts to identify categories that bind codes together in a meaningful way. For example, the topics that are related to PD activities were explicitly found in the data and hence were categorised as in-service PD activities. However, the topics that are related to the influences on teachers' experiences of and attitudes towards PD were implicit and I had to work out how they should be categorised. After having tabulated the codes and categories, the third reading served to "code content to topic categories" by identifying the main quotes and writing the code name next to the text and the category number (Radnor, 2001: 72). I manually highlighted the codes as I read and annotated throughout. I then copied the excerpts and inserted them into the tabulated codes and categories to complete the coding sheet. I then generated coded transcripts (ibid). During this stage, I copied and pasted the topics and quotes from the master sheet (the original word document I used to documents the analysis process) in a new template which represents the initial codes identified from interviews (See appendix 8). The five steps outlined above facilitated carrying out the analysis of interpretation. Finally, I subjected my analysis achieved so far to the "final step of refining process" where I read the quotes for "different subtleties of meaning" (Radnor, 2001: 88). This step culminated

in finalising the themes and categories where I wrote statements that described my personal interpretation and summarised the findings within each category (see appendix 9).

It is important to stress that as I approached this process of analysis, I kept in mind the importance of researcher positionality and reflexivity highlighted in 4.3.1 above. That is, I tried hard to interrogate my assumptions through an acknowledgement of the potentially limiting lens of my own researcher subjectivity and theoretical orientating stance in order to ensure that the meanings I produced were done with an informed awareness of my own responsibility to provide as full and accurate account of what was revealed as possible (Alvesson and Skoldberg; 2009: 6). This was particularly important with respect to making connections between what participants said and the macro-discourses which informed these – such as between the themes of policed PD and compliance culture and a discourse of managerial professionalism. In all, three macro discourses were identified through my analysis and interpretation of the interview transcripts. Two of these were seen to echo the distinctions between managerial and independent professionalism identified in the literature in chapter 3 (see 3.2.1) and another, native speakerism, to be one, as stated in chapter 2, is one that is a characteristic of a discourses of professionalism in foreign language learning settings in many Gulf countries as observed by Syed (2003), although rarely explicitly stated in institutional documentation.

Given the limitations of space in this thesis, illustration of the complex processes of reflexivity involved in the process of data analysis are not provided with subsequent chapters (chapters 5 and 6) devoted to the presentation of the outcomes and discussions of this analysis process.

4.7 My position as a researcher

Researchers working within the interpretative tradition acknowledge that investigators and object of research are interrelated (Guba, 1990) meaning that "the identities of both researcher and participants have the potential to impact the research process" (Bourke, 2014: 1). This

entails that, Bourke adds, "through recognition of our biases we presume to gain insights into how we might approach a research setting, members of particular groups, and how we might seek to engage with participants". In full acknowledgement of this, in this section I will discuss my position with regards to how the findings of this thesis reflect the interpretations of others' interpretations and how my position impinges on the sense I produced out of the interviews. In chapter I outlined my interest in this study and my ontological and epistemological stance is outlined in 4.2 above.

Positioning perspectives which include insider and outsider stances are important in discussing the validity or trustworthiness of research (Milligan, 2014). While these perspectives can stand alone, as I shall argue, there is a wide recognition in educational research that insider and outsider perspectives are not necessarily fixed dichotomous entities as these are not mutually exclusive in real life (See for example Hellawell, 2006). In line with this, and given my understanding of identity I outlined in 3.4.1 as flexible and changing depending on each interview context I consider myself to be " an in-betweener" (Milligan, 2014) rather than either outsider or insider in my research project. However, I also appreciate that I was viewed differently by participants with important consequences for the knowledge construction process in interviews, both in terms of how I came to view myself and in terms of measures that had to be taken to ensure that levels of trust were maintained and did not have a detrimental effect on the process of conducting the interview (Milligan, 2014).

Thus, on the one hand, having been a teacher at the ELI for sometimes, and being a Saudi, might have been perceived by the participants negatively in the sense that I was viewed as an insider (Mercer, 2007); someone with tenure and a political status. Indeed, some teachers asked me directly whether I was going to reveal any information about them to the ELI administration. This concern can be considered as a reflection of the ongoing tension between teachers and the administration, and as a Saudi national might be seen to impact on my

relationship with participants too. However, on the other hand, since I was not familiar with many of my participants I might have been considered an outsider. Moreover, since I have been a student in the UK for sometimes, I could have been considered by some participants especially those from English first language speaking countries as an insider to some extent (someone who was familiar with their country and western educational practices). More details of the ways in which I negotiated my researcher identity and stance in order to ensure that this happened and that interviews were productive in addressing my research aim and questions are shown below.

I remained cognisant of my "Saudi" self during my interaction with my participants especially with regards to their potential concerns about the political consequences of the interviews on their job prospect. My reflexivity on my different positions can be considered as one way through which I rule out what Kvale (2003) described about the researcher being an oppressor. Thus when some of my participants asked me *during* the interview whether it is going to be recorded despite the fact that I had already informed them about this and receive their informed consent to use a tape recorder, I quickly recognised that the perceived predominant image of me was probably as a Saudi with all the associated concerns about whether this would mean I might pass things to other Saudi administrators with a possible negative impact on their job security. I promptly told them that the interview was being recorded and but that the device could be turned off if they preferred and that they were under no pressure to be recorded or even to continue the interview. They chose to continue the interview and did not mind the recording and it is at this point that I was reassured that my participants trusted me to help them feel more empowered and gain greater control over the flow of conversation (Morgan, 1998).

The fact that I am a non-native English speaker helped me to create a rapport with many of the participants and generated a number of emotional responses in me. Their accounts of perceived discrimination resonated with my beliefs and assumptions about the inequalities among

NS/NNS that are still dominant in the Gulf as Syed (2003) has observed, despite widespread calls for an end to these discriminatory practices (See Pennycook, 2007; Holliday, 2006; Canagarajah, 1999). As a teacher (rather than an administrator), I was able to also empathise with the view of many participants about the centralised decision-making in the Saudi educational system and to relate to and generate further discussion around their participants feelings of voicelessness. I believe that my non-native speaker and teacher positionalities helped create a feeling of rapport between myself and participants. As a Ph.D. student, studying at a Western university, I was also able to create a good degree of rapport with native speaker participants in the interviews. I appeared to be considered a legitimate researcher and native speaker participants were honest in their accounts with me. At times I found their comments disturbing (such as when one referred to the ELI culture as "Arab Culture" but this frankness also allowed me to better understand how within the ELI, native speaker teachers could also feel undervalued and marginalised. According to Foucault (1976), this power-relation may be cast into the interview as a site for knowledge production, where it helped me to play different roles to delve deep into the participant's world, and probe for nuanced influences on their experiences with PD and generate co-constructed meaning. Failing do so as Yates (2013:35) highlights has "the potential to impair the credibility of the research".

From these accounts it can be seen that it is not so much the position held by the researcher that is most important but the ways in which these were worked through and embraced to ensure that I become ethical and responsive to my informants. That is the shared identities and assumptions between me and my research participants informed one another dialogically. In fact, the concerns raised by the dichotomous insider outsider perspectives outlined above do not appear to be an issue as my informants were open and frank with me during the interviews and due to the rapport I developed with them in our first meeting and the subsequent interviews. A first step in ensuring authenticity of my informants' accounts is that I ensured that the stories

the participants told do not wholly reflect 'participant bias'' where they might have utilised the interview in an attempt to vent out their disagreement with institutional PD initiative (Kvale, 2007). It might also be that given my familiarity with context, the participants may have attempted to voice what they thought I wanted to hear rather than what they actually believe and perceive. I addressed this through the validation of the interview transcripts through "member-check" whereby each participant was expected to ensure that their views reflect their own beliefs (Creswell, 2009). I emailed every participant his own transcript of the interview, but only a few of them acknowledged or responded to my e-mail. While this posed an ethical dilemma for me, the trust and rapport that evolved with my research informants throughout my research has enabled me to suggest that this meant their consent or agreement to the transcribed interviews.

Another issue of authenticity of the stories told by my informants concerns how my familiarity with context as outlined in chapter 2 did not wholly influence how I administered the interviews. As Collier-Reed et al., (2009) argue that it is important for the interpretative researcher during the data collection and analysis to be able to 'bracket' one's own presuppositions regarding what Ashworth and Lucas (2000: 289) describe as "importing earlier research findings, assuming pre-given theoretical structures or particular interpretations, presupposing the investigators personal knowledge and beliefs, and researcher's concern ..". Nonetheless, unlike positivist researchers, Merriam (2009) postulates that researchers' role within interpretative studies is not detached but central to the research process (see also 4.7 my position as a researcher in this study). Indeed the researcher, is "the main instrument for obtaining knowledge" and "capturing the experiences and lived meanings of the subjects' everyday world" (Kvale, 2007: 29). For the reasons outlined in this section, I believe that the "self-scrutiny" (Bourke, 2014:1) measures I established informed my candid reflection of the

stories told by my participants rather than influenced merely by my own positions. This represents one fact of ensuring the quality of my research which will be detailed below

4.8 Ensuring data quality: Trustworthiness and Ethical considerations

In this section, I introduce the quality measures I used to make my research trustworthy and credible by demonstrating systematic, visible and rigorous processes of data collection and analysis. As also described above, quality involves describing my understanding of my role in the research (acknowledging my position and any possible role played by 'power' outlined in the above section). Quality in interpretative research requires researchers to demonstrate how they behave ethically too, or as Hesse-Beber and Leavy (2006) indicate according to the moral integrity of the researcher.

As a starting point, the quality of qualitative research is often questioned by positivists perhaps due to lack of consensus on quality criteria such as validity, reliability, objectivity and generalizability (Rolfe, 2006; Shenton, 2004). These traditional determiners of quality of research are drawn from the scientific research tradition to assess the validity of process of scientific research methodologies to ensure that the "study measures or tests what is actually intended" (Shenton, 2004: 47). Nonetheless, it is widely accepted nowadays that it is not possible to claim for objectivity in interpretative research (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Interpretative researchers have gradually developed a different set of criteria to acknowledge the issues of rigor (ibid). It is increasingly common among interpretative researchers to establish rigor through terms such as trustworthiness and credibility in designing natural research and presenting its findings (Miller, 2008). Trustworthiness is concerned with how the researcher himself included persuades the audience that his research findings are worth paying attention to whereas credibility emphasises consistency across the research process (Creswell, 2009). Unlike positivist research, notions of 'credibility', transferability', and 'dependability' are equivalent criteria to credibility and trustworthiness to ensure the value and rigor of the

process of qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Credibility or the 'truth value' considers the 'correspondence between the ways the respondents actually perceive social constructs and the way the researcher portrays their viewpoints' and re-tells their stories to the wider audience (Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004:106). Hence, since naturalistic research rejects the idea of neutrality and value free stance, interpretative researchers need to detail the ethical issues of the research project. Transferability, Mertens and McLaughlin (ibid: 107) add, draws on the notion of "applicability" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of research findings by providing "sufficient details… to determine the degree of similarity" to other contexts. Dependability draws on the notion of 'consistency' of the research findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and is employed to 'attest to the quality and appropriateness of the inquiry process' (Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004:107).

4.8.1 Ethical procedures

In line with the quality measures outlined above which indicate that qualitative research is a moral undertaking, researchers need to safeguard the ethical guidelines of research with regards to the researched topic of the study, the data collection methods and the participants involved (Cohen et. al, 2010). Hence, researchers have a clear responsibility to ensure that they recognise and protect the rights of their participants in terms of their consent to participate in research and rights to confidentiality (Patton, 2002).

An important first step before commencing on my research undertaking was to obtain ethical approval form from the ethics committee at the University of Exeter (see appendix 3). In this form, I described my commitment to adhering to participants' rights to consent to take part in my research project, anonymity and confidentiality and finally their right to withdraw at any stage. However, as explained in 4.3.3 and also in chapter 1, I was only able to conduct individual semi-structured interviews with my participants. Subsequent to this, I contacted the subject institution (appendix 6) to seek approval to implement my study with the participants

who work at the ELI and would like to take part in my study. I assured the administration that the institution and the participants would be anonymised in order to protect their identity and any obtained information would be treated with strict confidentiality. They were informed about the aim of my research study which aimed at exploring the phenomenon of professional development with the aim of providing potential framework for its enhancement. Furthermore, and in line with "the subject's right to freedom and self-determination" (Cohen et al. 2000: 51), the participants were provided with the informed consent forms (appendix 4). Besides, the well-being of the participants and their best interests were my utmost concern throughout and even after the data collection phase. My ethical stance was consistent throughout the research process. For example, bearing in mind the ethical dilemmas faced during my failed attempt to construct a professional learning community (chapter 1) probably due to teachers' fears over privacy issue in the authoritative context of this study (see chapter 2), I was attentive to teachers' ethical concerns and strived to secure their right to privacy and confidentiality. Prior to conducting interviews, I honestly discussed with the participants these ethical issues such as their satisfaction with the venue and recording of interviews. At the beginning some teachers were quite wary about whether I was going to reveal their names and the information obtained in the interviews to the administration. However, I assured them that the interviews will be safely stored in a computer desktop and that no part of interview shall be disclosed to anybody and that their identities would be strictly anonymised. All the information obtained would be solely used for research purposes as per the consent form. I believe that these measures established trust between me as a researcher and my participants. Nonetheless, some teachers e-mailed me after conducting interviews and asked me for confirmation that the information they provided would not be revealed to the ELI administration as they worried it would influence their reputations among their colleagues and may compromise their job future. To me this was a good indication to the level of trust between me and the participants as they felt free to contact me at any time about issues related to the conduct of research. Whilst I reassured them that their identities are anonymised, I also advised them that they were under no pressure

to continue as research participants and that they could withdraw at any time if they were inclined to do so. Quite contrary, they reconfirmed their consent to continue as research participants based on their free choice and interest. I also described how I would collect and analyse the data and how member check would empower the research participants to reflect on and make their voices heard. I transcribed verbatim the interviews and emailed these to the participants for member check to modify or comment as they see fit (Merriam, 2002). However, not all the participants confirmed their member check and this created a huge dilemma for me. I was hesitant whether I should contact them again, or meet them in person to get their confirmation, or whether such steps would put teachers under pressure. However, since none of the research participants declined my invitation for the member check, I was more inclined that the remaining participants did not mind the inclusion of their interviews in my study.

I believe that my research is trustworthy because I subscribe to Creswell's (2009) assertion that trustworthy interviews reflect how the researcher gained insights from the interviews and changed as a result of being embedded in the interviews (Creswell, 2009). Indeed, I believe that conducting this research study influenced my understanding of PD and how to support teachers to develop within their workplace. A final point about trustworthiness considers the extent to which my positionality influenced how I approached data collection, analysis and interpretation which is articulated in detail in 4.7. The 'reflexive account' (Mann, 2016) I provided based on this positionality offers the reader an awareness of the analytical lenses through which the researcher 'gazes' at the data and the way in which different researcher selves are "written into the text" (Lynch, 2000). Thus whilst I have had a background of the context in which professional development is enacted, my role was more of a listener to the stories told by the participants in order to gain thick descriptions of participants' experiences of PD. At the same time, my awareness of the context provided me with the active role that I played in the interview in order to mutually understand their experiences of PD in their daily lives. Moreover, while the interview questions were prepared to guide the interview process, it

was open to explore a host of additional themes and dimensions pertinent to teachers' experiences with PD in the workplace. Rapport with the participants was maintained across the interviews to minimise power-relations during these. The basic qualitative approach that informs this thesis considers the relationship between people and their environment as people interpret and make decisions about how they act based on their experiences and their interpretations and experiences with others.

4.9 Summary

In this chapter I introduced the philosophical underpinning of the study and the methodological choices that guided my data collection and analysis. For the purpose of this research, a basic qualitative research design was adopted to inquire into teachers' perspectives on and experiences of PD provided to them in the workplace. The chapter also detailed the quality measures and ethical guidelines that informed data collection, analysis and interpretation in my research. It also introduced how the model developed in 3.6 is used to guide the empirical side of the study in exploring teachers' views about three set of influences: a micro, and a meso discourses which are seen to react to the macro-discourses at play. The data produced a huge range of accounts which will be developed as the findings of the study in the following chapter.

Chapter 5. Findings of the study

5.1 Introductory Overview

This chapter aims to present the findings of this research study obtained from the analysis of the semi-structured interviews described in chapter 4 (see 4.3.3). The chapter is organised into four main sections which reflect the key areas explored in interviews in line with the research questions the study sought to address (as shown in section 4.1.1). The four sections address the following topics:

- PD activities at the ELI identified by participants

- Participants experiences of PD at the ELI

- Participants views of the impact of these on them personally and on the ELI community

- Their views on suggested alternative forms of PD

In each section, key themes identified from my analysis of the data are presented and illustrated with extracts from participants' interviews. Taken together, the themes provide insight into teachers' views and experiences of PD at the ELI and what informs these. As such it helps account for the apparent disengagement of teachers from PD activities and provides some insights into what sorts of things need to be addressed to better meet their needs which will be discussed in more detail in chapter 6.

5.2 PD opportunities identified by participants

A first general observation regarding participants' accounts obtained from the twelve research interviews is that with very few exceptions they concentrate on describing their views and experiences of the institutional efforts to support their PD and little mention is made of their own self-initiated efforts. This is perhaps not surprising given that the study focus was on workplace PD. Nevertheless, it was interesting that although mention was made of other possible ways of undertaking PD, only a few of the participants claimed to be actively engaged

in autonomous efforts to develop themselves professionally whether in or out of the ELI. Only 3 participants were currently engaged in Masters and Doctoral studies, for example. The possible reasons for the apparent lack of self-directed informal PD among participants working at the ELI will form part of the discussion of the findings in Chapter 6 below.

An additional related observation is that most of the activities participants describe being engaged in are those that are closely aligned with the main forms of formal PD opportunities that the ELI promotes discussed in chapter 2 above. Namely training workshops, the annual symposium and classroom observation as shown in Table 4 below.

A final general observation is that overall, participants' experiences of PD activities at the ELI were almost entirely negative. Participants were particularly scathing about the value of observation and training sessions they were offered. Moreover, while a few participants see the symposium as holding some potential to meet their PD needs, most find it unproductive in its current form. For example, while Munthir was one of a small number of teachers who found this to be a good PD opportunity, most felt it would need to be improved (too formal) (mostly a forum for experts to share ideas not all relevant. Thus while Munthir concluded that: "all what we do that I think is related to professional development is what we call symposium" others felt it was too formal, and "not focused on our development" (David), more of a forum for invited experts to "go there and talk" (Jawad) and not related to teachers actual needs (Rizwan).

As is evident from table 3 below, the workplace PD opportunities offered by the institution are limited and the sporadic nature of PD opportunities was something that many participants commented on as well. While for example Richard felt "at the ELI now, we have actually quite a few professional development opportunities" a point echoed by Aidan, Anthony was one of those who commented on the small number of PD opportunities saying:

Table 3. PD opportunities promoted at the ELI

PD activity	source	Scope	Teachers' role	frequency
Training	PDU: In-house	Teaching new materials; Implementing new curriculum Introducing new educational technology	Trainees: Teachers are trained by reputable training agencies (Anonymised)	At the beginning and the End of the academic year; ad-hoc (when the need arises)
Observation	PDU: coordinators	Check implementation of new curriculum, teaching approach and new educational technology or teaching aids	Observees: observed by designated coordinators to assess and evaluate teachers' performance	2-4 times a year
Symposium	Invited Plenary speakers (from outside the ELI); Teachers interested to present their research articles, workshops, etc,	Ad-hoc: Teaching methodologies, approaches etc..	Attendees: teachers are required to attend the end-of-year symposium	One-off event at the end of the academic year

"To be very honest, in 2 or 3 years I have had only one workshop by OTA [Oxford Training Academy], and quite recently" (Anthony). Among other participants who commented on the sporadic nature of PD, were Murad and Muthir who both highlighted how the symposium, something they viewed as a positive PD opportunity only happened once a year. Thus from participants' accounts there was a feeling that the ELI's PD support strategy needed to ensure

that PD opportunities were offered in a more systematic way and at regular intervals throughout the year. As Rizwan commented, for example, "I think the ELI should think about regular training or once a month asking people to meet in a hall and exchange their views".

5.3 Participants experiences of PD within a culture of compliance

A key focus for the study was uncovering teachers' experiences of PD in the workplace. In this section I will report first on an overarching theme regarding participants' views on the workplace culture at the ELI identified from an analysis of their accounts and which was seen to inform two related themes regarding the wider PD strategy and approaches taken to PD at the ELI.

The central overarching theme identified from the analysis of the participants' accounts is one that refers to a condition of the workplace culture. Specifically, to teachers lived experiences of the ELI as a culture of compliance. This compliance culture not only informed the way in which PD was seen to be 'policed' and a top-down venture but was also seen to have important consequences for individuals and the community alike which impacted on the ways they viewed and engaged in PD. As explained in 2.3, the curriculum at the ELI follows a modular system comprising 4 modules which students must finish within one academic year (the foundation year) in order to progress to their first year of academic study. As was also explained, the ELI has produced a pacing guide as a way to ensure that teachers keep on track. These two things were seen to be key components of a compliance culture by participants which as will be discussed in 5.3 below led them to feel professionally compromised and which led to a blame culture within the ELI, one which saw teachers as to blame for any failure.

A key component of this culture of compliance was top-down planning. As Aidan observed for example in the ELI "everything is planned for you. You don't have much of a say in terms of

what is going on in terms of teaching, the curriculum, the testing or whatever. You are here to do whatever you are asked to do".

This point was also reiterated by Murad who found that "the coordinators prepare even your material for you and every week you go and collect the whole pack from the coordinator and you go and implement it according to the pacing guide". Regarding the pacing guide specifically, as Anthony observed, this "tells you what to do hour by hour" and as Haidar remarked, "everybody has to stick to it" and as John pointed out, this "requires teachers to do things exactly, you give it this amount of time and you have to follow it rigidly". Murad articulated an illustration of how this pacing guide is seen to be a central priority for the administration by discussing what happened during an observation session:

"I was teaching the reading circles and my coordinator with 2 other senior coordinators came to my class, and they found that we were doing this reading circle. After that my coordinator called me and he said look, how come you're doing reading circles that day, it's scheduled to be the day after!"

5.3.1 Policed PD

Policing is a word used by one teacher (Aidan) to describe the way PD is imposed on teachers at the ELI. As Aidan said: "teachers are obliged to attend those symposiums, but policing may not be the right thing to do". Echoing this, Khan observed that teachers are coerced to attend PD activities offered to them by the ELI as this "goes into teachers' files" and is used to inform their end of year evaluations. Similarly, in discussing the symposiums, John observed: "teachers have to attend conference; there is an attendance sheet".

The view of PD as policed or imposed within a wider audit culture within the university where this ELI is located is particularly in evidence in participants' accounts of their experience with the practice of observation that was singled out for negative critical attention by participants.

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As one participant, Ayub, put it, "So far observation is supposed to be developmental but still I think maybe for logistic reasons or whatever it is still mainly evaluative". Another participant who agreed with this is Richard who provided an illustration of the how observation is imposed on teachers in an audit culture, saying:

> "I had my coordinator coming to my classroom unannounced, uninvited. He just walked into my room and started talking to my students for 3 or 4 minutes. I had just explained something to my students I was getting ready to follow through with some sort of exercise or activity based on what I had just taught them when he came in. Now when he finished I had to go back and redo what I have just spent 5 minutes doing because he ruined and wasted 10 minutes of my class time because he forced me to redo this again and it's completely unprofessional".

Richard indication of the unannounced visit by the coordinator resonates with the institutional aims for observation where the unannounced visit is intended to be evaluative, but is one which is perceived negatively. This view of observation as policed PD was also shared by David who recounted the following event that led him to realise this.

"My coordinator sat in my class, he said it was O.K. but we've heard afterwards that they [the coordinators] were asked [by the administration] for those informal assessments here in the headquarters you know, even though we were told that it was just informal"

The use of observation for evaluation purposes was roundly condemned by all participants who pointed out that it was primarily used as a way of assessing performance and closely linked to whether teachers' contracts are renewed at the end of the year. As Aydin observed that "your job contract [as a teacher] is based on observation, and based on this observation the teacher is fired. That's just an observation to fire you. That's it". Echoing Aydin, Murad said that "the classroom observation here in this place is for firing and not for development and it makes no sense to me. Why you hire and fire people every year?" Others who concurred with this view were John who observed that observation "is used to hammer people, to penalise them" and,

Richard, who remarked on how "based on one-hour observation the future of the teacher is on stake whether he will be fired or stay. Many teachers were fired in this way".

Echoing concerns shared by all of the participants, Munthir summed up the way in which observation as a means of professional development is seriously compromised in the ELI:

> "They [teachers] get feedback on their performance but they are evaluated at the same time, and I am really against that; if you want to develop you do not have to evaluate because evaluation will intervene with other matters that are very touchy with teachers like money like renewing the contract so the teacher will feel pressured".

Jawad indicated that the purpose of PD was to "fulfil a set of criteria which were given to teachers in advance". Concurring with this, Murad commented further on what the focus of an observation would be. As he said: "instead of discussing with me you know whether the students were benefiting from the activities, they [observers] are just looking at it from the point of view of management and the pacing guide. It's not about their learning.

5.3.1.1 Top-down PD

The second major theme regarding PD activities promoted at the ELI within a culture of compliance was that these were top-down, that is that the focus and nature of PD activities was set by others rather than teachers. The majority of my informants denounced the imposition of PD activities from management feeling they should have been consulted. The fact that they weren't meant that for many the PD activities they were required to undertake were not seen as closely aligned with their needs. Teachers denounced and questioned the logic behind this top-down philosophy. As Jawad said for example, "when everything is directed top-down to the teachers, to students, it's bad for everybody".

The top-down nature of PD was evident from participants comments on a number of different characteristics of the PD participants encountered. These are discussed in turn below.

5.3.1.2 De-contextualised and irrelevant PD

It appears that an important concern for teachers about PD is whether it addresses the context and helps them resolve practical issues. Rizwan's view of context as comprising "educational culture, students, institution, society, textbooks from A to Z" is representative of the general view prevalent in participants' accounts. Echoing this, Khan, who was a coordinator, emphasised how important context is for teachers PD. He said that "if you really want to help teachers, help them develop according to their own context" (Khan).

The issue of de-contextualized PD came up mainly with regard to workshops and the symposium. In large part these PD activities were seen as irrelevant by participants as the following quote from Rizwan illustrates: "Regarding training activities one of the problems comes when we learn the thing that is not relevant or we are given the workshop on the thing that is not relevant". Richard provided a good example of something that was deemed particularly irrelevant: "I remember one time my coordinator showed me a training video and they were showing me like a teacher in an elementary class in English speaking county teaching native speaker children in English!" More broadly, Ayub highlighted another reason why training might not be relevant saying: "the training was idealistic but you have to adapt any methodologies to the realities on the ground and here something is suitable but something isn't suitable". Agreeing with Ayub, Anthony perceived the reason why PD does not match classroom situations is because trainers lack awareness of the teachers' workplace context. "Most of the time the trainers who come here they have just the know-how about the situation; they haven't been to the situation". As several participants explained, this meant that the focus was mostly on providing new ideas but not explaining how these could be put into practice. As Rizwan observed, for example: "They [trainers] just tell this is this. So, how to utilise and bring it as practical in the classroom?" Similarly, with reference to training workshops provided by the Oxford Teaching Academy (OTA) in particular, Richard indicated that these only provide

an ideal "it's [training] ideal, [OTA] tell us how this book works and [we] should do this and that without knowing what happens in the classroom. It doesn't help and it [this approach] has never helped actually".

One outcome of the top down workshops from participant perspectives is that ideas were imposed without proper consideration of the context and teacher needs and perspectives. As Khan for example pointed out:

> "Somebody [a coordinator] proposed co-teaching, And then it was implemented and now it's been taken off. Nobody likes it, neither students nor the teachers… . It happens in ideal situations where teachers don't have any fears. They can say something in front of their colleagues"

Similarly, Aydin explained how the decision to use the target language as the sole means of communication in the classroom followed a workshop on this after which the administration "had decided that [teachers] are absolutely not supposed to translate to students in their mother tongue (Arabic) even if the need arises" Aydin.

The top down model of training also inhibited teachers from using practices not advocated in workshops. As Aydin pointed out, for example: "If a teacher wants to use Grammar-translation method, he will be deemed insufficient. So the message is don't use it because your trainer told you it wasn't good".

5.3.1.3 PD as too theoretical

Another theme linked to the de-contextualised and irrelevant PD theme above was the view that PD content in workshops and symposiums is too theoretical. Commenting on the training and observation, Ayub for example, observed that "The thing they [trainers and observers] tell us in professional development is only research-based, they talk about Chomsky, Saussure, Jeremy Harmer but they don't bring them practical in the classroom". Likewise, the conference was perceived negatively because it was about theories. As Rizwan explained "They [the PDU] brought some people in to talk about social cultural theory and the social aspects of language

teaching but I was talking to my colleagues at the end of the conference and like they couldn't make much out of it or see what it means for teaching."

These sorts of speakers were seen as problematic by participants. Murad, for example, described the invited speakers in the following way: "They have the knowledge right at the top and are just throwing it out to teachers" Murad. Similarly, David described the problem with this as follows:

> "Now, a lecturer he has a lot of knowledge, he is telling the students, he is just imparting using whatever but he doesn't have to go down and interact person to person like you do in an English learning situation with second language learners"

Jawad and Rizwan agreed with this saying, with reference to the symposium, "It's a venue for "famous scholars go there and talk" (Jawad) but this "leaves us teachers wondering how does this conference relates to our actual classroom?" (Rizwan). Richards concurs that "a lot of times when you have training, it's at such a theoretical level that the inexperienced teachers can't understand, they can't apply what's being said to the classroom". Finally, Jawad observed:

> "Professional development should be something practical. I mean the approaches that we bring in the classroom not only what we read in the theoretical books, they're translating the things that we have read in the books. I couldn't get you know more benefit from that. It should be something practical".

5.3.1.4 Reductionist PD

Another impact of a top-down approach to PD and the compliance culture that it was embedded in was the reductionist tendencies, especially with regard to observation which tended to attempt quantify teaching in terms of numbers and measurement. This was something that was viewed in overwhelmingly negative terms by participants. As Richard remarked, for example, "the issue I have here is that I couldn't believe that for all observations there is a grade out of 5 for different areas of teaching that is given to the observed teacher". Echoing Richard, Aydin perceived that observation is reduced to a checklist to be ticked by the observers to judge how

good or ineffective the teacher is. "The result of their [observers] classroom observation is only oral or written in ticks or just they say numbers e.g. 3 out of 5 but it doesn't go any further on the ground. That's the problem here". As Munthir saw it, this practice did not amount to genuine PD, describing the process of assigning a number to an observation as "completely evaluative and completely subjective".

Richard adds that the aim of PD should not be aimed towards criticising teachers, but provide feedback "So the thing is that the teacher trainer should not limit his views to only criticising the teacher, and do this, do that. So the thing is I would like them to provide feedback".

PD was also perceived to be reductionist with relation to training being conducted as a transmission model where teachers cannot actively take part.

5.3.1.5 One-size-fits-all PD

A few participants, typically those who had most experience, also described another issue with a top down approach to supporting PD in the ELI, namely that they perceived this as promoting a one-size-fits- all approach to PD. This approach was viewed negatively by those who raised it. As Ayub described it, "the issues [is] that the ELI sees one-size [PD] to improve all teachers, they create, make, and design PD for all teachers". For these experienced teachers, the approach to PD at the ELI was not seen as meaningful as it didn't reach their needs. As Richard pointed out, for example: "You know I have been teaching for 20 years I don't need a basic elementary training"

5.3.1.6 Didactic PD.

Linked to the other dimensions of PD as top-down discussed above, there was a clear sense from one of the participants (Aidan) that PD was too didactic. As he explained with regard to the workshops for example: "We need a little bit more autonomy on the part of the teachers and have some awareness that language teaching is not limited to one single approach or what

the teacher trainer tells you". Similarly, regarding the annual symposium he observed: "They [teachers] couldn't make much out of the conference, it was kind of one-sided conference; I think even conferences should be interactive".

5.4 Consequences of the compliance culture for teachers.

A number of consequences of this compliance culture were evident in the participants' accounts. As will be discussed, this led participants to feel professionally compromised which affected their morale, contributed to unprofessional behaviour on their part and impacted on their attitude towards PD activities, meaning that even within a system where PD was imposed, that they were also fundamentally emotionally disengaged from these. The compliance culture was also seen to have contributed to a culture of mistrust which affected the development of feelings of collegiality necessary for collaborative PD ventures and which therefore worked against the building of a strong and supportive professional community. In what follows I will first consider the perceived consequences on teachers as individuals, both in terms of their work and then more specifically in terms of their perspectives of PD. Following on from this I will consider the impact of the compliance culture on the teacher community at large and on efforts to generate more informal collaborative forms of PD.

5.4.1. Feeling professionally compromised.

Without exception, all participants described themselves as professionally compromised which was attributed to the culture of compliance within which they worked. This was perceived to generate a blame culture and also created a conflict of interests between what they thought was professionally appropriate conduct and the requirements of the system which was evidenced in the references to lack of voice, lack of autonomy and feeling pressurised and disempowered. Finally, it was also evident in their comments on the unprofessional nature of ELI practices within this culture of compliance, especially PD practices, which was seen to lead in some

cases to an erosion of their own professional standards and conduct. These different themes are discussed in turn below.

5.4.1.1 Operating within a culture of blame

Teachers' experiences of PD at the ELI were in part influenced by a perceived culture of blame at the ELI which as I will explain further in section 5.4.3.2 below contributed in no small part to a culture of mistrust in the wider community at the ELI. The participants felt they were perceived as to blame for any systemic failures, such as failure to complete the curriculum or students' failing to successfully complete the exit exam at the end of the year and crucially that PD was perceived as addressing teacher deficiencies. As Munthir noted for example: "So, if something seriously went wrong …., the whole focus here is to say what's wrong is that teachers aren't professionals, weren't developed, they need more professional development"

Richard was one of several teachers who felt it was unfair to blame teachers lack of competence or skill, rather than acknowledging other factors impacting on teacher performance, such as students poor language skill and a system of advancing students to the next level despite this. As he said:

> "Everything that's not happening it's our fault. It's my fault that you put a level-2 student in a level-4 class? It's my fault that you told me to teach a student how to write 3 paragraphs when he can't even write a 2-clause sentence?"

Other examples of feeling responsible for systemic failures taken from interviews with Aidan, Ayub and David are shown below:

> "We are always the target; they [teachers] don't work they don't do this and messed up things, they don't teach, always they get the blame" (Aiden).

> "If a student is late in class, I am to be blamed" (Ayub).

> "So I've come to conclude that it's always the teachers' fault and I don't think that's fair" and "that makes the teachers' job much more frustrating in my view" (David)

5.4.1.2 Operating within a pressurised system

Participants were unanimous in pointing out the ways in which the ELI systems and practices led them to feel under pressure. In addition to the pressure caused by the culture of blame discussed above, a major theme across the interviews was that the modular system and the pacing guide reflected an "ideal" set of parameters for teaching and learning that had very little to do with the reality on the ground with consequences for the quality of teachers' work and their student's learning experience. As Haidar and Aidan both noted, for example:

> "The pacing guide is too limited, too rigid and everybody has to stick to it. So within that pacing guide, an hourly-based pacing guide, both teachers and the students have no choice but to just skim through the pages [textbook] and it is about coverage not understanding" (Haidar).

> "So, the thing is the teacher is rendered inefficient because of number one time constraints, curriculum constraints um you have to cover so much material in let's say one week and so or so. … His overall purpose or concern is not to satisfy his students understanding, it's rather to satisfy the curriculum" Aydin.

Teachers found that these requirements left them with no time for instruction as Aidan also observed:

> "Teachers are left with not enough time for instruction. All of a sudden you have a writing test, you have the mid-term test and then the final test, all these writing and portfolio quizzes take so much of the teachers' time that teachers were left with no real time for quality teaching".

This left teachers wondering if what they were doing was "really helping the students or not" (Rizwan) and as Jawad and David observed to the view that the system they were working in was a failure:

> "This system is a failure in the sense that it's the teacher who is asked to do the impossible. This is why we're asked to teach in level 4 to students who are barely level 1, and that cannot be done regardless of how we try" Jawad.

> "So, the pressure is on the teacher which is half the coin, the other side of the coin is not addressed in my view but from what I see that students come in without books, they come in late, a lot of them have poor attendance rate, but there doesn't seem much pressure is put on them" David

The result of the system of student promotion despite poor grades as David pointed out was very frustrating and created a poor teaching and learning experience. As he said:

> "So, it's very frustrating for me but it's also frustrating for students. Now, you can imagine a guy who is very weak, he doesn't know what I am talking about as he hasn't the bank of words. So even my explanations are no good because he doesn't have those words either"

The pressure left many teachers to question the ethics of what the system required them to do and worried about the students. The majority of informants felt a deep empathy for the learners' situation but felt unable to do anything about this. As John pointed out, for example, he found it "painful" to hear students complain about "rushing through the curriculum and not being able to slow down". In a similar vein, Rizwan said: "there is time-limit, pressure, I really feel sorry for the students". Finally, remarking on the problem of absenteeism in classes at the ELI another teacher (Haidar) commented: "If I were them, I would be absent as well because it's boring; 3 hours in the class and you don't know what's going on" Haidar

However, a number of participants also commented on how the compliance culture led to students themselves exerting pressure on teachers. With the need to progress through all 4 modules and to exit the ELI and get on with their subject specific studies, students also exerted pressure on teachers to get through materials as quickly as possible. As Murad said for example: "Students will say, 'Look we didn't finish that yet'. So you need to speed up regardless of whether the students are learning or not". The result was, what Khan called: "a big gap and discrepancy between what students expected and what teachers thought students needed". He went on to say that even as a coordinator, he felt powerless to use his professional knowledge to address this due to being "surrounded by constraints that are imposed by the administration".

5.4.1.3 A lack of voice and autonomy

The feeling of powerlessness mentioned by Khan above was one that was echoed by several other participants and closely linked to concerns about a lack of voice and autonomy which surfaced in all of the participants' accounts triggering a range of different emotional responses. Richard was one of those who expressed this feeling of disempowerment brought on by the compliance culture and the blame culture that formed part of this. As he said:

"So I feel that the school is disempowering me as teacher and then they turn around and blame teachers for the failures. Oh teachers are bad and they need observation, no this is not. You're making all these mistakes which are taking away my power"

The feelings of frustration and unhappiness which were widespread were brought about by a disregard for the experience level of participants and their desire to be treated professionally. Richards, one of those who felt himself to have expertise which was being ignored for example said: "Why then bring a foreign 'expert' and then not listen to him?" This point of view was reiterated by John too as the following extract from his interview indicates: "I feel that we have no say, you have to follow exactly and wait for my coordinator to tell me everything and to give me all the material. You are here to do whatever you are asked to do". For Rizwan the situation was so frustrating he felt that he wanted to quit teaching English language. As he said: "I don't want to teach language anymore. If you are a professional and you're not being listened to, then this is one of the main reasons".

As Khan explained, teachers' concerns were not only difficult to voice but even when they were, they fell on deaf ears. As Khan explained "teachers voice concerns every time but nobody listens. It seems nobody listens they know it but this is the reality". He went on to say how "When the modular curriculum was suggested I was there in the hall. Everybody [teachers] opposed it, this is not gonna happen, but because the one who actually pushes the administration to this modular system was a guy from America he had a CELTA, He had his business background in administration sector he came into this position"

Others who stressed a lack of autonomy included Richard, Aidan, and John:

> "There are constraints [that] strip away the autonomy from teachers. There is no autonomy for teachers" because "some people make decision on the part of the teachers and they are so called experienced managers, directors, curriculum designer whatever, but the thing is what you end up having is something very limited something very much constrained very limited time for instruction." (Richard)

> "My concern is that we teachers are not autonomous. We're always constrained by decision taken by our superiors. So the thing is that considering the fact that we're constrained, we're not ready to carry out what we really think is good for our students" (Aidan).

> "Professional development is tied in with the curriculum development. The curriculum we had last year or two, has been prescriptive in the fact that you are supposed to do certain things in certain times in certain places and it didn't really give enough of freedom, professional freedom, to the faculty delivery in that curriculum you're asked to deliver in the classroom" (John) .

5.4.1.4 Deprofessionalisation

Another theme found across all accounts was a sense of being treated unprofessionally which in some cases led teachers to adopt unprofessional behaviour themselves. A sense of being treated in an unprofessional manner was something that was closely linked to the other facets of being professionally compromised mentioned above, but was also singled out for attention in participant accounts in two main ways.

Firstly, with reference to the observers. Observers were either not deemed to have the professional credentials to conduct observations or were seen to behave unprofessionally when conducting the observation. Aidan was one of those who was unhappy with the calibre of staff who were assigned to do observation. As he said:

> "If a coordinator has a CELTA qualification, he thinks he is qualified to offer feedback. Because of his CELTA certificate he [coordinator] says you should put the students in pairs. You didn't put them in pairs. That was the only feedback he was able to use, because why? You see, what he knows is only limited to what he learned in CELTA".

An event that was singled out by several teachers was when someone from the Engineering faculty was invited to observe the teachers. Many found this very upsetting and undermining of their professionalism, particularly since this person's commentary were used to evaluate a teacher. As Khan (a coordinator) recalled: "The new [administration] asked the engineers who are non-professionals to observe English Language teachers and based on their recommendations you'll be surprised the [observed] teachers were fired". Haidar also elaborated on this from a teacher perspective:

> "What they [teachers] mind is that they see somebody who is not very well qualified or somebody who is an engineer who became a member only because he speaks English very well. He doesn't have the qualification or somebody who has no idea about theories and teaching English as a second language somebody who has no idea about group-work or the importance of scaffolding in classroom or they're not familiar with affective filter, because you are going to write like a report about what you are going to do in the classroom. It's really a shame.

In terms of how these observers behaved, again, teachers were unanimous in their views. Rizwan summed up the views of many: "The person who observed me had no clue what he is doing and on what point he is speaking on. It was like what I tell you do it, otherwise you'll suffer, it is frustrating". Similarly, David recommended that teachers be wary about how they respond to feedback from observers:

> "Teachers should be quite wary because coordinators may take personal things; not only professional things. If you say something they don't like, they may take it personally and then they exaggerate those things against you"

Concurring with Rizwan, Munthir said that "there are a lot of teachers getting upset over observations, observation by people they think not qualified". Finally, John remarked: "I don't believe that the observations are done in the correct manner if you read academic papers on this".

A second topic under the theme of deprofessionalisation, was raised with respect to the relative status of non-native versus native speakers of English. Many of the non-native speakers commented on their view that the ELI administration operated with a view of an ideal teacher

as someone who is a native speaker which they saw as undermining their own sense of themselves as professionals. Jawad acknowledged this for example as the following extract from his interview highlights:

"The model that we are going to teach should be native model and obviously is going to affect the teachers inside the classroom and outside the classroom and it really bothers teachers as non-native speakers. Though they're qualified teachers they have higher degrees and everything compared to the native speakers but the thing is there is the complex of the language. We can never bridge that gap"

Rizwan provided an illustration of the effect of this unwritten policy on teachers saying:

"There is a teacher that I know personally, he is a level-4 teacher now and it means he is above-average but the only thing is he is not an English native speaker and because of that his name comes up almost every year for observation. On the other hand there are teachers who don't really work hard and they're enjoying the good status possibly because of their accent".

Teachers deemed this conduct unprofessional and "unfair" because as Haidar observed, "observation should not only [be about] pronunciation". It should cover other aspects such as that a teacher can "use technology in the classroom and apply the assumptions of theories of subjects"

As explained above, the perceived discrepancy between teachers' views of themselves as professionals and the way in which they were treated led many to feel demoralized anxious and disillusioned. As Khan said "teachers are so down now, their motivation level is so low, they don't want to do anything. But this is because of the atmosphere you know". As David mentioned, "a lot of teachers will be afraid of their job, they don't want to lose their job".

Discussing a marking system that does not enable him to see his student's exams and therefore identify weak areas and how to support students with these, Richard made the following comment: "I never even see my [students] tests when they take their mid-term or final exam. I never see it after they take it. How am I supposed to teach my students when I don't see what they got wrong on the mid-term? As a professional educator it's hard for me to go along with

something like this". However, while a sense of the professional dilemmas this poses for teachers is evident in participant accounts, it is also the case that some teachers may also resort to unprofessional practice to comply with the system, including not sending accurate student registers. As David remarked for example:

"I know for a fact that teachers don't send in accurate [absence] rate because they're afraid it will reflect on them and this is another problem here. With the focus on the teachers so much they'll say uh if I say he is absent they'll say I am a bad teacher" David

5.4.2 The impact of the compliance culture on teacher engagement with PD

The different elements of the compliance culture were also seen to impact on the way in which participants engaged in PD activities. On the one hand, as discussed earlier in chapter 2, PD was a requirement of all teachers and the results of observations as well as other forms of PD formed part of the annual teacher appraisal process as discussed in chapter 2. Because of this, and because teachers were aware of the way their PD activity might be used to fire them, on the surface at least, teachers appeared to be fully engaged in PD. However, on the other hand, there was a clear sense that teachers were not investing in PD activities offered by the ELI and therefore ultimately disengaged. There was for example a sense of teachers paying lip-service to PD activities as is illustrated in the following quote from Murad:

> "I remember one day I contributed and gave a presentation myself and I was happy at first to see many people but then after the presentation you know, they [teachers] said we're there because we have to sign a paper to show attendance. I was disappointed I said well I was happy I thought the guys liked my topic that's why they came. But now I know they might've come for different reasons because they had to"

Rizwan also provided a clear sense of teachers' emotional disengagement from the PD activities offered by the ELI as well as further evidence of the low morale of many teachers:

> "There are good teachers who've lost interest, and they're doing whatever they're told they don't say anything now. I remember when these things started 2 years ago every

meeting there would be many question and comments. But now you attend a meeting and it's dead. They're all dead, they don't say anything now"

While a lack of interest is one possible reason for the lack of engagement on the part of teachers, a number of other reasons were also offered by teachers. One of these was the unsuitability of the training itself, as Richard observed: "I've had other trainings here by people that I consider far less qualified and why am I setting here listening to somebody who has less education, less experience than me telling me a bunch of elementary thing". However, the main reason offered by participants was an awareness that PD was used for evaluation purposes and was linked to future employment prospects. As Jawad explained "whenever the ELI makes professional development it's linked with evaluation and this makes teacher refrain from PD activities". Similarly, with regard to the lack of engagement in PD activities and the relationship between this and employment, John made the following observation:

> "I've heard about teachers who have lost their jobs at the end of the year. So, it would get around fast and that puts more pressure on the teacher where he might even make more mistakes than he otherwise would if he is nervous because of being monitored and knowing that it will go against his name on the file for the year or after."

From this extract it is clear that PD activities were a source of anxiety for many teachers and it appeared that the lack of engagement in these was as much a reflection of this than it was an active act of resistance. Teachers were wary of exposure, in case this increased visibility made them more vulnerable and this affected their participation in events. The following extract from Khan's interview, shows how this affected teacher engagement with the symposium, for example:

> "Now we had this first ELI symposium recently, where we asked the teachers to present and there were certificates and very good colleagues of mine, but when asked them to present then one of the people said oh man just leave it. Because they're reluctant to say anything in front of anybody because they think that the others are there to pick up the mistake"

The feelings of anxiety and related emotional responses to training are most evident in participants' comments on observation. David, for example, expressed his distrust of the observation process in the following way: "I won't like you to come for peer-observation

because you might find my weaknesses. I do want my improvement and development but I don't want you to come to my classroom and exploit my weaknesses". For many teachers, classroom observation was very intimidating, demoralizing and undermining of teacher self-confidence as the following extracts from Rizwan and Anthony illustrate:

> "The thing is it should help in professional growth but again the fact is you are too scared to call anyone inside your classroom". Rizwan.

> Teachers for example denounced the misconduct of observation as an evaluative rather than PD activity and deemed it to be demoralising for them. As one teacher said it, "observation is very potentially demoralizing for the teacher. If they [teachers] got 2 out of 5 [in the evaluation scale] it undermines their professional self-confidence which certainly doesn't enable them to do their job better. I am totally against this policy" Anthony.

Another observation regarding the impact of the compliance culture on teacher engagement with PD is that it created a time pressured environment meaning that while teachers were compliant with the expectation that they engage in the PD opportunities provided by the ELI, that there was a feeling that there was no additional time for teachers to engage in alternative self-directed informal PD. Thus for example as Haidar observed:

> "If you ask how can I have time to make an action research in the classroom within that pacing guide because we have a coordinator who pops into your classroom every now and then to check whether you are on schedule or not. And they take notes"

Haidar also suggested that time was one of the main reasons for a lack of collaborative PD activities between teachers, however, as I will discuss below, there was evidence in participant accounts of other, more damaging effects of the compliance culture on the teacher community at the ELI.

5.4.3 Consequences of the compliance culture for the teacher community.

As explained in chapter 2, the professional community at the ELI is large and comprises teachers drawn from a wide range of ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As will be discussed, this diversity inevitably presents some challenges for building a cohesive

community of teachers, not least with regard to the native-non-native speaker divide. However, what is apparent from teachers' accounts is that the accountability agenda and blame culture inherent in the compliance culture that is promoted in the ELI create a culture of mistrust which further compounds these divides with important consequences for collegiality and more collaborative and informal forms of PD networking across these.

5.4.3.1 The splintered nature of the teacher community

Reading participants' accounts, it became evident that a defining feature of the community at the ELI was that this was marked by deep ethnic and linguistic divisions which impacted on how well the community worked as a whole. Khan was one of several teachers who commented on this. As he said:

> "I don't know because of different cultures nationalities and their educational backgrounds and professional backgrounds, and everything, we are far from each other, one another, we are not colleagues"

What emerged was that the ELI teacher community was a splintered community, comprised of a network of many small communities which regarded each other with mutual suspicion. One reason that may explain the splintered nature of teachers' community can be attributed to the language barrier where being non-native speaker is experienced to be inferior in status than their native-speaker counterparts. As Ayub said, for example:

> "The thing is language is a big barrier and the qualifications. Language barrier I mean native vs. non-native speakers. And that is the question around ELT world. You know native vs. non-native speakers and their status. From the management side there is no discrimination against non-native speakers but inside the teaching community definitely teachers feel it"

Despite being the majority of the teaching force in the ELI, not being a first language speaker of English led to many feeling insecure and second class citizens. As Rizwan noted, for example: "It is in our community you know that as a non-native speakers we are always inferior. There is no resemblance in status between natives and non-natives". This sense of injustice was one that was recognised by teachers on both sides of the language divide. With

Richard, a native speaker freely acknowledging that a distinction needed to be drawn between being qualified and having English as a first language in making decisions about recruitment. As he said, "They [native English speakers] are recruited because of their language. But the thing is they're not trained teachers. So that's a problem" Richards.

The result of the perceived differences between different groups of teachers, whether on the basis of language, ethnicity, culture or language led to a number of communication challenges between teachers within the teaching community and this, as two participants observed resulted in a dysfunctional community. Thus Aidan observed, "It's a multicultural society but it doesn't work actually. There is no real communication". Ayub commented on the reason for this lack of communication saying: "I don't think that it is a matter of personal trait like shyness or something but I think it is a matter of dysfunctional community".

It was evident from teachers' accounts that informal nationality clusters were an important form of community within the wider professional community. Ayub, for example noted "I am really disappointed with the idea of a community with multicultural people. People here are more focused on their ethnic or national group than the professional one". David also observed that, for example: "I would say every nationality has its own way of dealing with problems at the ELI". This point was also highlighted by John: "What is happening here is I am Pakistani, I have my own Pakistani community, if someone is from South Africa they have their own. I don't know the community is less about the professional, it's about your personal linkage". From this it can be seen that teachers feel far from each other despite their being on one place and having many professional challenges in common.

5.4.3.2 A culture of mistrust and a lack of collaborative PD

From the above, it can be seen that there are clear challenges in building a strong professional community among such a diverse group of teachers and some of these are ones that are not

necessarily linked to the compliance culture promoted at the ELI. However, there was also a clear sense that one of the consequences of the compliance culture was that it added further to a feeling of mistrust which impacted on a sense of collegiality and collaboration among teachers. As Munthir noted for example, "I don't think any relationship exists between teachers or among teachers because collaboration is not promoted in this context". A point also raised by Rizwan:

> "I think there is something that is keeping us away from the teachers. If we want we can. Move ahead and be very friendly with each other. We have had a good atmosphere but you can't call it friendly and developing collegial helping that's not there"

This culture of mistrust, borne out of teachers experiences of PD as a vehicle for teacher appraisal, meant that teachers were wary of speaking out (as noted earlier in the chapter) and mistrustful of coordinators and management. This had a knock on effect at the teacher community level, where the mistrust resulting from the culture of compliance could therefore be seen to further exacerbate inter-nationality and language group relationships. As David put it:

> Within such community, teachers appear to be wary all the time because "[they] have to be quite careful about what [they] say to each other because that might get back to the people in the administration. In a mixed situation like this you have to be careful about what you say. It might be held against you and it might affect your prospects".

Murad echoed this saying: "teachers don't wanna make their concerns public because they are afraid it might go back on them and it has the impact". For many teachers, therefore it was deemed best (and safest) to network professionally within a small group of (small nationality or ethnicity) friends and to avoid or remain silent in larger groupings outside of this. As Ayub noted, "when it comes to formal work and PD situations, there is always a block". As Anthony pointed out, "it is just your circle of friends you've been with when you need certain details as to how you go to your class or whatever issue you have".

Further illustration of this consequence of the compliance culture on the community is evident in the accounts of Khan and Ayub who were both coordinators.

"I am in the situation where I am a member of the PDU (the professional development unit) but I can't make them believe in me. They don't believe me, my friends they've changed you see because they say he's gonna observe us. Previously we used to share a lot of stuff. They just keep quite when I am there because they know I am the head of the unit and I can do anything maybe but this is sad because they don't wanna share" (Khan)

"If I [as a coordinator] tell someone we will come and we'll help you if there is a problem he says alright I know what kind of help. People have this said to me, (A) don't tell us PD you have to observe us, just observe us, that's it. Don't tell us professional development because there are consequences" (Ayub).

5.5 Teachers' alternative visions of PD

Drawing upon their own biographies and personal experiences outside of the ELI, teachers accounts revealed their own understanding of PD which contrasted with the institutional vision of PD at the ELI. As I will describe, this included an idea of PD as a life-long project with both personal and collaborative dimensions. It also revealed their view on the importance of informal PD which should be grounded in and responsive to their own practical realities and addressing the challenges they faced within this.

5.5.1 The Importance of PD as a life-long endeavour

Despite the generally negative experiences of PD at the ELI, all teachers saw PD as important, an obligation for professionals and therefore something that they should be engaged in. As Rizwan said, for example: "I must make a change within myself to make changes for students" because "if the teacher is not learning he can't be a better teacher" Rizwan.

For many teachers, PD was therefore understood to be a lifelong endeavour. The participants perceived continuity of learning to be an essential component of PD and professional growth. As Ayub put it: "professional development is continuous through life. It's not only like at certain stages of learning you stop. It is a continuous process that keep on-going every day and every day is a new experience". Underpinning this for Khan was a sense of "never-ending improvement".

5.5.2 PD as an individual and collaborative activity grounded in practical realities.

Many participants emphasised their understanding of PD as grounded in their own personal experiences. As John said, for example: "From my own experience I saw that PD is the development that happens while doing while teaching" and Jawad: "For me it's a question of learning every single day and every day is a new teaching experience for us". However, it was also understood to be enhanced by collaboration with others as well as Haidar said that this "helps a lot because we are talking to a friend; we are talking to the people who are in the same situation, who are experiencing the real situation what I am going through." Agreeing with this, Jawad argued that collaboration was seen to help people grow and helped build a sense of teamwork in a teaching community. As he said:

> "PD should be... people or individuals developing themselves personally growing as individuals and as teachers about their teaching… and also working towards the elements of teamwork within the organisation"

For Rizwan, the collaborative dimensions of PD were more beneficial than individual PD. As he put it:

> "It [professional development] is something like eating food. Eating with others includes talk, socialising, laughter. You remember with friends. More often than not, team itself together everyone achieves more". (Rizwan)

5.5.3 Ways of undertaking PD identified by the participants.

Drawing upon these principles mentioned above, participants offered a number of views of what sorts of PD activities were beneficial, but also how these could be employed most effectively. For almost all participants, these were best when they provided informal rather than formal learning opportunities such as those they encountered in the ELI.

Most of the focus was on activities which drew upon teacher practical lived realities, highlighting the importance of workplace or on-the-job learning. As Richard saw it: "Professional development should be something practical, something focusing on the approaches that [teaches] bring in the classroom not only what [they] read in the books".

Echoing this point, Aidan also pointed out that: "Teachers can learn from their own teaching because they encounter different types of students from class to class and they try to get round the problems they see in the classroom"

5.5.4 The importance of reflection and classroom research

Several participants stressed the importance of reflection to PD. To quote Richard, for example:

> "Well, from my own experience I saw that PD is the development that happens while doing while teaching, it means that people develop and improve their teaching skills if they reflect on what they do if they get help from the people around them if they keep trying new things that's the best professional development for me compared to people going outside or getting somebody from outside to come to the place it happens from within"

Teacher's reflection as a form of PD was perceived to be more effective than other PD activities as it could provide a source for self-professional development based on their learning needs to resolve teaching dilemmas and concerns. Moreover, teachers perceived reflection to be helpful in resolving real classroom dilemmas rather than trying to apply others ideas. Murad was one of those who denounced the non- grounded and academic' orientation of PD which he argued "might suit the academia but does not match the realities in the classroom".

One participant, Munthir, explained how he had employed a reflective technique in his work as a language instructor in the US. And how this had impacted on his PD

> "During my study in the United States I taught at the English language institute there and from the ways they used for professional development is they gave each teacher a video-camera and they said O.K. give us the best class you can give. I thought well this is very easy and then there a stand on the camera, I fixed that at the end of the classroom and I gave my lesson, I went home I watched the movie and I was not satisfied. And I had to develop myself; nobody is involved here it's only myself. So I started you know video-taping myself over and over again and I fixed a lot of the things that I never realised alone in the classroom because when you're teaching, you don't see yourself"

Another teacher, Aidan, described how classroom research was another tool he had found helpful for reflection. He explained how his focus was on looking at the attitudes of students to communicative teaching which was introduced as an innovation to replace a grammar

translation approach where he worked in China. As he explained he discovered that "the students were concerned about the lack of explicit grammar teaching and asked for more error correction and that helped me improve my practice." (Aidan)

Finally, Rizwan, emphasised the importance of collaborative reflection:

> "Actually I want to work on those things [teaching concerns] I want to see teachers working together on reflection, they reflect on the issues and then sort out the issues and they bring some new change in the classroom and outside the classroom" Rizwan.

5.5.5 The value of informal peer observation

"Genuine" peer observation also surfaced in several accounts as an activity which several informants felt could facilitate continuous professional learning. As Haidar argued for example "a teacher should visit his colleague to learn more classroom techniques or classroom practices". Similarly, Jawad recalled his previous experience at another university where peer-observation was a source of informal continuous learning. He believed that this created "a free-learning atmosphere" and described how "teachers used to visit each other, me and other teachers, and even sometimes shared sections. We did co-teaching actually. It was spontaneous there was no planning. The benefit appears to be enormous for this teacher as, as he explained, he learned how to merge theory into practice by means of peer observation. As he said:

> "I studied psychology of classroom practices especially with the focus on the socio-cultural approach. So I tried to place every classroom practice against the Background of a socio-cultural approach to language acquisition and that's Vygotskian approach. I found it very amazing but I didn't have the experience how to apply. I am very theoretical, I am theoretical person but I need the practice. But when I saw another colleague teaching, I could place what he was doing in the classroom in a frame and say O.K that's how I will apply this. I could place his classroom practice in the frame of the socio-cultural approach" (Jawad)

Rizwan was another teacher who also stressed the benefits of peer observation and how he had tried it out in the ELI. As he said:

> "This is how things should be, a teacher should visit his colleague to learn more classroom techniques or classroom practices. For example, I find myself very weak in teaching vocabulary. So what I did in last module I visited one of my colleagues informally and I saw how because he was like an expert in teaching vocabulary. I liked

the way he taught vocabulary, I had no idea of teaching vocabulary and I learned a lot form his classroom. That's how things should be"

5.5.6 Other forms of non-workplace PD activities.

Two participants also mentioned a preference for a number of other non-workplace based PD opportunities both formal (such as obtaining a further qualification) and informal (such as professional networks) as the following quotes from interviews conducted with David and Ayub illustrate:

> "The other area is of course to try and acquire from the qualification by doing a degree be it masters or a doctorate in an area of pursuit that you want. And you can do that as a distance learning" and "you have some ways for developing yourself from the point of view of information of specified area to do with teaching I suppose in this case" David

> "It [PD] is kind of life-long learning that can be done through different channels, face to face interaction, attending conferences and seminars where you meet a lot of people. Also social media has made collaboration easier. This is the informal talk, discussion on the Facebook, on the Linked-in or some of the other social-media networks. That helps a lot especially it's not only about the ELI even if I have quite a few friends somewhere else in Saudi Arabia and they give me the suggestions because they know the Saudi culture they know the Saudi students, so that's helps also" Ayub

5.5.7 Towards an alternative institutional strategy for PD at the ELI

A final observation evident in a number of accounts is an indication of the ways in which a new PD strategy might be evolved in the ELI and what this would need to accommodate. Firstly there was a sense that PD should not be tied into evaluation processes. As Richard said, for example "it will be constructive if it is without any further consequences", and if "it's done in a nice way" (Jawad). Another participant, Rizwan stressed the importance of needs analysis. As he said: "But the thing is needs analysis. This way, at least you'll have an idea of the most important thing for teachers, the less important thing and the least important thing to concentrate on". Two participants (Aidan and Munthir) also acknowledged that institutional

PD strategies would inevitably place institutional priorities and needs at the forefront but that

this should not exclude the developmental needs of the teaching staff:

 "Every institution has its own needs has its own particular set of learners and I think the
challenge for any institution is this aligning their professional development goals with the
individual professional development goals of their teachers" (Aidan).

"I think ELT professionals need to have their needs met" and this can be achieved by the
institutional will to align "their professional development goals with the individual
professional development goals of their teachers" (Munthir)

In the following chapter, as part of a discussion of the findings presented in this chapter, I will

suggest some of the ways these ideas might be enacted.

Chapter 6. Discussion of the findings and conclusion

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is threefold. Firstly, to discuss the findings of the study into teachers' experiences of and reactions to the PD support initiatives offered by the ELI with reference to the conceptual framework developed in chapter 3 and relevant literature. Secondly to consider the contributions of these findings to building an understanding of teachers' engagement with PD opportunities and in providing a critical understanding of how to improve PD at a local pragmatic level. Finally, by way of a conclusion, I emphasise the importance of research into teacher perspectives on PD, propose a number of future directions that research could take and reflect on my own personal learning journey in undertaking this thesis and the ways it has deepened my understanding of PD, both in general and specifically with regard to this in the ELI.

6.2 Discussion of the findings

As explained in chapter 1, the starting point for the study reported in this thesis was the failure of my attempt to engage teachers at the ELI in the development of a professional learning community and my realisation that teachers' reluctance appeared to reflect a broader disinterest in and negative view of PD in the workplace, suggesting their disengagement from the institutional efforts to support teachers' PD. The study was undertaken to better understand why this might be the case and the ways in which contextual factors informed and impacted on teachers reactions and experiences of PD as reflected in the research questions that the study addressed mentioned in chapter 4 and which are reproduced below:

Q1: What are the tertiary EFL teachers' perspectives of professional development in a HE institution in Saudi Arabia?

- What are teachers' perspectives on professional development activities they undertake in the ELI?

- What are their experiences and reactions to these professional development activities?

- What alternative PD activities do teachers propose, if any?

These can be seen to frame the discussion of the findings in this section. Figure 3 below provides an overview map of the key themes to emerge from an analysis of the findings which will inform the discussion.

Figure 3. Overview of key themes identified in the findings
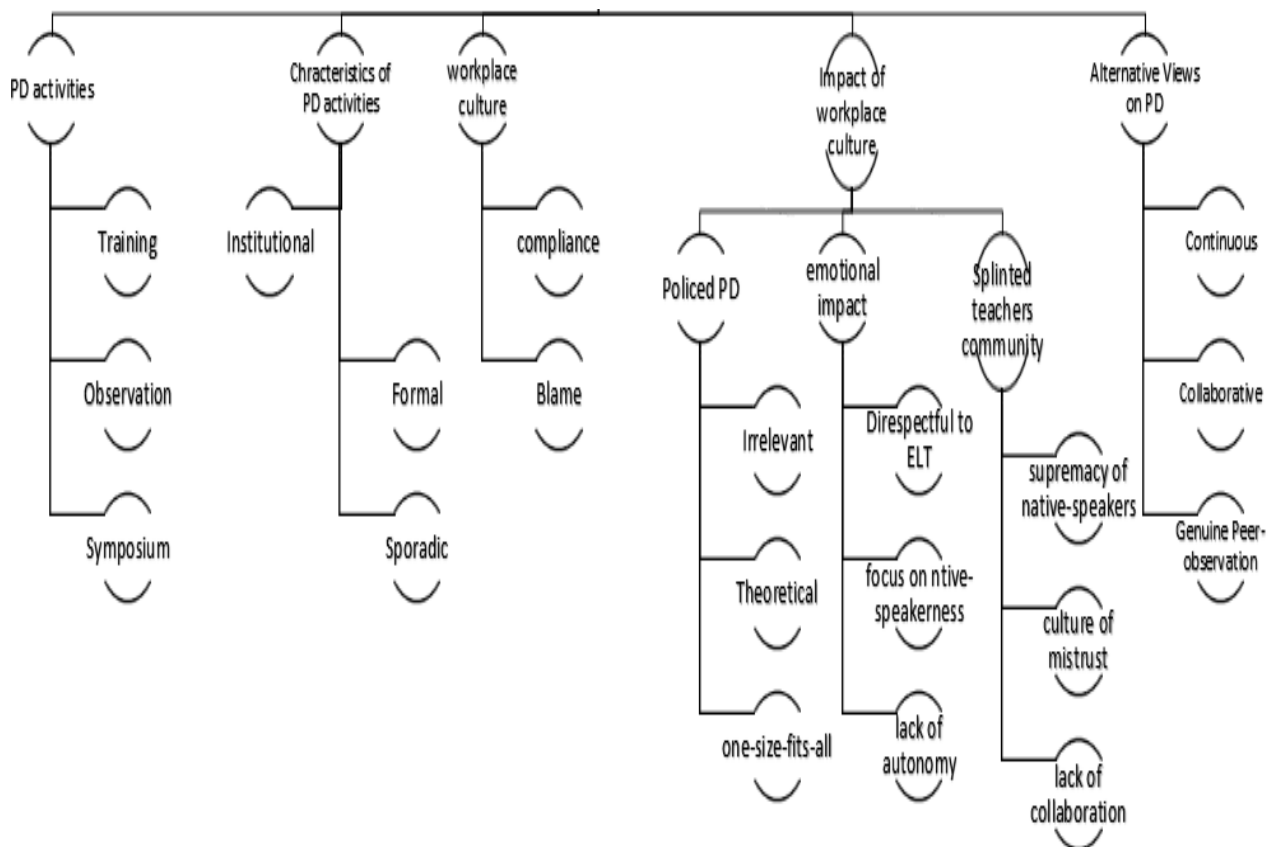
In discussing these themes, in light of the consideration of what PD literature suggests and my experience as a tertiary educator, I have attempted to provide richer understanding of the meaning these themes might offer to understanding PD within the context of this research study as well as more broadly. I will argue that they demonstrate a tension between the micro agentive

perspectives of teachers and the meso dimensions (institutional norms and values) demonstrating the enactment of PD in the workplace as a complex multifaceted phenomenon.

6.2.1 The nature of the PD support activities provided at the ELI

With regards to PD opportunities outlined in chapter 5, teachers mentioned that the main PD activities they engage in are those which are promoted by the institution. Namely, workshops, observation and the annual symposium. Participants accounts of these reveal that the model of PD promoted in the ELI is one that is most closely aligned with the training approach to PD discussed in chapter 3, which reflects a techno-rationalist approach and is underpinned by a behaviourist understanding of teacher learning which prioritises the transfer of procedural and theoretical know how and skills. The purpose of this form of PD, whether in the form of workshops, observations or the symposium was understood by participants to address perceived teacher deficiencies against an institutionally determined set of norms and criteria of effective teaching. This reflects a traditional model of in-service professional development which requires teachers to attend occasional in-service PD on topics selected by administration and outside trainers (Sandholtz , 2002) with teachers' PD depicted as an absorption of knowledge transmitted by trainers or coordinators to teachers who are viewed as passive recipients lacking calculable skills (Johnson, 2006, Day & Sachs, 2004). Teachers' accounts revealed their understanding as viewed as implementers of others conception of best practice.

The sorts of PD support activities offered to teachers highlighted in their accounts are commonplace in many educational settings as is evidenced in the research literature (including, for example the studies reported in chapter 3 by Yurtsever (2013) and Raza (2010). However, while a training orientation to PD may well have a place in a teacher education programme (Freeman, 2009), in general, as Hargreaves (1995) notes and as was also mentioned in chapter 3, a training orientation to PD is increasingly cast in a negative light due to the fact that it reduces PD to ''a narrow, utilitarian exercise that does not question the purposes and

parameters of what teachers do'' (Hargreaves, 1995: 26). As such, as was also highlighted in 3.3.4.1, the literature suggests some limitations of the training model of PD as vehicle for achieving reform agendas with its focus on the know about of the teacher knowledge (Little, 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998: Burns & Richards, 2009; Freeman, 2001). In addition, several studies have highlighted some limitations of the training model of PD as vehicle for achieving reform agendas (Kennedy, 2005; Freeman, 2002; 2009). The results of this study (see 5.3) show that teachers themselves were not happy with the training model promoted with many citing a preference for continuous, self-directed and informal PD. The findings also suggest that teachers favored PD that is more collaborative and saw collegiality as integral to teachers' learning, something which was absent from their workplace. This reflects their preference for a more development orientated more normative re-educative form of PD underpinned by a view of learning as socially constructed (Johnson, 2006; Johnson & Golombek, 2002). This resonates with the findings of the studies undertaken by Raza, (2010); Yurtsever, (2013) Fraser, 2011; Crawford, 2009; O'Connell, 2010 reported in chapter 3 (see 3.7).

6.2.2 Teachers negative reactions to the PD activities

The PD literature highlights how teachers do not necessarily view training in a negative light as both Raza (2010) and Yurtsever's (2013) studies show. In addition it is also widely acknowledged that teachers in the early stage of their career often find training beneficial (Wallace, 1991; Kennedy, 2005; Zohairy , 2011). However, in this study teachers have overwhelming negative impressions of the PD support activities, irrespective of the number of years of experience that they have. This confirms the impression I had of teachers as disengaged from institutional PD reported in Chapter 1. The teacher perspectives reported in chapter 5 above have enabled a deeper understanding of why this is the case. The picture that has emerged is PD is "a site of struggle" (Norton, 2000: 127) reflecting a profound conflict of interest between teachers and the administrators in the ELI, enshrined in very different visions

of what PD is and how it can best be promoted. This highlights the value of the asking participants about both their own (micro) perspectives and inquiring into their experiences and the constraints and affordances of the workplace norms and values on their engagement with PD. As Little (1993) suggests, these findings present "a problem of fit" between the prevailing conceptualisation of teachers professional development in the institution and teachers own experience of the way this is enacted.

6.3 Accounting for teacher negativity: competing discourses of teacher professionalism

In the conceptual framework I brought to bear on the study reported in chapter 3 above, I proposed a tripartite approach to understanding teacher perspectives on workplace PD. With this in mind, the study design examined the micro perspective (the personal perspectives of teachers, their sense of their professional identity developed out of their previous experiences and life history) which provided them with an orientating stance towards PD at the ELI as well as the meso perspective (their experience of engaging with the PD activities offered in the institution and factors which affected this). In accounting for the negativity evident in participants' accounts, in this chapter, I return to the third perspective in my framework; the macro dimension which as explained in chapter 3 is concerned with discursive realities which provide a contextual backdrop to both the meso and micro visions of PD evident in participants' accounts and which can provide a deeper and more coherent understanding of teacher perspectives of PD which as explained in chapter 1 can generate a more comprehensive picture of PD from which more nuanced understandings of how to improve PD can be made.

As explained in chapter 4 above (see 4.3.1), an understanding of the macro discourses underpinning participant accounts was identified by subjecting what participants said about their perspectives on PD to a further level of analysis and interpretation including the discursive practices of managerial professionalism discussed in chapter 2. This entailed a process of drawing connections between these and ideological underpinnings about their sense of

themselves as professionals. Discourses are by their nature implicit, implicated in the actions and worldviews of individuals (Fairclough, 2003; Van Dijk; 1995; Foucault; 1980) and inevitably these need to be seen as primarily implicit in what participants said, but through a process of looking for patterns and underlying meanings in participant accounts, these were made more explicit through my analysis.

From the findings reported in chapter 5, I believe it is possible to discern that what it means to be a professional is at the heart of teacher accounts of PD at the ELI. This is not only evident in their mention of unprofessional treatment, an explicit theme in the findings but is also implicit in much of what they have to say about their status and treatment at the ELI which affects the way they orientate themselves to PD and engage in this. Moreover, I believe the tension referred to earlier in this chapter is in essence concerned with competing understandings of what being professional means; one held by themselves as educators and an alternative progressive vision held by the ELI management as 'neo-liberalised' professionals. While, as discussed in chapter 3, there are those who question the use of the term professional in an account of PD as this has certain negative connotations, it was also suggested (following Evans, 2008) that it is important to address this. My findings have helped provide empirical data on the importance of doing this and I believe can be better understood with reference to the distinction made by Evans (ibid) between what she called professionalization and professionality. As explained professionality, also sometimes known as independent professionalism (Leung 2009) relates to the individual sense of self as behaving and being professional. This is contrasted with professionalialization, also known as managerial professionalism (Sachs, 2005) or sponsored professionalism (Leung, 2009), which is linked to an understanding of professional as entailing external standards setting, whether in a professional association or professional body, institution or through a national mandated policy. These different understandings of what being a profession means have come to occupy

the position of two competing discourses that form part of the socially constructed frame of reference that are drawn upon in professional fields including education (Sachs, 2005) and are two of the discursive realities (macro level factors) evident in teacher accounts. By highlighting the significance of their understanding of what it means to be a professional to their views and experiences of PD, the teachers in this study have signalled that a discussion of PD activities cannot be meaningfully undertaken without discussion of what it means to be a professional. Their understandings of what it means to be a professional moreover, draw upon these discursive frames of reference as a source of meaning making and as a means of contesting the practice of PD at the ELI. As Sachs (2005) argues teachers are positioned and configured differently within each of these discourses, and the purpose of this section is to consider the findings in light of the two discourses, which I will refer to as managerial professionalism and independent professionalism. It is possible to discern other discourses in the findings, intersects with managerial professionalism in complex ways. One of these, a 'global' discourse within TESOL is what Holliday (2006) refers to as native-speakerism which alongside a local discourse, which I refer to as paternalism, shapes the particular ways in which managerial professionalism is enacted in ELI.

6.3.1 Managerial professionalism

The workplace culture norms and values evident in teacher accounts in chapter 5 and in the description of the institution in chapter 2, can be seen to be a manifestation of a discourse of managerialist professionalism (Day & Sachs, 2004) or what Evans (2008) calls the professionalization movement which appears to have 'confused' rather than enhanced teachers' professional development (Patrick et al. , 2003: 237). Managerialism manifested itself in the context of this study in the form of policed PD activities onto the teachers, and created structures where teachers are closely monitored to implement the proposed PD agendas and their performance is evaluated to ensure full compliance to the set institutional policy. The

underlying PD model vested in this managerial professionalism can be described as a competency-based model that aims to maintain the image of 'being' good teachers which creates "a semblance of order, control, and certainty in the face of uncertainty and vulnerability of the teacher's world" (Britzman, 1991, Cited in Moore, 2004: 6). Institutional measures that have been put in place to ensure greater efficiency of teachers' work such as the Quality Assurance and Accreditation schemes outlined in chapter 2, can be considered as a managerial attempt to "control and regulate knowledge" (Clegg, 2003: 41) to manage the quality of teaching and learning.

Evidence of the prevalence of the policing culture in teachers' work includes the attendance sheets that teachers have to sign to confirm their attendance at workshops or the symposium, observation that is unannounced, the pacing guide that ensures teachers are on track of the scheduled curriculum, and the use of PD to evaluate teachers. In this regard, the policing culture appears to have stifled teachers and has rather led to a compliance culture to the managerial demands. The findings predominantly suggest that there are grounds to argue that teachers' participation in PD activities can be described as a form of compliance to the managerial requirements. In addition, PD can be considered as a mechanism to ensure that teachers comply with the pacing guide and ELI policy. Another manifestation of the managerial professionalism was described in the findings as a prevailing culture of blame by the administration to the teachers for any failures in the education system. PD can be viewed as a remedial mechanism set by the PDU unit to rectify the faulty issues with the curriculum or students. As a consequence it appears that the managerialist orientation of the institution has led to imposing PD that is too theoretical, not addressing the context of the workplace and not addressing the needs of the teachers about how to teach according to the educational needs of their students. Coupled with the blame and policing cultures outlined above, teachers felt they had to comply with the outcomes of PD activities introduced to them even if they feel it violates their

established beliefs about teaching English such as the use of L1 in teaching their students. This may explain the sort of multidimensional factors that influence teachers' decisions to engage with and attitudes towards the sort of PD offered to them in the workplace. Among this confluence of influences, teachers' decisions can be seen to occupy a marginal position that bears little more than being forced into compliance to the discursive practices of the hegemonic discourses prevalent in the workplace.

6.3.2 Managerial professionalism in the context of institutional paternalism in Saudi Arabia

The emphasis on the bureaucratic control, the standardization movement and 'micromanaging curricular uniformity' (Hargreaves , 2003: 1) at the ELI are further ways in which the organization can be seen to draw upon a discourse of managerial professionalism, increasingly widespread in tertiary institutions around the world (see Clegg, 2003, Barnett , 2003; Patrick et al., 2003), one which inevitably means that teachers are treated as "compliant and closely monitored producers of standardized performances" as Hargreaves (2003: 92) points out. However, as Leung (2009) points out the concept of teacher professionalism that is endorsed by institutions will also draw upon local socio-cultural reality; that is it will be "context-sensitive, reflecting historical, social, political, and ideological contingencies" p. 51. In Saudi Arabia, managerial professionalism finds a natural home within a culture of "rigid hierarchy" (Elyas, 2011: 215) and a "centralised approach to policy and curriculum development" that is commonplace in Saudi Arabian higher educational institutions discussed in chapter 2 and as discussed by Kabel (2007) (in Elyas & Picard , 2013: 1084). Thus the compliance culture at the ELI draws upon socio-cultural norms and assumptions to enact the managerial professionalism that has been brought in with the internationally mandated quality assurance mechanisms, including the accreditation procedure. That is to say these are interpreted within a context with a centralized educational system promoting a top down authoritarianism or paternalism

(Mazawi , 2005) and which manifest in the top-down and policed PD highlighted by participants accounts. As Clegg (2003) and Land (2001) note, the prime motivator for PD appears to "domesticate" teachers, or to align teachers' professional development to the needs of the organisation. These institutional practices has shaped the professionalism and created what Leung (2009: 49) called a '*sponsored professionalism*' which is "proclaimed on behalf of the teachers".

This managerial discourse in the ELI appears to have shaped the professional culture within the institution which is based on performativity to the dominant discourses of standardised performances and fine-tuned outcomes (Evans, 2011). Expert trainers, qualified coordinators, research evidenced successful curriculum, Commom European framework curriculum, and accredited standards-based programme by an American institution seem to have set strong discourse with predefined goals that the ELI utilises grounded in the belief that managing these will successfully yield the intended reforms. However, the story that teachers reported about their experiences reflect a complex, 'indeterminate, swampy zones of practice' (Schön 1987, in Clark & Erickson , 2003: 5) that defy the simplistic conceptualisation of PD.

Finally, the discourse of sponsored professionalism can be said to influence how teachers collectively experienced their collegiality at the ELI. The compliance culture meant that there is one version of professional practice vested in the ELI policy, and that any attempted deviation could lead to serious consequences in terms of how teachers' professionalism is evaluated which may lead to their contracts being terminated. As a result, it seems that this compliance culture might be said to inform a perceived culture of mistrust among the teachers' community due to the mismanagement of educational trust through performativity and rituals of verification (Day & Sachs, 2004; Power , 1999). The majority of teachers mentioned that they do not trust coordinators (when they visit them in class or in community and undertake their evaluation) nor do they trust their colleagues at the community level especially ones who

do not belong to their cultural ethnicity fearing that they might backbite to the institution about them. While the literature talks about the 'contrived collegiality' to describe how teachers collaborate to satisfy managerial mandates which imposes collaboration on teachers rather than teachers themselves organically collaborate to develop their professionalism (Hargreaves, 1990; Little, 1993; Change , 2011), managerialism in the context of this study was perceived to further eradicate genuine collaboration and collegiality between teachers as a result of fears of accountability. The findings suggest that the denial of collegiality and more importantly dialogue with others in teachers' community at the ELI, to use Bakhtin's notion of dialogism (1981), appears to make teachers to internalise demeaning image of themselves as unprofessional.

6.3.3 The co-opting of a discourse of native speakerism into a managerial professionalism

Findings revealed that teachers' negative experiences with the PD at the workplace reflect a tension resultant form the ideological underpinnings of native-speakerism in ELT world. This tension emerged at two levels: at the institutional and at the community level. At the institutional level, native-speakerism appeared to be a dimension of the sponsored professionalism where the status of being professional TESOL teacher appears to be closely tied to the globally but locally perceived functions of English (Philipson, 1992; Pennycook , 2007; Canagarajah , 2006; Hudson , 2013; Elyas, 2008) More specifically, the concurrent consideration of what it means to be a good language teacher in Saudi Arabia, as showing native-speaker traits, specifically how one should sound (Elyas, 2008; Habbash , 2011) as evidenced in several of the accounts presented in chapter 5 above (see for example 5.4.3.1; 5.4.3.2). At the community level, native-speakerism appeared to divide the community into binaries of native and non-native speakers with consequences for individual teachers and the teachers' community as a whole (see 5.4.2; 5.4.3; 5.4.3.1). In other words, the managerialist

orientations of the ELI administration vested as evidenced in the finding of this study in adopting American accreditation system, as well as American English as a global language in the Saudi context (Elyas, 2008) may have informed educational decisions to sustain the image of the native speaker as a qualified efficient teacher (Philipson, 2003 : 1992 , Canagrajah , 1999). Hence, the majority of non-native speakers in this study, felt that their professionalism of being effective teachers is judged against the image of native speakers in terms of accent and other ideological traits associated with this such as being effective and deserving higher positions than non-native speakers (Hudson, 2013). Thus, when coordinators visit teachers in classroom, there appears to be an implicit expectation to show traits of native speakers in order to be deemed effective TESOL teacher at the ELI. Moreover, teachers' negative experiences concerned how when PD endorses the image of native speakerism, teachers found it challenging (and probably risky) to resist or challenge this discourse. The positions that native speaker teachers occupy at the ELI (such as coordinators) were viewed by the non-native speakers as ideologically and politically instigated rather than based on professional criteria for recruitment even though no explicit reference to discrimination on the basis of these was evident in recruitment adverts as discussed in chapter 2 or in the Faculty Handbook. It appears that the privileged position of English infused the structural powers at the ELI. The majority of the non-native speakers on the other hand find themselves vulnerable to the privileged status of native speakers both in terms of how they should sound, but more importantly with regards to decisions related to how they teach or what PD they need to engage in. The majority of the respondents for example felt that even if they take part in PD activities out of compliance to managerialism they do not appear to take active roles in collegial discussion because they are quite fearful to be penalised for their grammatical or pronunciation mistakes. While this finding could be peculiar to the context of this study with regards to NS-NNS positions in PD, the literature echoes similar findings with regards to how English is privileged in the Gulf countries

and how native-speakerism is privileged especially the white-privilege, American Privilege, British privilege (Karmani, 2005; Hudson, 2013) and Elsewhere (Philipson, 1992; Worrington, 2014; Holliday, 2006). This privileged status of native-speaker creates inequality for example, centre vs. periphery (Philipson, 1992), which has "widespread currency within the popular discourse of ELT" (Holliday, 2006: 385). The perceived inferiority to native speakers that the majority of non-native speakers in this study felt can be attributed to the "othering" of …

"… colleagues form outside the English-speaking West according to essentialist regional or religious cultural stereotypes, especially when they have difficulty with the specific types of active, collaborative, and self-directed 'learner-centred' teaching–learning techniques that have frequently been constructed and packaged as superior within the English speaking West" (Ibid).

The ideology of native-speakerism can be described as in part oblivious to cultural and ethnic multiplicity that typify the TESOL teachers' community at the ELI. Holliday (2006: 386) describes this as "cultural reduction, or culturalism". Thus, while the dichotomy of native/non-native speakerism can be described to be resultant from the perceived managerial culture at the ELI, it can also be said to emerge as a result of teachers' histories as being native-non-native community at other contexts. Non-native speaker teachers for example in what appears to be feeling of inferiority to native speakers, find refuge in their own ethnic communities in a bid to mobilise collegiality.

The ideology of native speakerism finds its discursive influence both on the conduct of PD and the meaning of being TESOL professional. In terms of the former, PD appears to be considered professional practice in part if the training is delivered by reputable, and possibly native speakers either trainers or coordinators who observe teachers in classrooms. The standards of PD practice that TESOL teachers undertake was centred around criteria set by native speaker 'coordinators' in terms of the modular system and teaching methodologies (Use of L1, communicative language teaching and pacing guide) or through American accrediting

institution as mentioned in chapter 2. Native-speakerism also informs the status of being professional teacher at the ELI as one who shows native-speaker English accent, and one who follows rigidly the recommendations set by his native-speaker (or native-speaker like) superiors. At the community level, teachers appear to cluster around their ethnicities in a bid to avoid the prejudices of how they should sound as professional teachers. Teachers' community can thus be described as a splintered teachers' community which may not be appropriate for formulating collaboration and collegiality.

The discourse of native-speakerism is implicit in the actions of coordinators and others in managerial positions in the ELI and as participants accounts reveal, is implicated in the ways in which non-native speaker teachers feel undervalued and subject to different treatment as well as in the way in which some native speaker teachers otherise non-native speaker teachers in their accounts (see for example the splintered nature of the teacher community and deprofessionalisation in 5.4.1.4; 5.4.3.1; 5.4.3.2). The discriminatory practices are also enshrined in the different pay-scales given to non-native versus native speaker teachers working in the Gulf as Syed (2003) discussed (see chapter 2). Since there is no formal acknowledgement of the native non-native speaker differential in documentation, it can be argued that this discourse is a *hidden discourse*, implicated in the enactment of a discourse of managerialism but not explicitly acknowledged by managers or subject to critical scrutiny by them. Rather it seems it is taken as given, acceptable and legitimate form of knowledge. As Van Dijk (1995: 18) indicates that discourses sometimes work implicitly in the discursively enacted dominance or underlying ideology. Finding ways to address this as part of a wider need to address the managerial model of professionalism is important. Some of the steps to be taken to do this are discussed in recommendations in 6.9.1 below.

6.4 Teachers alternative visions for PD: Independent professionalism

Independent professionalism, as Leung (2009) defines it as teachers' taking critical view of imposed reforms, in many respects manifested in the findings of this study as teachers being critical of PD encapsulated in the managerial professionalism that may not help teachers develop as caring professionals, and the alternative views on PD teachers suggested to meet their personal and professional needs (Leung, 2009; Smith , 2001). Teachers were critical of institutionalised PD and as result suggested alternative views of PD to the institutional ones which includes professional learning through reflection, peer-observation and collegiality that may help them provide care for their students. This suggests that self-directed professional development (e.g. Mann, 2005) is part of what it means to be professional as discussed in chapter 3.

The participants of this study understood PD as a life-long learning venture teachers undertake to stay abreast of the latest development and the latest research to inform their practice. Teachers' quest for continuous learning reflects their commitment to develop professionally through self-initiated PD activities such as reflection. My informants also mentioned their preference for informal PD activities in teaching methods and how to deliver student-centred lessons effectively. Another dimension of teachers' professionalism can be attributed to the perceived significance of the professional community to teachers' sense of being professional. Teachers' quest for collegiality appeared in their interest for collaboration among teachers' professional community to promote their professional growth and achieve personal vision and institutional education reforms. However, due to the lack of collegiality in their workplace context, exacerbated by the compliance and blame culture outlined in chapter 5, teachers expressed their interest in building a workplace community of professionals in order to develop their professionalism whether virtually or practically at the ELI where they can share ideas,

read books, deliver workshops, and gather in rooms to talk about their teaching issues and how to resolve these.

One manifestation of my informants' aspiration to professional community appeared in this study in the form of teachers' clustering and finding refuge in close friends with the same ethnicity. It is implied that one condition for nurturing collegial PD is building a culture of trust in the workplace. A collaborative culture that teachers aspired to was perceived to be one where "working relationships between teachers tend to be spontaneous, voluntary, development-oriented, pervasive across time and space and unpredictable" (Datnow, 2011: 4). Nonetheless, collaboration or collegiality might be incompatible within the context of this study where PD is imposed on teachers and "decisions about curriculum and evaluation are highly centralized'' (Hargreaves 1994: 193).

Yet another dimension of teachers' professionalism which appeared to have influenced teachers' experience and engagement with PD was their biographies and historical trajectories with successful PD throughout their careers but not in the ELI. This in a way seems to influence what PD teachers wanted to see at the ELI. Teachers mentioned for example how the context in which they worked prior to coming at the ELI was conducive to true professional growth, collegiality and satisfaction with their purpose of teaching. As discussed in chapter 5, one of the positive experiences was through reflection on a video-taped lesson where a teacher reflects on his episode to learn how to improve his practice. As discussed in chapter 3, reflective practice was deemed important for teachers as it helps them conduct self-directed PD, relieve them of external control of PD and their teaching (Mann, 2005; Richards & Farrell, 2005) Teachers deemed reflection as a form of development as a lively experience that they hoped to see at the ELI because it was perceived to lead to professional development that is based on their needs to improve practice, and enhance students' learning. For example, it may lead teachers to change their teaching strategy or bring in new materials to engage students or even

find alternative curriculum based on their students' needs rather than compliance to managerial mandates. A thorny issue that teachers found hard to go along with was the institution's emphasis on banning the use of L1 in and outside the classroom. This was demeaning for teachers because based on their biographies they taught their students using L1 in other contexts and believed it was successful as it leads to fast-track but rewarding learning by their students. This finding highlights how teachers drew on their biographies as active agents which motivated them to pursue PD in supportive workplace conditions and thus easily engage with this.

Nonetheless, looking at the other dimension of independent professionalism rooted in teachers initiatives as caring professionals (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002, Smith, 2001), it can be seen that teachers articulated their concerns about their lack of autonomy and the implication this had on the moral dimension of teaching, i.e. teaching to the best of their students (Johnson, 2006). These findings resonate with the suggestions offered by leading theorists in TESOL (Leung, 2009; Ur, 2002; Nunan, 2001) and education generally (such as the work by Evans, 2008; 2011). The findings suggest that teachers' negative experiences of PD encapsulated in managerialism as outlined above (this section) and in section 6.3.1 shed light on how teachers draw on democratic professionalism (Day & Sachs, 2004), referred to as "professionality" by Evans (2011) or as Leung (2009) calls it "independent professionalism" which concerns, as outlined in chapter 3, independent professionalism manifested through teachers' "inquisitive and critical view of handed-down requirements" that hinders their autonomy to provide care for their students.

These findings resonate with the studies reported in 3.10 (Raza, 2010; Yurtsever, 2013, Fraser, 2011; Crawford, 2009; O'Connell, 2010) which suggest that teachers' autonomy and motivation to choose PD lead to their meaningful engagement in PD. However, while the literature suggests that independent professionalism in part directs teachers to develop their

practice through 'reflexivity' where teachers turn their thinking on themselves for self-examination (Leung, 2009; Patrick et al., 2003), this self-examination however appears to be stifled in the context of this study by the compliance culture or "self-surveillance in which reflective practice becomes a managerialist orthodoxy' (Clegg, 1999: 168).

The discussion of findings presented above which relate to facets of independent professionalism voiced by teachers with regards to the sort of suggested PD activities in which they can engage leads me to introduce how teachers' protested their independent professionalism through dialogue in this thesis. Teachers' independent professionalism manifested itself in the form of resistance to managerial mandates and practices of PD rather than options to evolve their professionalism. As discussed in 3.3.4, teachers as knowing emotional and moral subjects (Kelchtermans, 2004) who take control of their self-directed PD (Mann, 2005; Bailey et al., 2001) felt that in the context of this study they lacked the autonomy to choices regarding their PD and as (Sandholtz , 2001: 823) notes "find themselves subjected to the decision of others". The formal imposition of PD also has in part contributed to undermining teachers' self-efficacy and status as professionals. Teachers' concerns about the managerial practices of PD appeared to have negatively influenced their attitudes not only towards PD but also to be independent professionals (Hargreaves, 2000). Hence, data suggests teachers' disengagement from despite being coerced to participate in top-down PD which appear to undermine their self-efficacy to act as professionals in the workplace context with regards to PD choice and implementation. As Hargreaves and Dawe (1990) note that managerialism resulted in "teachers' reluctance to explore and embrace alternative teaching approaches which may challenge or move beyond what they already know" p.227. This suggests that in order to cope with the PD reform at the ELI, as Beijaard et al (2000) note, teachers wanted to resist the imposed institutional vision of professionalism to protect their personal identities or their own views on professionalism, but the compliance culture appears

to stifle even teachers' attempted resistance. The study is thus different from O'connell's (2010) and Crawford (2009) in the sense that context presented further challenges to being independent professional which is at the heart of designing PD to enhance teachers' engagement both at the individual and community level. As outlined in 3.4.1, this has consequences on teachers' identity about how they perceive themselves and others view them as professionals (Miller, 2009; Clarke, 2008; Varghese et al., 2005: Norton, 2000)

6.5 Reflections on the contribution of the study to understanding and promoting teachers' professional development

I believe the findings of the study have made a number of contributions to knowledge which I will discuss in turn. As indicated in chapter (1) my original motivation to undertake the study was to deepen my understandings teachers' lack of interest in PD provided to them at the workplace, born out of my initial attempt to build a professional learning community. Two reasons can explain teachers' disinvestment or disengagement in institutional PD which will be introduced in turns.

1- As highlighted in 2.3.1 and 2.4, the institutional vision for PD underpinned by the managerial professionalism creates a particular vision for PD which does not match teachers' vision, priorities and practical realities. That is, the institution provides sporadic developmental activities which pay lip-service by encapsulating these in accountability agendas which were not seen as a legitimate forms of PD by teachers. It can be seen as pseudo-PD in the sense that it is accountability dressed up as professionalism.

2- Linked to the reasons highlighted in 1 above, teachers appear to be in a position where they are not able to contest the situation they find themselves in due to the ethos and culture of the workplace. Therefore, teachers are obliged to engage in PD but are emotionally disengaged from it.

6.5.1 Towards a better understanding of teachers' engagement with institutional efforts to support their professional development

The majority of participants' experiences with PD in their workplace seem to demonstrate a marginalised professional identity, one which is suppressed into compliance while struggling to be independent professionals. The implications of managerialism and the perceived lack of independent professionalism highlight that managerialist movement outlined above appears to have led to revoking some of the professional dimensions such as autonomy, self-regulation and collegiality (Evans, 2011; Leung, 2009; Miller, 2004; 2009; Varghese, 2004). The implication of this is that teachers' perceived loss of autonomy appears to subordinate them where their involvement and voice in educational matters and PD became marginalised. The competing forces of managerialism against teachers' independent professionalism appear to render teachers vulnerable to power-relations which outweigh their moral commitments to teaching and PD, and hence become compliant to the institutionally sponsored professionalism. That is to say, while teachers' in theory protested the professionalization movement in terms of PD and other-curriculum related issues through dialogue in this thesis, they had to comply with this in practice, echoing what Ball (2003: 221) calls the 'values schizophrenia'. Teachers' denounced for example the training model, but participated in PD activities, objected to the observation procedures, but had to be observed (some teachers were even fired due to this), and critiqued the pacing guide but taught accordingly to cover up the curriculum. This reflects Leung's (2009: 50) observation that decisions on "what counts as desirable professionalism to be sponsored" is implicated in politically and ideologically enshrined views on professionalism. In addition despite teachers' expectation and belief of the role of their workplace teachers' community in enhancing collegiality as central to professionalism, the policing of PD, culture of mistrust and monopoly of native-speakerism appear to disturb teachers' professional community and rather suggest a splintered community bound by

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ethnicity. These conditions may show how the marginalisation teachers experience can limit their learning in both formal and informal professional development (Anderson , 2007). It might also indicate the danger this might have on erosion of independent professionalism as the professionalization movement enshrined in neo-liberal managerialism at the ELI is taken up to mean professionalism. As Dillabough (1999: 378 as cited in O'Connor, 2008) argues that "institutionalised teacher standards often act to marginalise and repress individual beliefs and experiences by viewing the private sphere as irrelevant and subjugating the aims of the individual to those of the system"

Nonetheless, teachers' articulated voices in this study regarding workplace negative experiences might emphasize their commitment to their work and professional roles (O'corner, 2008; Zembylas, 2003; Beijard et al., 2000). It also emphasizes the role emotions play in teachers' work which is rarely acknowledged in public policy and professional teacher standards (O'corner, 2008: 119). While these different facets or dimensions of professionalism experienced in the workplace offer insights into how these dimensions influence teachers' engagement, these are presented in the literature as individual factors (O'Connell, 2010; Crawford, 2009) which offer simplistic conceptualisations of teachers' engagement as highlighted by Opfer and Pedder (2011). It is the aim of the subsequent sections to provide richer account of the various dimensions that influence teachers' engagement with PD in the workplace.

6.6 A more informed and richer understanding of teachers' engagement in PD

The results of the study have shown the value in seeking out teacher accounts of PD, something that is still under-explored in the research literature. I believe the results show how teacher perspectives can contribute to a more informed understanding of institutional support mechanisms for PD. In addition, the use of the three dimensional framework I developed in 3.6 has also allowed me to build a more nuanced understanding of teachers' engagement with PD

than I could have achieved through attention to meso or micro perspectives individually. This has enabled me to understand teachers' experiences of PD as profoundly socially constructed. The discursive understanding of PD allowed me to find the overarching links between miro and meso discourses and how this contributed to my understanding of why teachers in this study were fundamentally disengaged from the institutional PD initiatives as discussed above.

As illustrated in figure 4 below, an important contribution has been to describe and demonstrate that TESOL teachers' perspectives of PD manifest a complex set of micro, meso and macro influences (Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Borko, 2004) and the explanatory power of discourse as an overarching frame of reference within which richer understandings of PD can be uncovered and problematized. The ways in which these different elements work together to provide richer insight into teacher engagement with PD opportunities in the workplace is discussed following on from the figure.
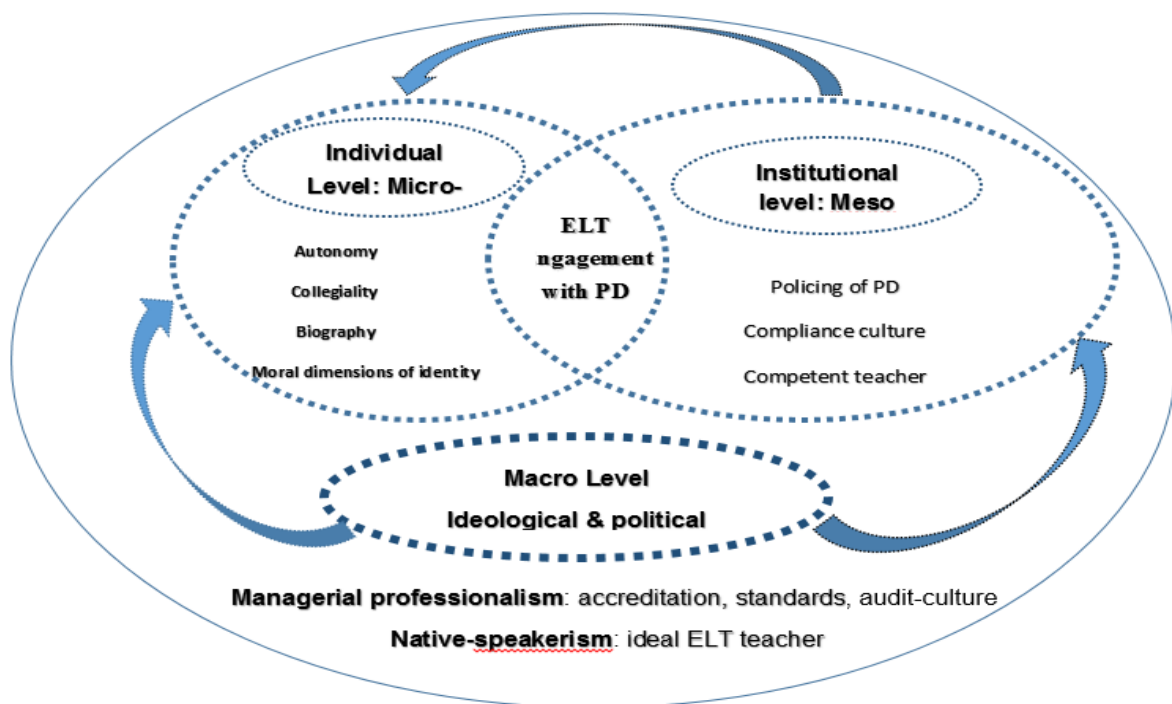
Figure 4. Factors influencing teachers' engagement with workplace PD

6.6.1 Micro-influences: the individual factors

The first set of factors deemed to influence teachers' engagement with PD can be spotted at the micro-level, ones that relate to teachers' views and beliefs of themselves as professionals (see 3.6.1). In other words, this dimension concerns teachers' perspectives on themselves as knowing but also emotional and moral subjects that bear on their experiences of and engagement with workplace PD (Kelchtermans, 2004; Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002; Goodson, 2000). PD can be understood to be contextually constituted by teachers' underpinning view of independent professionalism born out of in-situ accounts but also the historical trajectories and biographies' of being a professional teacher geared towards doing what is best for their students (Zembylas, 2007; Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002) as discussed in chapter 3. As also discussed in 3.3.3.1 teaching and professional development are moral activities that emanate from personal beliefs and commitment to continuous professional growth by teachers to enhance their professional practice and achieve what is best for students (Buzzelli & Johnston , 2002; Johnston , 2003; Mann, 2005).

In line with the above, the findings suggest that independent professionalism seems to motivate teachers to find ways to engage with PD that enhances professional growth on areas of students needs in terms of how to achieve their potential learning. Thus a first mediating factor that the majority of participants find important in defining the quality of PD to engage in is that it should focus on dealing with students' linguistic needs and enhances teachers to promote their professional growth accordingly. This means as revealed in 5.5 that teachers should be entrusted as autonomous professionals in decisions related to PD choice, teaching and curriculum related issues. As also explained in 3.3.3.2, teachers' views on what influences their engagement with PD highlight the importance of collegial atmosphere where teachers' learn collaboratively within their workplace community.

Data also suggests that teachers' past experiences or historical trajectories, and biographies were also perceived by teachers as pertinent factors to their engagement with workplace PD. These facets at the individual micro level are manifestations of teachers' independent professionalism (Leung, 2009) or professionality (Evans, 2008) and it is clear that these show as important influences in teachers' engagement in PD at the workplace. However, independent professionalism does not occur in a vacuum but rather requires a symbiotic relationship with or 'heterogeneity' (Bore & Wright, 2009) of different factors at the meso-level such as release time, and making resources available (see also Johnston, 1997 as discussed in chapter 3) to implement what they see best for their students' needs as revealed in 5.4.2. Teachers' autonomy or self-directed teaching free from external control that influences or hinders their decision-making in educational matters is another contextual micro-level factor which affects teacher's attitudes towards PD. That is if a teacher feels that his students prefer a specific learning style and wants to develop himself in this area, but his autonomy is restricted in the workplace by the meso-factors such as managerialism, teachers might be reluctant and unwilling to continue with or disengaged from their development as introduced in 5.4.1.3. At the same time, space and resources (such as communal room to meet and share ideas as discussed in chapter 5) should be made available to teachers in order to enhance their workplace learning and engagement with PD. In addition, the complexity of this task may be exacerbated by the institutional mandates and ethos at the meso-level about what is a worthwhile knowledge and how good teachers should look like as discussed in chapter 3 (Johnston & Golombek, 2002; Leung, 2009; Johnson, 2006). Teachers for example believe that they should use L1 to teach their students but this belief is in conflict with the training conducted institutionally (see 5.3.1.3), and hence teachers willingness to engage in PD appears to be compromised. This is also connected to the macro-discourses as indicated in the ELI policy's neo-liberal orientations to professionalism represented by discourses such as accreditations, standards, and its vision

to be the premier ELI institution in the Middle East (see 2.3) as well as teachers' contempt with native-speakerism (5.4.3.1). So as introduced in 5.3 and discussed in 6.3.3, teachers' participation in PD especially non-native speakers was seen to be compromised by the compliance culture and native-speakerism. In the former teachers felt negative about the ethos of observation and training but in the latter teachers feared to dialogue with their colleagues or trainers in PD sessions lest they be described as non-professionals due to fears they do not sound native speakers. The micro-level factors related to independent professionalism can also be seen to be influenced by another meso-level, at the community level. That is, teachers expressed their desire to collaborate with their colleagues, but this desire seems to be hampered by the splintered nature of the community due to another meso-level of policed PD and perceived authoritarian institutional culture. Hence if PD is threatening or evaluative, teachers' attitudes to and engagement with PD will be negatively influenced (Burns, 2005).

6.6.2 Meso-influences: institutional factors

This level concerns the perceived influences on PD at the institutional level. These included a culture of managerialism (5.3.1) at the administration level and individualism culture (5.4.3.2) among teachers' community represented by seclusion or clustering to ethnic groups due to tension and culture of mistrust among the administration and teachers. Teachers' exposure to PD in the workplace appears to be restricted to the sporadic PD activities (5.2) which are designed to ensure implementation of curriculum (5.4.1.2) and meet accountability agendas (5.4.2). Thus the technical-rational practice of PD at the ELI can be understood at the meso-level as socially constituted by the mediating socio-cultural and political forces where PD takes place (Johnson, 2006; 2009, Johnson & Golombek, 2011). Thus managerialism could be seen as a meso-discourse that influences how teachers should continue their professional development and what model should inform this development. The data suggests (2.3) that the envisaged PD model at the ELI was predominantly the techno-rational model which, as

discussed in 3.3.4.1 and 3.3.5, "provides an effective way for dominant stakeholders to control and limit the agenda, and places teachers in a passive role as recipients of specific knowledge" (Kennedy, 2005: 237). However, the conceptual framework I developed in 3.6 highlights the interconnectedness of the meso-factors to the micro and macro influences on teachers' engagement with PD. Hence, as introduced in chapter (2) and chapter (5) the institutional practices of managerialism are informed by the macro-discourses of neo-liberal discourses on professionalism where standards, audit cultures and competitiveness in league tables promote the training model which "supports a high degree of central control, often veiled as quality assurance, where the focus is firmly on coherence and standardisation and support the notion that standardisation of training equates improvement" (Kennedy, ibid). Data suggests that the discursive practices of managerialism (PD within a culture of compliance, blame, mistrust) reveal how these mediating factors can negatively influence teachers' attitudes to continue their in-service PD which could result in teachers' emotional disengagement in workplace PD initiatives. For example, teachers in the context of this study believe that collegiality and teachers' collaboration are two determinants of the successful professional growth and reform implementation. However, they reported how managerialism discourses enshrined in neo-liberalism appeared to create an atmosphere of accountability rather than independent professionalism which contributed to transforming teachers' collegiality into dysfunctional or splintered community (Hargreaves & Dawe , 1990). Teachers also reported that there are clusters of nationalities and close friends disturbed by lack of trust among each other and fear of being judged as incompetent non-native speaker teachers. Thus there are grounds to suggest that teachers' engagement in PD through collaboration and collegiality can be hindered by the institutional culture of mistrust and hence resonates with evaluation and the serious consequences this may have on teachers' employment status. As discussed in 5.3.1, teachers for example perceived the purpose of PD to be for firing 'incompetent' teachers based on two

or three classroom observations and as some teachers reported that some teachers were displaced because of their accent as they did not sound like native-speakers.

6.6.3 Macro-influences: ideological and political factors

This level concerns the factors related to national policy and the global agendas of internationalisation of higher education and native-speakerism influencing teachers' engagement with workplace PD. The findings suggest that these macro-level discourses appear to inform the discourses at the macro-level vis-à-vis managerialism and to a certain extent the micro-discourses vis-à-vis teachers' views on native-speakerism. Hence teachers' experiences of and engagement with PD can be influenced by the institutional initiative of professionalism informed by national educational policy (Chapter 2) and current international neo-liberal trends in the globalisation of higher education. Thus, in the name of competitiveness and internationalisation of higher education, data suggests that PD initiative at the ELI was viewed by teachers as a vehicle for achieving the standards (as discussed in 5.4.1.2) set out in the accreditation schemes by an American institution (as introduced in chapter 2) towards professionalising the cadre. It was also mentioned (chapter 2) that the professional teacher was conceived of as "good teacher" implementing 'high standards of professionalism' by conforming to the accredited standards (as also discussed by Clegg, 2003). The majority of teachers mentioned their negative experiences with the workplace PD activities which are suggestive of how PD is managed within a managerial professionalism culture. This situation also suggests that the bureaucratic and managerial control over teachers' PD and work is constantly monitored and audited to achieve and satisfy such standards internationally set by the American institution and nationally implemented by the ELI. However, the institutional enunciation of professionalism can be described as vaguely defined (Evans, 2011) and dressed up as professionalization (Worrington, 2014) and is probably taken as a discourse to justify "attempted solutions" to improve teaching and learning at the ELI (Bore and Wright, 2009).

Data suggest that workplace PD at the ELI appears to be informed by the managerialist orientations of what it means to be professional (Leung, 2009, Evans, 2002). This view seems to have rationalised evaluative rather than constructive PD (Burns, 2006) and conformist rather than activist teachers (Goodson & Hargreaves, 2003). There are grounds to argue that, as Kenndey (2005) suggests, the institutionalized managerial professionalism veiled in standardisation of PD and micromanaging teachers' performance are taken to mean teachers' informed engagement in PD and improvement and transformation in teaching. This sets in conflict with teachers' independent professionalism which is informed by self-directed teaching and professional development based on their students' needs and free from external control of these standards.

6.7 Enhancing teachers' engagement in workplace PD

The study suggests that the sort of professionalism undertaken institutionally is at the heart of understanding how and why or why not teachers engage in workplace PD initiatives. It also suggests that the managerial approach and personal approach to PD signal competing constructs of professionalism which underpin teachers' workplace lived experiences. PD as understood within the context of this study is not only a matter of introducing professional development activities for teachers to simply "engage in" within neo-liberal culture to effect personal and institutional change. Rather teachers' engagement in PD appears to be more nuanced and complex than the event-delivery approach whether individually or collectively undertaken. This research study has revealed a web of factors or discourses politically and socioculturally informed which influence teachers' experiences of, attitudes towards and engagement with PD. An understanding of PD at each discrete level of these influences (Micro, Meso and Macro) can lead to a superficial understanding of purposes and processes of professional development which appear to be incognisant of the underpinning notions of professionalism and what it means to be professional (Opfer and Pedder, 2011, Whitty, 2006).

Treating these discourses with the tripartite framework introduced in 3.6 and discussed in 6.5 reveals that the "rhetoric of technical expertise, competence and reflective practice are deployed to mobilise professional practices and identities in particular ways and position certain practices and dispositions as specifically professional" (Edwards & Nicoll, 2006: 115). This superficial understanding of PD can lead to, as Bottery and Wright (1996: 83) warn, the teaching profession spending "too little time thinking about issues which ask fundamental questions about the purposes of an education system - and therefore of a teaching profession - within a particular kind of society". In response to this superficiality, the study suggests that a heterogeneity of all influences of PD can help us make informed and in-depth understanding of PD and why teachers are or are not willing to engage in PD at the workplace. This understanding may help the English language institute which served as the context of this study to design PD in a way that leads to teachers' informed engagement in PD both as individuals and among workplace teachers' community. The understanding of PD as revealed in this study is suggestive of the importance of promoting TESOL teachers' workplace in higher education as a "learning organisation" (Bui & Baruch, 2010; Opfer & Pedder, 2011) underpinned by the complexity perspective (micro-meso-macro- framework) outlined in 3.6 that makes it both learn and foster learning. A perspective that is based on deepened understanding of teachers' experiences of PD rooted in their socio-cultural and political lived worlds. As Bore and Wright (2009: 244) suggest that

> "An absence of the recognition of key elements of social complexity can lead
> the policy developer and the professional practitioner into misunderstanding
> both the problem they wish to address and the possible 'solutions' they might
> apply".

These elements, Bore and Wright continue, produce "attempted solutions which are inappropriate, and leads to unrealistic expectations, failure and demotivation in the profession".

6.7.1 Theoretical contribution: insights on teachers' engagement with PD

The study also has a contribution at the theoretical level. It has offered a new direction in how TESOL researchers approach PD. Recent work on professional development and professionalism, while scarce and predominantly theoretical in nature, has been introduced as a binary conceptualisation of PD where PD is theorised as a top-down or bottom-up, individual or collaborative with preference of the latter by teachers (e.g. Raza, 2010) or how the two projects of professionalism (independent and sponsored, see Lenug, 2009) inform teachers' work generally. A general observation in the extant literature is that there is a state of dilemma as to why PD is still a failing project (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). However, the study I undertook has revealed a deepened understanding of the recent debates in this field, such as the one highlighted by Leung (2009) and Burns and Richards (2009) in TESOL and Evans (2011) in general education (see discussion of these in chapter 3).

While current research highlight the prevalence of the professionalization movement as one of the unequivocal realities of the 21 century, one of the ways to counter teachers' disengagement as reported in the literature is to be reflexive practitioners (e.g. Leung, 2001; Farrell, 2007; Mann, 2005). However, my study suggests that at least for the context of this study that this contention is untenable on two grounds. As my thesis indicates that sometimes the professionalization movement may itself represent super-powerful discourse(s) put into practice with inherent power-relations that regulate the conduct of teachers and marginalises teachers' voices and roles and their moral and ethical views and beliefs towards TESOL profession (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002; Zembylas, 2007) and dimensions of sponsored professionalism (Leung, 2009). In addition, the professionalization movement as highlighted in this study may be erroneous, in some respects, where "audit cultures" is dressed up as professionality (Evans, 2011; Bore & Wright, 2009; Whitty, 2006) endorsed by managerialism and paternalism and underpinned by socio-cultural and political ideologies in the context of

this study. This thesis revealed that teachers' willingness to engage in PD is predominantly influenced by the underpinning discourses of what it means to be professional, a phenomenon implicated in competing discourses of professionalism (Day & Sachs, 2004; Leung, 2009). It indicates how when the independent professionalism is marginalised by the ideological, political and socio-cultural discursive practices of professional development and concurrent managerial professionalism, then it is highly likely that teachers' engagement in PD is seriously compromised (Bolam & McMahon, 2004) which may endanger independent professionalism (Leung, 2009). The study has provided insights into how tapping into teachers' experiences and narratives can unravel the complexity of PD entangled in discursive practices, and important among these is the discourse of professionalism and native-speakerism.

The findings of this study also reflects the ambivalent position of whether TESOL is a profession (e.g., Mann, 2005; Richards, 2008; Nunan, 2001). It can be seen to revisit and question the claim raised by Ur (2002: 392) who posits that TESOL has "seen significant progress towards professionalism". Data suggests that while teachers showed strong belief in how they should be treated as professionals, the workplace context employs practices of managerial professionalism enshrined in neo-liberal initiatives in higher education which can be seen to stifle teachers' desired professionalism. The study can also be seen to identify the moral dimensions of why teachers should continue their professional development and how it connects with the moral and ethical sides of teaching raised by Johnston (2003) and Buzzelli and Johnston (2002). Moreover, the study can also be seen to extend the debate raised by Johsnton (1997) of whether TESOL is a 'career' or 'profession' by suggesting based on the majority of my respondents' views in this thesis that unfortunately teachers lack what characterise them as professionals. There are strong grounds then to argue that TESOL associations need to take serious measures to identify what constitutes teachers' independent professionalism and the ideological and political implications of managerial professionalism

and native-speakerism on this. This richer understanding of PD highlights the need for more research which emphasises the development of more complex understandings of teacher learning and development – drawing upon recent calls by Opfer and Pedder (2011) for understanding teachers' learning as complex and situated in particular contexts.

6.8 Implication for researching PD in TESOL

As a relatively under-researched area, tertiary TESOL teachers experiences of PD in this study provides new insights into how to understand and facilitate how teachers can engage in workplace PD and contribute to the ELT 'profession'. The findings of my study whose participants compose both native- and non-native speakers expatriate as well as national TESOL teachers working at the foundation program raises serious questions about the issues ELT teachers around the globe may face with workplace PD initiatives especially with regards to who is qualified to teach English (Canagrajah, 2012). It is also suggestive of exploring whether teachers' independent professionalism is tenable and sustainable within the local and global neo-liberal managerial culture sweeping higher education such as the one that provides the context of this study and other contexts (see Clegg , 2009). The study also suggests that while research on teachers' PD exists in abundance both in TESOL and general education, with more of this in the latter (e.g., Evans, 2008; 2011; Day & Sachs, 2004, Sachs, 2005) the intersection between PD and professionalism needs further investigation, especially in TESOL, to go beyond discourse of reflexive practitioner (Leung, 2009; Clarke, 2006) and inquire into independent professionalism to gain equal footing with the sponsored professionalism discourses. In conducting such work, more can be uncovered about the attitudes of English language teachers towards PD and the underpinning notions of professionalism undertaken institutionally and the impact on teachers' perspectives of professionalism and how they engage in PD. It can also shed light on whether ELT professionals are marginalised within the current neo-liberal trends in higher education globally or whether this is exclusive to the

context of this study. Finally, this research, although indirectly, points to a methodological significance of basic qualitative inquiry in voicing teachers' workplace lived experiences with PD in the workplace.

6.9. Insights into how to improve teachers' experience with PD at the ELI

The participants' lived experiences with PD reported in this research study suggest that their engagement in PD can be described as a result of their compliance to institutional performativity agendas rather than professionality or independent professionalism (Evans, 2011; Whitty, 2006). The managerial approach institutionally endorsed sanctions PD onto teachers who appeared to be compliant due to fears over losing their job contracts. It also imposed accountability measures to ensure uniform input and output, but resulted in a culture of mistrust, insecurity, lack of collegiality and dominance of native-speakerism. These factors entail that the workplace marginalises independent professionalism (Leung, 2009) and thus becomes a site for struggle for teachers' identity (Clarke, 2008; Varghese et al, 2005). The findings also suggest teachers' low morale due to as Norton (2000) "lack of fit" between the prevalence of professionalization movement against teachers' intendent professionalism. Thus, there are grounds to argue that teachers are not treated as professionals at the ELI in terms of their autonomy about decisions related to PD and other educational matters which are likely to impact on their willingness to invest in the contextual norms and practices. It also suggests that the ELI may not be described as a learning organisation, as teachers' learning appears to be predominantly administered in top-down culture where PD activities are informed by the training model. Teachers' learning as collaborative venture, for example as a professional learning community (Wenger, 1998) appears to be lacking due to the imposed deficit paradigm and the splintered nature of teachers' community due to managerialism and compliance culture. This finding is not surprising as it reflects my initial failing attempts to conduct my previous research to formulate a professional learning community as an intervention study.

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The study thus has implications to improve teachers' experience with PD at the ELI based on the alternative views on PD suggested by the informant of this study and the available literature. First, in order to facilitate teachers' professional development, an understanding of the different notions of professionalism, i.e. independent vs sponsored professionalism, need to recognised. Such understanding could be helpful in enhancing teachers' ownership of the workplace by "giving teachers ownership of their learning and placing more trust in the validity of their-decision-making…" (Murray et al ., 2014: 300). Teachers' engagement in this regard can be facilitated by making available time and space for teachers to reflect on and analyse the PD initiatives by focussing on "questions, issues and dilemmas these initiatives raise for established practise, for pupil learning and for the school as a learning organisation" (Murray et al ., ibid). At the same time, teachers' ownership of workplace can inform our understanding about how educational reforms can be implemented by the all stake holders and how teachers' engagement can reduce or eliminate conflict and tension resultant form sponsored professionalism. Given this, the sponsored professionalism and mandated reforms should be looked upon as a flexible rather than rigid instruments to be complemented and/or confirmed by teachers' sponsored professionalism. This understanding needs to acknowledge teachers' identity rooted in their previous learning experiences, their autonomy in decisions regarding PD and educational matters related to students' learning (Smith , 2001) , and their collegiality and the need to dialogue informally in workplace learning environment. Concurrent with this, measures need to be put in place to ensure sustainability of teachers' professional growth such as, low workload, release time (Raza, 2010), library for reading and sharing, communal place for dialogue. The contrived 'observation' should be transformed into genuine peer-observation where teachers' themselves visit one another for the sake of learning rather than coordinators visiting them for the sake of forging compliance through accountability measures. These material resources require other conditions to be nurtured such as acknowledgement of World

Englishes (Kachru , 1997; Brown , 2002) to ease and decrease the tensions inherent in the ideological and political associations with native-speakerism. Trust among teachers' themselves and with the administration should also be nurtured in a way that makes sharing ideas and concerns a norm rather than taboo.

Second, there needs to be measures that make the workplace, ELI, a learning organisation where a professional leaning community can informally thrive among all community members both novice and experienced, and administration and teachers (Darling- Hammond , 2008 ; Hoban , 2002). The informal teachers' learning does not however mean the exclusion of formal ventures such as training (Raza, 2010, Mann, 2005), but that these should be based on teachers' perceived needs. However, facilitating teachers' autonomy irrespective of the workplace culture might lead to conflict in some contexts (Smith, 2001), as in the case of this study. And finally given the entrenchment of neoliberal and native-speakerism ideologies in educational reforms as revealed in this study, there is a need for future research to undertake a socially critical approach to unearth the implications of these macro-discourses in creating struggles for indigenous groups. This approach should dig beneath the surface, "asking how social systems work and how ideology or history conceals the process that oppress and control people, in order to reveal oppressive mechanisms" (Harvey, 1990) in Mills & Gale , 2009:14). This approach should yield an understanding of "the role that schools and school systems play in reproducing social and cultural inequalities and legitimating certain cultural practices through the hidden linkages between scholastic aptitude and cultural heritage (Bourdieu, 1998b in Mills & Gale , 2009: 14)

6.9.1 Towards a more effective professional development model at the ELI

The point of departure for this thesis, as described in chapter 1, was my belief in the importance of the concept of a supportive professional learning community and my failed efforts to implement one. The study has revealed that the reasons for this which reflect the failure of the

ELI itself to provide a community that is conducive to the building of trust, shared values and vision and a culture of collaborative creative collectivity – all of which are seen as important to build an effective PLC as discussed in chapter 3 above (see 3.4.2 and 3.4.2.1). In this section I detail some of the measures that need to be undertaken if the ELI is to transform itself into a community which can serve as a vehicle to support teachers PD.
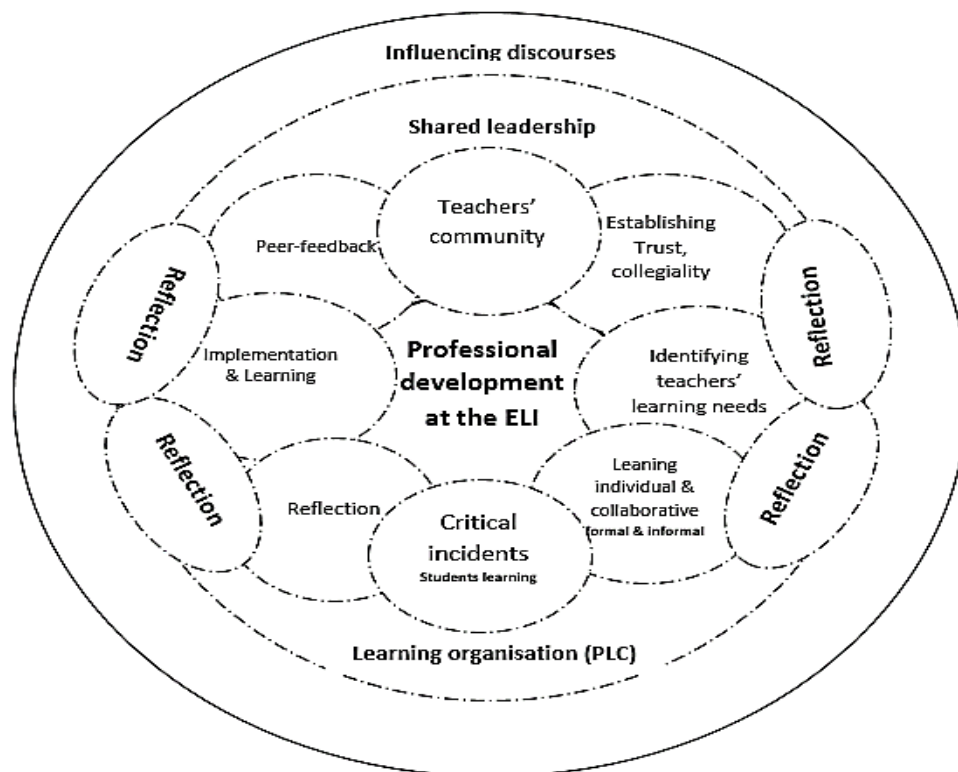
Diagram (1): effective professional development model of enhancing PD at the ELI

Drawing on the findings of this study, diagram 1 presents a visual representation of what PD might look like in the ELI. Drawing upon the various micro, meso and macro dimensions which are significant to the experience and enactment of PD at the ELI as identified in the findings of the study reported in chapter 5 above, this sees a need for the ELI to engage in a sustained process of critical reflection. This requires attention to the influencing discourses (such NS/NNS and the implication of these) on the dynamics of and power-relations among the members of the professional learning community. Attention to other discourses such as professionalism (independent and sponsored) should also guide the PLC's assumed

responsibility to improve students learning. Thus members of PLC at the ELI need to reflect on standardisation, accreditation, decisions regarding curriculum, choice of PD and teachers' evaluation, and how these enable or hinder teachers' empowerment and independent professionalism. In addition, the PLC members need to acknowledge the influence their biographies, genuine peer observation, genuine collegiality on their continuous learning. The PLC members need also to discuss issues that influence teachers' retention such as workload, release time, funding and making available the resources to enhance continuous learning such as faculty library or communal conference room. Further below I outline how informed reflection can lead to enhancement of PLC at the ELI. Below I detail a framework of action to address these points the results of which will, I believe pave the way for greater commitment and engagement from teachers in PD activities.

A- Critically Reflect on past practices with relation to students learning:

- o Divide teachers into cohorts to produce detailed reports about the issues concerning their engagement with workplace PD (e.g. professional development, evaluation, students learning, allocated time, etc.).
- o Discuss major discourses of professionalism, standardisation, and students learning objectives.
- o Decide collaboratively on the ELI future agendas and goals that do not contradict the established religious or cultural beliefs of the wider society.
- o Establish a time frame for meeting these.

B- Critically reflect on teacher-administration relationship:

Teachers, administrators and coordinators should critically reflect on their relationship at the ELI in terms of:

- o Teachers' autonomy (decision-making) in the classroom in terms of managing the curriculum and students' assessment.

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o Standards and reforms and how to achieve these given the points raised above about autonomy.

o Establishing collegiality and trust across the ELI teachers' professional community, especially with regards to the merit of being a multicultural learning community, and how linguistic (NS vs. NNS) and ethnic differences should be considered as an asset.

o Performance assessment or teacher evaluation and how to enhance it. There needs to be a discussion about the teaching/learning practices to be deemed acceptable/not acceptable.

C- Critically reflect on teachers engagement into PD

o Identify institutional learning needs (tied to curriculum)

o Identify teachers different learning needs (in relation to curriculum and personal growth)

o Identify PD activities teachers find more engaging; (training, workshop, lecture, peer-observation, professional learning community)

o Identify when to introduce PD activities (induction, continuous, etc.)

o Find out how to enhance teachers' autonomy to promote their professional growth individually and collaboratively what facilities need to be put in place.

D- Critically reflect on whether the above points (a,b,c) make learning in the ELI as an initiative underpinned by just education system that facilitates holistic learning and dialogue or one which follows a banking concept of education (Graman, 1988), and how it is possible to transform this reality.

This multi-dimensional model can help English language educators uncover the dimensions of complexity of PD at the workplace and how it should be enhanced. It could also be considered an answer to Syed's (2003: 339) call for "qualitative development of teachers" that takes into

consideration "long time frames, few immediate or tangible returns, and complex organisational systems".

6.10 Concluding remarks

The research reported in this thesis set out to explore teachers' lived experiences with professional development as experienced by the TESOL tertiary teachers. It has identified the forms of PD that teachers undertook at their tertiary institution, the underpinning PD model or paradigms that inform the institutional motives for supporting teachers to develop professionally and finally, based on teachers' experiences, the consequences these had on teachers' attitudes to and engagement with PD. What the study revealed is that PD seems to be at the heart of what it means to be professional, but this concept of professionalism has been contested in this context between teachers and administration where power-relations appear to have rendered teaches powerless and disempowered to own their professionalism. This highlights that PD is more nuanced than what general literature reported in this study has revealed in education in general and TESOL in particular. That is, if PD is to be implemented in a specific context, due consideration has to be paid to the complex set of influences at the meso-micro-and macro-levels. These might help explain how to design PD in a way that interests teachers and meets their learning needs but more importantly how to nurture the conditions that lead to facilitation of workplace learning.

6.11 Limitations of the study

Despite the suitability of the basic qualitative approach that informs this thesis and the contribution my study has made, it is not without limitations. These limitations emerged from the beginning of and during the implementation of my study. I was aware of the other research designs and methodological options that could have been used to investigate teachers' experiences of and attitudes towards PD such as the narrative inquiry approach or mixed-

methods research. However, I believe that the basic qualitative approach is more suitable to answer my research questions based on my philosophical stance discussed in 4.2 and my conceptualisation of teachers professional development as social constructionists' undertaken in the workplace as outlined in 3.4 and 3.5.

I am also aware of how I could have made my study more credible and trustworthy by triangulating my data collection methods such as focus-group interview and observation. However, as outlined in chapter 2 in regards to the peculiarity of the socio-political context of this study, and as was also highlighted in chapter 1 about my previous failed research attempt, and in line with others (e.g., Kvale, 2007; Kelchtermans, 2004), the interviews served as sufficient inquiry tool to understand teachers' engagement with PD at their workplace. In addition, it is my belief that the semi-structured interviews helped empower the participants to voice their concerns "from below" (Crawford, 2009) about their experiences with, attitudes towards and engagement with PD. I also acknowledge that my subjectivity and positionality (see 4.7) in this study has influenced the way I interpreted and analysed the data. However, for reasons I outlined in 4.7 and 4.8 I believe that the verbatim transcription of the participants' stories and the abundance of extracts from the transcribed interviews helped reflect their PD experiences candidly. Taking these issues into account, my research study can be considered credible, trustworthy and worth paying attention to (Creswell, 2009). Thus, through the methodological design implemented in my thesis I was able to develop new insights and understandings of teachers' engagement with workplace PD.

6.12 Personal reflection

My research journey has been a rewarding experience for me both personally and professionally. At a personal level, this study has emerged as an answer to the questions I raised myself about what professional development is all about and how one can develop or be developed. It also answered my questions about the 'wonders' I raised as to why teachers at

the ELI were not welling to engage in PD I proposed (see chapter 1) or the activities that are based on standards set by the ELI and accredited by an American institution .

As a practitioner TESOL teacher and as a facilitator of PD for some time, this thesis has been a learning experiences that has hugely influenced and transformed my conception of PD and how teachers' learning could be enhanced and their engagement with PD can be facilitated. For me PD was synonymous with the training model in the form of workshops or training sessions (Crawford, 2009). I have now become aware of the different models of PD and its interrelationship with what it means to be professional and how teacher change can be enhanced or facilitated. I also have become aware of the dimensions of professionalism and the contextual influences on enhancing or hindering teachers' learning and engagement with workplace PD initiatives. The complexity of PD and indeed education which is an outcome of this research has transformed my beliefs of education that can be micro-managed to a stance where I now see education more complexly where teachers' professional development is only one dimension of an intricate web of influences at mico-macro-and meso-levels (Hoban, 2002). As Philip Jackson (1968: 166-167) highlights that "the path of educational progress more closely resembles the flight of a butterfly than the flight of a bullet".

At a practical level, and in contemplating what the research interviews revealed, I have become more sympathetic with the situation in which both the administration and teachers are positioned, one in which competing ideologies of professionalism are still pervasive in this age and time (as revealed in chapter 5 and discussed in this chapter). This leaves me to speculate whether these issues are still pervasive at the global level, and unfortunately based on what the literature has revealed in chapter 3 reflecting Ball's (2003) assertion of the dominance of 'values schizophrenia' in education, this conflict of interest appears to be an issue that still needs to be addressed by educationalists and TESOLers alike. The policing of PD reforms is a key word revealed by my interviewees which points to policies sanctioning rather nurturing

PD at the meso level which is being informed by the global macro discourses of professionalism. Thus, the fact that the findings revealed that PD in the ELI is informed by the deficit paradigm to control teachers' performance is not peculiar to TESOL teachers in the Saudi context. This finding adds to my dilemma as to why the deficit paradigm still prevails globally despite calls to embrace more humanistic approaches to PD reforms (Kennedy, 2005, Eraut, 1994). As indicated in chapter 3, I believe that PD is more chaotic and requires coherence of different systems at meso-, mciro- and-macro levels that influence teachers' engagement with PD at the workplace. I also believe that the conflict of the two projects of professionalism has contributed to the state of ambivalence as to how to make PD professionally, personally and institutionally rewarding experience for teachers. It has also created power-relations that makes certain practices the norm (top-down PD, native-speakerism, compliance culture, etc) and controls what can be said and done institutionally (accountability measures). I also believe that there is hope within this conflict for the TESOL teachers and professional organisations to learn how to resolve this clash of interest between projects of professionalization. In a way, as discussed in chapter 3, this clash can be approached by developing "personal interpretative frameworks" (Kelchtermans, 2004: 224) for practitioners and theorists through which the quality of PD initiatives and educational reforms can be assessed with the moral and cultural perspective rather than through the neoliberal agendas of marketization of education. The prime goal for both movements should be to educate the nation rather than accept uncritically neoliberal reforms in higher education (see chapter 2 and discussion of these in this chapter). I also believe that native-speakerism still dominates the ELT world as Nunan (2001), Holliday (2006), and Hudson (2013) indicate where unjust practices dominate with serious repercussions against the moral aims of TESOL professionalism. I also believe that theorists need to take serious steps to highlight the role of professionality and independent professionalism in TESOL specifically and education generally to ensure that educational reforms educate the nationals

rather than present struggles for them. As also my research participants have revealed in their accounts (especially non-native speakers) that Native-speakerism as an ideology has hugely manifested itself by othering and marginalising voices and identities that do not conform to its ideology. This has led me to question how pervasive this is within other contexts and what standards can be put in place to address this by TESOL professional associations.

And finally, another important finding emerging from teachers' perspectives on PD offered to them at the ELI is that it was viewed as sporadic initiative. In other words, the PD activities that teachers cited were occasional and scattered at various points throughout the year. This might indicate that PD is a peripheral rather than core organisational norm which also indicate that the continuity of professional development is not enhanced at the ELI. Moreover, the scope of PD which is limited to the three activities (training, observation and symposium, see table 4) might exclude other forms such as bottom-up or self-initiated PD. In general, the PD activities that TESOL teachers in the context of this study undertake at their workplace tend to be occasional PD sessions or days where the "the topic in one session may have little or no relationship to the succeeding session" (Sandholtz, 2002: 823). This finding is corroborated by Clegg (2003) who suggests that PD is not in common usage among university stakeholders which is symptomatic of ambivalence of both universities and staff as to the benefit of PD.
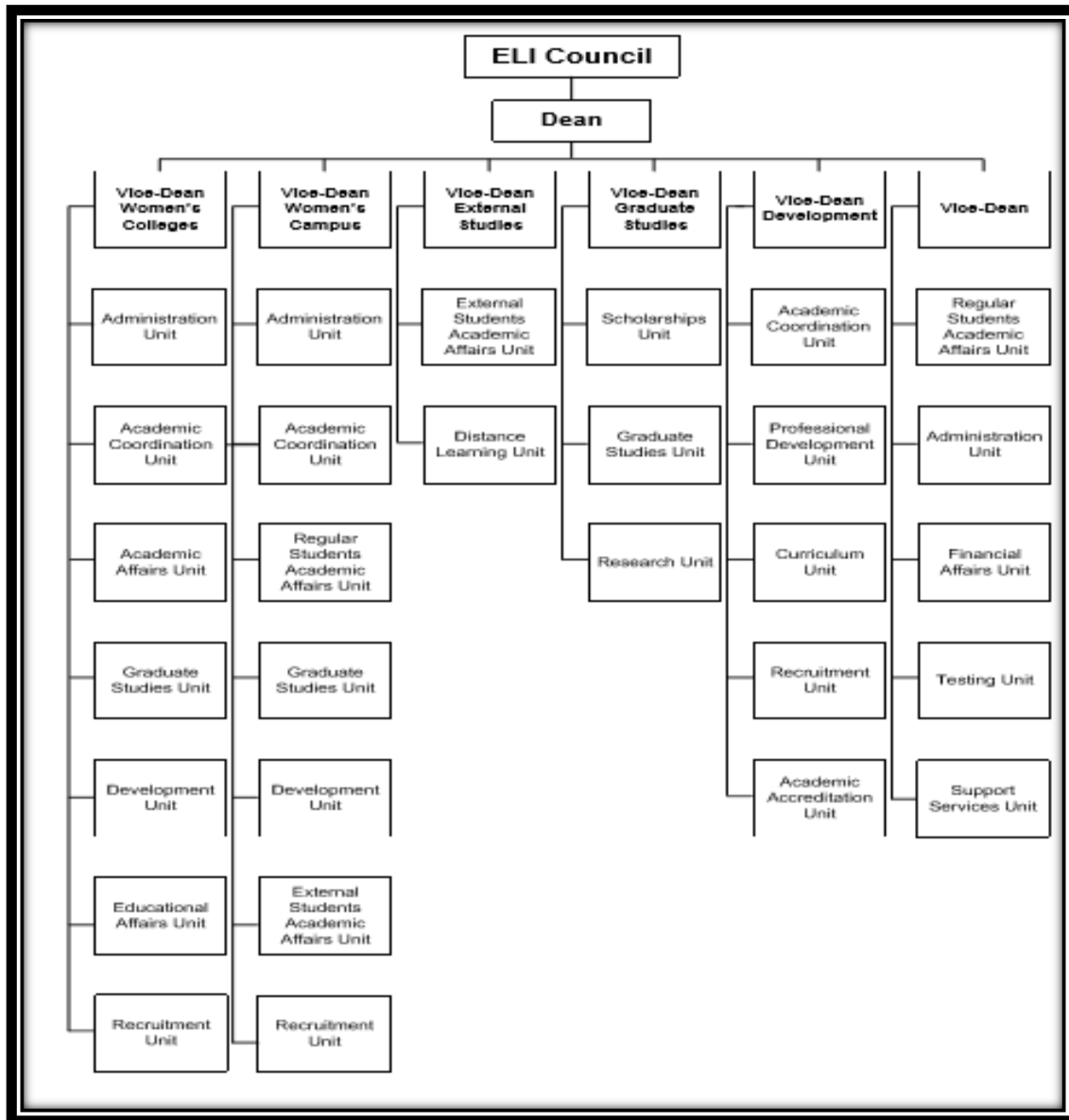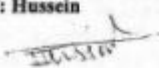
Appendices

Appendix (1): Number of TESOL teachers by nationality

TESOL Teachers at the ELI		
Category	Nationality	Number
Saudi Nationals	Saudi Arabian	11
Non-Saudi national	British	20
	Irish	1
	American	22
	Canadian	13
	Newzealnd	2
	Australian	1
	South African	12
	Tunisian	24
	Moroccan	2
	Yemeni	2
	Mauritius	1
	Syrian	3
	Sudanese	2
	Jordanian	11
	Egyptians	38
	Algerian	5
	Swedish	1
	Pakistani	37
	Indian	12
Total		247

Appendix (2): The structure of the ELI administrative units (Taken from the ELI faculty handbook, 2013)

Appendix (3): Certificate of ethical research approval

EXETER

Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

DISSERTATION/THESIS

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, and then have it signed by your superviso and finally by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/guidelines/ and view the School's statement on the GSE student access on-line documents.

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter). **DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND**

Your name: Hussein Assalahi

Your student no: 580038072

Return address for this certificate: 67 renaissance Gardens, PL2 3LX, Plymouth.

Degree/Programme of Study: EDD TESOL

Project Supervisor(s): Dr. Sarah Rich.

Your email address: hmaa202@exeter.ac.uk

Tel: 07411921414

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given overleaf and that I undertake in my dissertation / thesis (delete whichever is inappropriate) **to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.**

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed: Hussein   date: 22/11/2011

NB *For Masters dissertations, which are marked blind, this first page must* **not be included** *in your work. It can be kept for your records.*

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
updated: April 2011

Your student no: 580038072

Title of your project:

Developing a professional learning community: a framework for enhancing EFL teachers' professional development in ███ University, Saudi Arabia.

Brief description of your research project:

The study takes the form of an intervention study that aims to explore EFL teachers' perception and experiences of building a professional learning community (PLC) with face to face and online components as a framework for continuous professional development in the English Language Institute (ELI), ████████████████████, Saudi Arabia. To this end, and based on teachers' concerns, CPD activities (reflective practices) will be developed in conjunction with teachers to be carried out as mechanisms for facilitating professional development. The research is grounded in the interpretive paradigm, ████████ and follows a mixed-methods approach. It utilizes quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and analyses. The ensuing findings will focus on teachers' holistic perceptions about the efficacy of the PLC in developing and transforming the teaching/learning nexus.

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

The views of all ELI teachers (male department) will be sought regarding problems they face in a background questionnaire which will inform agenda for reflective tasks during the intervention. 10 teachers will be selected as participants in this intervention study. The participants will be a mixture of native as well as non-native speaker, expert and novice teachers at the ELI ████.

Give details (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) regarding the ethical issues of:

a) <u>informed consent:</u> **Where children in schools are involved this includes both headteachers and parents). Copy(ies) of your consent form(s) you will be using must accompany this document.** a blank consent form can be downloaded from the GSE student access on-line documents:

The consent form to be employed with participants is attached. A letter to be sent to the dean of the ELI to obtain his consent is also attached.

b) <u>anonymity and confidentiality</u>

Ethical consideration of this research and of the participants will be a core priority and will be highly considered and strictly followed. First, the ELI administration will be contacted to obtain consent for conducting research, introducing my thesis project, and clarifying any pertinent queries. The number, time, roles, venues of COP and its members will be introduced to the administration to insure clarity and uniformity of research goals and practice. The researcher will also insure that research bears no political, economic or logistic threats to both the administration and participants. Second, the researcher will obtain informed and freely given consent forms from the participants, make them aware of my research aims, their roles and concomitant expectations of their participation. Their physiological, psychological, social and economic rights will be protected against any potential harm attributed to their respectful participation. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained by protecting their identity, by safely storing and retrieving data, as well as its exclusive use for research purposes.

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

- **First**, ELI administration would be introduced to the idea of building on-site COP, and reassure them that by no means I am trying to exert any extra efforts either on the participating teachers or the department administration.

- **Second**: upon approval, prior to actual data collection methods, the participants will carry out an initial phase of the study during the first semester for about two weeks (from 10-12/ to 28-12-2011). The main focus this stage is to prepare all the parties involved in building the learning community (both on-site and on-line) along with trialling pertinent CPD practices.

- **Third**: Using a mixed-method approach, qualitative and quantitative data collection methods will be implemented during the second semester (from11-02/ to 19-05-2012) and will include:

a- *Survey*; which is a background questionnaire for all ELI teachers. The questionnaire would be designed and distributed using electronic online survey services (Surveymonkey.com) to ensure ease, speed, and efficacy.

b- *Focus-group interview*;

- Pre-intervention; semi-structured interviews will be conducted with participants to elicit common pressing teaching/learning issues, and how to undertake intervention CPD practices in a PLC community to develop teaching/learning situations.

- Post-intervention; semi-structured interviews with the participants to gain a clear picture of their perceptions about the efficacy of PLC on improving learning/teaching practices.

This form should now be printed out, signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's **Research Support Office** for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

---

This project has been approved for the period: 10/12/2011   **until:** 30/06/2012

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature):
...... Sarah Rule ...... date: 22 | 11 | 11 ......

N.B. To Supervisor: Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occur a further form is completed.

GSE unique approval reference .... D | 11 | 12 | 18 ....

Signed: .... date: 28/11/2011
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

This form is available from

Appendix (4): Consent form

UNIVERSITY OF
E**X**ETER

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of this project that intends to critically analyse teachers' professional development in the professional community at ████████████ University, Saudi Arabia.

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 anonymous.
- All information I give will be treated as confidential
- The researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

Participant: ....

Date: ...28./08/2012...........

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:

Hussein Assalahi

EDD TESOL Candidate,
School of Education,
University of Exeter
Graduate School of Education
St Lukes Campus
Heavitree Road, Exeter EX1 2LU, UK.
E-mail: hmaa202@exeter.ac.uk
Tel: +447411921414

Appendix 5. Interview guide

Dear Participant

I would like to thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. Our interview should last for about an hour and a half. Please feel free to ask for any clarifications if the need arises. I will be recording and transcribing our conversation so that I can make sure I reflect exactly what you mean. I will be asking you to review the transcriptions at a later date so that I can make sure I accurately record your thoughts and words as you intended them. As you know, I am interested in learning more about your experiences regarding professional development practices in the ELI and contexts that may enhance or hinder you from pursuing PD. I really want to know your views, so please feel free to share anything you think is important in helping me understand this topic.

Before we start, do you have any questions or clarification? Are you ready to start?

Main question: What are the tertiary TESOL teachers' experiences of professional development in the ELI?

A. Perceptions and beliefs about professional development.

1- What is your perspective of Professional development?
2- What kinds of PD activities/opportunities are generally made available to you at the ELI?
3- How useful are these activities/opportunities on promoting your professional growth? Teaching?
4- How are your PD goals determined? Who determines these?
5- Do you think that ELI teachers are treated as professionals? Why? What conditions make such a status?
6- What is your take on the following: Teachers themselves learn how to teach rather than trained?
7- How do you perceive the differences between professional development as a collaborative and individual process to be?

B- Awareness of ELI PD policy:

1- How aware are you of the ELI vision towards PD?
2- What are the ways that make the entire ELI community share the ELI vision? How?
3- How coherent are your believes with the ELI mission? Why/why not?
4- How would you describe your commitment to the ELI vision? Why/not?

Shared decision making in PD

5- How do you describe your role as a teacher in making decisions regarding professional development/teaching/ students learning? Why?

6- What are the channels which the ELI provides for teachers to initiate decision making?

7- What would you do if a teaching dilemma arises? (e.g; Do you think there is a need for professional development activity to be carried out? Do you learn how to resolve it individually? Institution? Do you seek help from colleagues? How?

Teachers' community and collaborative PD

8- How do you perceive the importance of the working within a professional community on teachers' development? ELI improvement?

9- What are the communal activities that teachers may have participated in to promote their PD?

10- How collaborative are you with teachers at the ELI in terms of promoting your professional development? Why/not?

11- Do you feel that you work at the ELI within a professional community? Why and why not? What do you think the constraints are?

12- Have you ever come across a teaching point when you felt you wanted to know more about it? How did you learn about it?

13- How would you describe reflection on teaching as an activity to improve practice? How far do you think the ELI teachers are aware of it?

14- What is your perspective on peer observation? How beneficial would it be for improving teaching?

Supportive PD Conditions

15- How would you describe the professional relationships among the ELI teachers' community?

16- How would you describe the relationships between ELI administration and teachers?

17- What are the constraints of forming collegial and collaborative relationship?

18- What facilities would you like to be put in place (time, equipment, etc.) to encourage collaboration?

19- How would you perceive the effects of this on promoting your professional development?

Do you have any other comments?

Thank you for taking the time to take part in my study.

Appendix 6. Letter of access

Dear Dean of ELI,

I am currently in the 3rd year of the TESOL Doctoral Programme at the University of Exeter, the UK. My research interest lies in English language teacher education with a main focus on building professional learning community of practice for the ELI teachers as an intervention study to help enhance their professional development which would in return help resolve teaching and learning issues related to the foundation programme.

I am writing to you to get your kind permission to introduce my research project to you and coordinate any pertinent arrangements for conducting my study. I believe that the ELI administration encourages collaborative leadership and supports self-directed professional development of its faculty. To this end, I am planning to hold a meeting with you as the dean, as well as heads of development and curriculum units of ELI. The reason for this meeting is to give you an idea about the what, why and how questions of my research project, as well as discuss suggested arrangements prior to conducting my study next semester.

Having said that, however, I would like to underscore that my research does not aim to disturb or present any inconsistencies to current policies or practices of the ELI, but is rather a facilitative intervention with the aim of improving teachers' development and students' proficiency and overall learning. The participants (10-12 teachers) in the professional learning community will voluntarily take part and I will stress carrying out their normal duties dictated to them along their kind participation.

<div align="center">Thank you for your kind cooperation</div>

Sincerely,

Hussein Assalahi,

EDD TESOL Candidate,

School of Education, University of Exeter. Exeter, EX1 2LU, UK.

Phone No: 00447411921414

Researcher: What is your perspective on PD?

[Coordinators] observation professional development

Khan: Last module we conducted some observations. On the basis of these observations

Feedback for development: by coordinators. Checking for conformity

feedback I recommended some suggestions for the teachers and I went after that and checked

Coordinators & teachers. Suggest reading a book for PD

with them what is happening and we thought about, how was the book that I suggested

Developmental Plan form

something like that. We prepared a document and it was basically related to ... then we

Second observation

observe there are things that we consider and on the basis of that we prepare a form which is

Coordinators suggest areas for development

a professional development form (developmental pan) and then simply we suggest that these

teacher

are areas that you were observed and you can do these things to improve upon those. And

teacher supposed to implement PDC check over: 2nd time. assessment?

when they start working we have to actually go back and check how things are. But in the

plan was not working?

middle things happened that disturbed the whole process. We wanted to be on target

targets to meet

peacefully, but what happened uhm something that the x-head something happened with the

Leave PD unit PD fails, change PD head

Central decision

dean they didn't agree with something and then the dean actually asked him to leave and he

moving position appointing another head

was given a teaching schedule but he was removed from the PDU I was the one after him

PDU members not TESOL

because there are two other members' uhm but they didn't have the background related to

TESOL. That's why the PDU head chose me and in the beginning he asked me to be the head

Why?

Important change held?

interim until later but then they sent me an e-mail and this way I know I am the head but still

Teacher doubt = Rule applies PDU Dean asking

I am not sure may be they're gonna keep me or not. And also he asked me to think about next

concern Teaching & being head = T. concerned? concern/hesitation

year so i've been teaching at times so I wasn't actually able to welcome that because in

Workload workload

summer in the morning you're teaching in the afternoon you have other duties here as well as

workload several duties

we were working with the placement test as well. So, many things I can think about. I have a

check page

Plan for PD

other – PD ? External?

plan uhm to start the professional development uhm. This is the background. The things are

not ... And I have doubts I am also planning to go to a doctorate so this is how things are. I

just want to make it clear that things are not to the point.

Researcher: So, what doubts are you having in relation to PD?

Appendix (8): Initial codes identified from interviews

NO.		topic	Themes	Categories
1		Forms of PD	o Personal development o professional growth	o Training for improving instructional skills o Delivering quality service based on students' needs. o Teachers' needs o Aligning knowledge gained to realities of classroom o Pursuing higher studies. o Openness to new ideas o Getting help from colleagues. o Reflection on teaching.
2		Sources of PD	External Internal	o personal o Needs of students. o Collaboration between teachers and administration o Institutional needs o External institution (Accreditation)
3		Challenges to PD	Tension:	o Between specified learning outcomes and students' needs. o Between perceived resistance from teachers to internationalisation discourse and ELI's interest in modern, accredited programmes. o Between ideals of standardization and realities of students' low levels. o Between the need to cover so much curriculum and students real needs. o Between teachers' ethical judgements over coverage and students, worries of exam content. o Between Balancing personal professional growth with institutional demands o Constraints imposed by institution teachers' aspirations to development. : o Prescriptive Curriculum o Lack of facilities o Ready-made tests o No recourse room for teachers o Poor-communication T-A o Lack of trust o Blame of failures goes to teachers o Coordinators as buffers not as professional mentors. o Students' low level, motivation o Lengthy learning hours

				o	No learner autonomy
4		Issues surrounding PD	Internalisation	o	The push towards standardisation and accreditation
				o	There are some pros of the accreditation
				o	Continuous change
				o	Transplanted modular-system from American institution.
				o	there are some serious issues that need to be addressed that have come about as a result of the accreditation movement
				o	Disregard for classroom realities
				o	Due regard is given to accredited curriculum, syllabus rather than to students' learning.
			Top-down		Presupposition that teachers are ready-made professionals.
				o	Rigid curriculum
				o	Teaching-pacing guide.
				o	Stripping away teachers' authority over teaching, testing, grading.
				o	Lack of professional autonomy.
				o	Ignoring teachers' voices
				o	top-downness
				o	Surveillance by coordinators.
				o	Evaluative observations.
				o	Unethical conduct of observation
				o	Political & economic consequences to teachers' frankness.
				o	
				o	
			Native speakerism	o	Favouring Native-speakers.
				o	Teachers feel the pressure of Nativeness.
				o	Your privilege is being a native speaker + CELTA
				o	Modular system was triggered actually by the Native speakers
				o	Inferiority to qualified-others.
				o	Coordinators are mostly natives speakers.
5		Threats to job satisfaction	Negative factors	o	Negative image of the evaluative orientation of PD
				o	Continuous change
				o	Ignoring teachers' voices
				o	top-downness
				o	No rewards, no appreciation
				o	Uncertainty over contract renewal
				o	Unknown firing policies.
				o	Teachers' burnout
				o	Lack of time to learn and develop
				o	Students' evaluations of teachers (abuse)
				o	Throwing teachers into the teaching pool (no induction).
6		PD activities at the ELI	Formal:	o	Training,
				o	workshops

				o Symposium, o Classroom Observation
7		PD activities outside the ELI	Informal PD	o Reading magazines, o Attending conferences, o Pursuing higher studies o Online: facebook
8		experiences of PD outside the ELI	External experiences	o Control over curriculum, teaching, testing, grading. o Minimal interference from administration. o Co-teaching. o Collaboration. o Communication and collegiality.
9		Effects of environment	Negative context	o Demoralisation to the teachers. o Professional compromise. o Economic-status jeopardy. o Frustration, high turnover. o Silence during PD sessions. o Negative feelings about communication. o Dysfunctional teachers' community o Wariness of and mistrust among colleagues o Refrain from sharing and collaboration o Putting personal agenda before the institutional or students.
10		Perpetuators of status quo	Other-factors	o Big Influx of students. o Big number of teachers. o Lack of clear vision o Administrations' pretension to be progressing. o Pervasive educational culture. o Administration's appeal to standardisation regardless of realities. o Top-downness o Strict managerialism due to huge number of teachers. o Appeasing monthly checks in teachers' pockets. o Administration' influence on coordinators. o obedient Coordinators to top-downness o Disregard for teachers' needs o Detrimental atmosphere to teachers' collaboration
10		Suggestive solutions	confirmation	Profession-related: Administration need to: o Ask for advice from teachers. o Provide constructive and Announced observation o Enhance peer-observation o Allowing professional freedom, autonomy

				o Make teachers happy, at ease
				o Enhance communication
				o Retain people.
				o Help them develop
				o Listen to the professionals
				o Bring External observers
				o Make PDU developmental rather than firing unit.
				o Have proper orientation programme for teachers about culture students
				Classroom-practice related:
				o Reflection using self-video-taping.
				o Learning from peers.
				o Behind closed doors, teachers' teach based on their beliefs and students' need.
				o Please the students and please the administration
				o Overall decry of pacing-guide by teachers.
				o introduce constructive learning, or teaching and also process-model curriculum, Organisation Related:
				o Improve the image of the ELI in teachers' eyes.
				o Invest in teaching force rather than direct the blame on them
				o Have a clear vision.
				o Enhance communication.
				o Stick with one change policy
				o Institutional funding for attending conferences, training courses
				o Bringing Experts
				o Arrange for periodical meeting for teachers.
				o Make resource-room for teachers.
				o Mend the unfavourable bad Image of ELI through organising international conferences.
				o

Appendix (9): Final themes and categories

NO.	Themes	Categories	Research focus
1	Formal professional development (PD)	Classroom Observation Training, Symposium,	PD activities at the ELI
	Informal PD	Sharing through ELI Facebook page Continuing higher studies	
	Sporadic PD	Training	
2	Compliance culture	A lack of voice and autonomy	Consequences of the compliance culture on teachers and students.
		Feeling professionally compromised	
		Operating within a culture of blame	
		Operating within a pressurised system	
3	Policed PD	Reductionist PD	Impact of the compliance culture on PD activities
		Top-down PD	Top down PD
		De-contextualised and irrelevant PD	
		Research based/ too theoretical.	
		One size fits all	
		Didactic	
4	De-professionalising PD	the compliance culture for the teacher community: Splintered community Culture of mistrust Lack of collaboration	Consequences of the compliance culture for teachers
		compliance culture on individual teacher engagement with PD	

5	Suggestions for PD	PD as a life-long learning	Teachers' alternative visions of PD
		Peer-observation	
		Collaboration	
		Reflection	
		Other forms of non-workplace PD activities	

Appendix (10): Annual Faculty professional development plan (ELI Faculty Handbook, 2013: 111)

1st Professional Development Goal
Specific Steps I plan to take to achieve this goal (please use a bulleted list):
2nd Professional Development Goal:
Specific Steps I plan to take to achieve this goal (please use a bulleted list):

Instructor's Signature:	Date:

Appendix (11): Job Announcement advertisement

(Images and contact information were removed in the interest of anonymity of the institution where the study is conducted)

applications for male and female English language instructors.

Qualifications required:

- MA in TESL, TEFL, Applied Linguistics, or any related equivalent from an accredited university;
  Or
- BA in English plus a Certificate/Diploma in English Language Teaching and a minimum experience of three years in teaching English;
- Ability to communicate accurately and fluently with full operational command of English.

Preferences:

Applicants who possess all or any of the following criteria would be given preferences:

- CELTA/TESL/TEFL/TESOL/DELTA;
- Overseas teaching experience;
- Experience in curriculum development, assessment, and use of classroom technology.

Based on qualifications and years of experience, a competitive package is offered, including housing and furniture allowances, medical coverage, annual return tickets for the instructor and up to three dependents, 60 days fully-paid annual summer leave plus national holidays, and end of service benefits.

If you meet the above requirements, please email your CV along with scanned copies of your

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