English Language Teacher Professional Development in Saudi Arabia: Teachers' Perceptions

Submitted by

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Abstract

This study focuses its attention on language teachers' professional development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). It sets out to explore Saudi English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' perspectives, attitudes and experiences with regards to their teacher professional development (TPD). It focuses primarily on how teachers perceive the concept of TPD, how they develop professionally to meet the demands of their profession, how they evaluate institutional training provisions, their engagement with self-direct forms of TPD, factors affecting their engagement with TPD opportunities, and how they think TPD could be enhanced in the Saudi context.

The study was mainly guided by the following overarching question: What are Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences with regards to their TPD? A qualitative approach to data collection was used to achieve the intended goals of the study. Data was collected from 25 practicing Saudi EFL teachers (males and females) via semi-structured interviews, semi-structured reflective essays, and WhatsApp correspondence. The data was thematically analysed. Braun and Clarke's (2006) model provided a general framework and a sense of direction throughout the process of data analysis.

The study highlighted how Saudi EFL teachers understand the concept of TPD. Participants provided a range of definitions for TPD with 'growth,' 'development,' and 'adaptation to change' emerging as key themes underpinning their definitions. Their conceptualisations were mostly functional, context-specific, and focused more on the content of learning and the type of expected effect rather than on the activity itself. Results showed that teachers have a high preference for self-directed TPD for its context specificity and relevance to their immediate needs. Although the study's participants considered institutional training as one of the main channels of their development that aligns their practices to their employers' agendas, data showed that they were highly critical of the way it was managed and delivered to them. Data showed that TPD is not a straightforward process. Rather, it is a complex undertaking that is subject to a range of facilitating and inhibiting factors. A number of recommendations were provided by participants on how they think TPD should be managed, how teachers' missions could be facilitated, and how their motivation could be enhanced.

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List of Acronyms

TPD	Teacher professional development
PD	Professional development
CPD	Continuing professional development
EFL	English as a foreign language
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
INSET	In-service education and training
CoPs	Communities of practice
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
DGE	Directorate of General Education
GPGE	General Presidency of Girls' Education
FLTA	Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant
QED	Al-Qunfuthah Educational Directorate
SLTE	Second Language Teacher Education

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

One of the main aims of educational institutions is to offer better learning opportunities for students. While there are many factors that contribute to the attainment of educational goals, teachers themselves are one of the most critical influences on student achievement (Broad & Evans, 2006). The importance of teachers in educational contexts cannot be underestimated. It is through teachers that educational goals and theoretical pedagogical notions are often translated into meaningful classroom practices and therefore better learning chances (Broad & Evans, 2006). Given that teachers are the main driving force towards the realisation of educational goals, their wellbeing and professional growth should be a central focus for educational reform initiatives (Bangs & Frost, 2012; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992). If educational reform is to achieve the ultimate goal—student success—then an adequate investment in teacher professional development (TPD) is mandatory (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995).

Due to the complex and multifaceted nature of teaching, teachers constantly experience new and unique situations (Hodkins & Harvard, 1994). Fostering the professional development (PD) and abilities of teachers is paramount in helping teachers adapt to these situations (Day, 1999a). TPD is a support mechanism that gives teachers the means to adapt and be responsive to the challenging demands of their profession. It is through TPD opportunities that teachers are given the chance to access knowledge, upgrade their skills and develop new conceptions of how students learn and grow (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Further, teachers need to grow professionally to gain the necessary skills and strategies that will eventually help students achieve success. Effective teachers are those who continue to enhance their knowledge and skills to keep up with the rapidly changing nature of education. Such professionals see in TPD an opportunity to keep up with the new practices and pedagogies that are essential for overall educational wellbeing and student growth (Craft, 2000; Powell et al., 2003).

In the Saudi educational context, where I used to work, teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) are significant because they represent a determining factor in students successfully learning English. Since English is neither a lingua franca for Saudis, nor is

it the official language in the public education system, EFL teachers can be considered, in some cases, the single most important source of linguistic input for students (Al-Seghayer, 2011). Realising this fact, a considerable degree of professionalisation has taken place in the field of English language teaching and learning over the last few years in KSA as is the case worldwide (see Richards, 2008). Our government began to see the centrality and importance of English language teachers and teaching to effective participation in global economy. This triggered an increasing demand for competent and qualified language teachers and for effective approaches to prepare them. However, a review of literature of TPD content and delivery models in the Saudi EFL context, coupled with my personal experience, reveals that TPD initiatives fall short from an ideal model of TPD (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Al-Hazmi, 2017; Alsalahi, 2015; Al-Seghayer, 2011; Elyas & Al Grigri, 2014; Sywelem & Witte, 2013). TPD and career enhancement opportunities available to Saudi EFL teachers are mainly limited to one-shot training events and workshops (Al-Seghayer, 2011). Although, these learning opportunities have their own value, as a development mechanism, one-shot institutionalised in-service training events are quite unsatisfactory, as they have a limited effect on classroom practice (Forde et al., 2006).

In addition, many studies have been critical of the traditional approaches to TPD for Saudi EFL teachers. These TPD methods have been described as centralised, scarce, and ineffective, and usually consist of 'one size fits all' packages that are theoretical in nature (Al-Hazmi, 2003). Further, these programmes do not provide hands-on, experiential and practical activities that can be directly linked to classroom reality (ibid). As a TPD approach, the training programmes were shown to have limited success, as many teachers failed to develop and practice what they had learned during the training. As such, it seems that TPD opportunities available to EFL teachers in our context are incompatible with the vision implied by the reform agenda pressing for a fundamental change in teachers' practice and the way they acquire knowledge. Therefore, it could be argued that at the institutional level, the Ministry of Education (MoE) failed to sustain a professional culture that fosters and supports continuous professional development (CPD) (Alharbi, 2011; Al-Hazmi, 2003; Al-Seghayer, 2011).

Of special relevance is the nature of our educational context itself, which plays a significant role in determining the nature of TPD and the construct of the teachers' professional identities. Saudi EFL teachers operate within a deterministic top-down educational policy that neither recognises teachers' voices, nor perceives teachers as real

partners in the educational process (Alsalahi, 2015; Al-Seghayer, 2011; Alfahadi, 2012; Mullick, 2013). Based on my extended experience in the Saudi context, Saudi EFL teachers' voices have always been neglected in initiating or conceptualising educational reform in our context. These oppressive and exclusionary practices pushed teachers into a technical educational reality and confined their roles to that of curriculum implementers and passive technicians (Alfahadi, 2012; Al-Seghayer, 2011). Teachers' experiences of their students, of the context, and of educational problems in general are not considered valid, therefore, they are neglected in our context. According to Kumaravadivelu (2003), oppressive educational policies and transmission-type approaches to education practices lead to disempowerment and de-professionalisation, as they curtail the freedom of teachers, devalue their experience and confine their classroom behaviour to received knowledge only (see also Giroux, 1988).

From the perspective of a Saudi EFL teacher myself, operating within such a traditional educational system, I would say that these oppressive educational conditions forged for me a troubled professional identity that made me uncomfortable. Although the system gave me a sense of belonging to a professional community, it undermined my supposed role as a professional educator. My involvement in our educational context, as is the case with the majority of my colleagues, has been limited to the classrooms and our voices are seldom heard beyond their walls (see Mullick, 2013). We have been forced into this technical reality by the MoE and our role is just to deliver our content to passive classrooms without having any choice in regard to the vital issues of what, when, and how to teach. In addition, forms of TPD delivered to us seemed to consolidate this problematic identity as they were mostly geared towards effective implementation of the curricula with no or limited chances for personal development as professionals.

Based on the above, it could be argued that the TPD plan of our MoE reinforces a problematic professional identity among EFL teachers. The model of TPD utilized by MoE is mainly concerned with the implementation of policy directives, and teachers are given little or no credence as expert professionals. Most of the MoE's provisions focus on content instead of humans (Alharbi, 2011). Therefore, this plan does not consider or encourage teachers to be effective educators and change agents. Another element closely related to this point is teachers' engagement with forms of self-directed TPD which seems to be devalued and neglected in our context. Al-Seghayer (2014) also referred to this, especially as it pertains to the lack of incentives and institutional support for teachers

engaging in TPD in a self-directed manner. This has a massive effect on teachers' willingness to undertake this form of development.

I have also noticed that most of the previous studies that investigated TPD in our context have primarily concentrated on the MoE as the main provider of TPD. Overall, the emphasis has mainly been on institutionalised forms of TPD. However, research must pay attention to the teachers, as they can also initiate a more valuable form of TPD (i.e., self-directed TPD). This is especially important due to the huge advancements in information technology wherein more meaningful, interactive, and affordable forms of learning can be accessed by teachers. Further, based on my experience, structures and support for workplace learning have not been given due consideration nor has the value or the impact of this kind of learning on teachers' practices. Therefore, it could be argued that TPD, in its broadest meaning and scope, has not been fully investigated in our context. These observations raised numerous questions in my mind and triggered my interest to further investigate TPD among EFL teachers in our context. Hence, I decided to undertake this research project with special interest in teachers' perspectives as told by themselves. My interest is also partly driven by my own belief that our understanding of TPD could be much broader than the limited scope adopted by many previous studies and as shown in the MoE's approach to TPD.

1.2 Significance of the study

This study intends to investigate Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions, experiences, and attitudes with regards to their TPD. It is an attempt to understand the prevailing discourse about TPD in KSA in light of constant mandated change, threatening managerialism, curtailed autonomy, de-professionalising policies and teacher marginalisation. Teachers' views and perspectives regarding their professional growth are important, given the significant role they play in determining students' achievements with the English language. As will be highlighted in my context chapter and as will be reflected in my literature review, to the best of my knowledge, no other study has dealt with these issues, in detail, among Saudi EFL teachers serving in our public educational system.

In addition, again to the best of my knowledge, TPD in its broadest meaning and scope has not been fully investigated among EFL teachers in our context. As discussed above, the focus has been on institutionalised training with what seems like a total disregard of other important aspects of TPD such as self-directed learning and informal learning in the workplace. Therefore, the importance of this study lies in its attempt at providing an

overview of the current status of TPD in its broadest perspective through teachers' own perceptions, experiences and attitudes in our public educational context. Thus, this study will be significant, because it will contribute to filling these gaps and enhance our knowledge concerning these important issues.

1.3 Aims of the study

The study primarily aims to draw a panoramic view of the current situation of language TPD in the Saudi context by exploring Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions, experiences of, and attitudes to TPD. In pursuit of this aim, the study addresses the following specific objectives:

- To understand how EFL teachers understand the concept of TPD.
- To understand how EFL teachers develop professionally to meet the demands of their profession.
- To understand how EFL teachers evaluate current institutional provisions of TPD.
- To explore the extent to which teachers contribute to their own development in our context.
- To examine the parameters of the process and features of language teacher development in KSA.
- To provide an analysis of the policy context with regards to TPD in the Saudi educational context.
- To recount proposed recommendations on how TPD could be enhanced in the Saudi context through teachers' perspectives.
- To identify the nature, characteristics, and process of effective language TPD educational officials need to understand and enhance in the Saudi context.

1.4 Research Questions

The study is guided by the following main question:
What are Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions on, experiences of, and attitudes to TPD?
Sub-questions:

1- How do Saudi EFL teachers conceive of the concept of TPD?
2- What TPD opportunities are Saudi EFL aware of at present?
3- How do they evaluate current forms and modes of delivery of institutional TPD made available to them?
4- To what extent are Saudi EFL teachers ready to engage with self-directed TPD?

1.5 Organization of the Study

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. Chapter one consists of the introduction, which provides an overview of the study's focus, significance, aims and questions. Chapter two describes the Saudi context wherein this investigation took place. It also outlines the educational system in KSA, the history of Saudi educational development and the development of English as a subject. Chapter three reviews literature relevant to the study. Chapter four deals with the methodological part of this investigation; and provides information about the study's design, instrument, sampling procedures, ethical considerations, data collection and analysis procedures. Chapter five presents the study's findings. Chapter six discusses findings and connects the discussion to existing literature. Chapter seven presents the study's conclusion, summary, implications and limitations.

Chapter Two: Context of the Study

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the context where my investigation takes place. It aims at giving brief contextual background knowledge about the Saudi educational landscape with particular emphasis on EFL teachers, the focus of this investigation.

2.2 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

KSA, the context of this study, is a Muslim country that is located in the southwest of Asia. It is the very heart of Islam as it contains the two most sacred cities in the Muslim world: Makkah and Madinah. It is located within the Arabian Peninsula and covers an area of approximately 2 million square kilometres and has a population of about 29 million, about a third of that figure (approximately 9 million) are foreigners (Almazrawi, 2014). It was established in 1932 by King Abdulaziz the founder of modern KSA and is administratively divided into thirteen regions each of which is run by a governor that is appointed by the king. Arabic is the official language of the nation and Islam is the main religion and the basis of the Saudi constitution.

Politically speaking, the KSA is an absolute monarchy that is ruled by Al Saud family according to Islamic principles. On the economic side, the KSA is the largest oil producer and exporter in the world. Although, the Kingdom has recently diversified its economic revenues, it still depends a lot on oil as the main power to propel the wheel of its economy.

2.3 The educational system of KSA

The first formal education in the KSA dates back to the 1920s when the Directorate of General Education (DGE) was founded by King Abdul-Aziz (Albahiri, 2010; Al-Johani, 2009). DGE was then replaced by MoE in 1953 as the main body in charge of k-12 boys' education in KSA (see Al-Subahi, 1988). Considerable changes have taken place in our educational system since its establishment in an effort to bring it in line with international standards. Currently, about one-fourth of the national budget of KSA is dedicated to education as a strategic option for the development of the nation (Albahiri, 2010).
Three educational authorities used to be in charge of education in KSA:

1- MoE which was established in 1953 as the main educational authority in charge of K-12 boys' education.
2- The General Presidency of Girls' Education (GPGE) which was established in 1960 to supervise girls' education in K-12 stages in KSA.
3- The Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) which was founded in 1976 as the main educational authority responsible for post-secondary education (universities and colleges) (Al-Subahi, 1988).

Girls' education used to be operated and supervised by GPGE, which is a separate educational entity. However, in 2002 after a period of about forty years of operating as an autonomous educational body, GPGE was integrated into MoE the main educational authority in charge of education in the KSA for both sexes at the moment. Thus, instead of following two different curricula, as was the case in the past, both sexes now have similar curricula in most school subjects (Alfahadi, 2012). It should be noted that our educational system is gender-segregated as boys and girls attend different schools and universities.

After graduating from the secondary school, students normally join universities and colleges. Saudi universities and colleges operate under the umbrella of the MoHE. However, the two main institutions in charge of education in KSA (MoE and MoHE) have been recently merged together by King Salman in a move that intends to unite efforts and develop educational output. Thus, MoE will be able to supervise the sequence of the students' formal education from the early beginning till graduation from the university. This is expected to bridge the gap between the two ministries that has long been discussed in our educational environment.

In terms of structure, the Saudi educational system (K-12 which is the focus of this enquiry) is divided into three main stages preceded by the nursery stage which used to be optional till quite recently. The three main stages are: the elementary stage (six years of formal schooling), the intermediate stage (three years), and the secondary stage (three years). Students normally start their formal schooling at the age of six and leave the secondary stage at the age of eighteen.

Generally speaking, education in the KSA is highly centralized. Educational policies and administrative decisions are all made by the central authority: MoE. Within this process of centralisation, a national curriculum is prescribed by the educational authority and is

strictly followed by the Local Educational Authorities that are scattered in the various parts of KSA (see Almazrawi, 2014; Alseghayer, 2011; Alfahadi, 2012).

2.4 Status of English as a subject in Saudi schools

English has gained a special status in KSA given its international importance. It has been recognised by the Saudi educational policy as the main foreign language in the country (Alfahadi, 2012; Al-Seghayer, 2011). A quick glance at the educational landscape in the KSA indicates that English is one of the main subjects that continues to gain much emphasis as one of the driving forces towards development and internationalism.

Nowadays, English is a core subject in all Saudi educational stages and institutions (Albedaiwi, 2014, Al-Johani, 2009). According to Al-Seghayer (2011) there is uncertainty about the exact year of introducing English into the Saudi educational system. However, most researchers, according to his view, seem to agree that 1928 marked the beginning of the formal teaching of English in KSA just a few years after establishing DGE in 1923 (see also Al-Seghayer, 2014b). It was first introduced at the secondary stage together with French as the main foreign languages in our educational system (Albedaiwi, 2014; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). During that early stage, English lacked any specific learning objectives and fixed syllabi (Albedaiwi, 2011). In 1959 the intermediate stage (grades 7,8, and 9) was established in the Saudi educational system as a transition between the primary stage and the secondary stage. From that time on, English became a compulsory subject at both the intermediate and the secondary stages with definite instructional objectives and syllabi (Albedaiwi, 2014; Al-Johani, 2009). French teaching which was kept for a while in the secondary stage was finally eliminated in 1970 (Al-Johani, 2009; Al-Subahi, 1988)

At present, students in the Saudi public educational system start studying English from year 4 (in the primary stage) till they leave secondary stage. However, it has to be mentioned that it was not until 2010 that students started learning English as early as year 4. Exposure to English used to be limited to the intermediate and the secondary stages.

Students in the intermediate and secondary stages attend four English classes per week, each of which consists of forty-five minutes. While in the primary stage, students' exposure to English is normally limited to two classes of forty-five minutes per week.

Students wishing to continue studying at the university level have also to undergo a relatively high exposure to English. It is a mandatory subject in the preparatory year at most Saudi universities. Students have to successfully pass an intensive English course before they can be upgraded to their undergraduate majors. The main aim is to develop students' ability in English to at least an intermediate level (Alshehri, 2014). Thus, they will be better prepared for their undergraduate majors. English is also the medium of instruction in some university departments such as medicine, engineering, IT, technical education, etc. (Al-Johani, 2009). King Fahd University of Petrol and Minerals, for instance, uses English as the medium of instruction in all its departments.

EFL has been in a state of flux and constant change since its introduction as one of the main subjects in our schools. Curriculum and textbooks have been revised a number of times, however, aims and objectives remained almost the same (Albedaiwi, 2014). Although MoE has updated and changed many of its policies with regards to curricula, teacher preparation plans, study plans, etc., its general goals and objectives have remained unchanged since 1970 (Albahiri, 2010).

Article number fifty of the Saudi educational policy delineates one of the main goals of teaching English in KSA. According to Al Hajailan (2003) cited in Liton, (2012) English is being taught in the Saudi context with an aim of

> furnishing the students with at least one of the living languages, in addition to their original language, to enable them to acquire knowledge and sciences from other communities and to participate in the service of Islam and humanity.

Aldosary (1992) cited in Alshehri (2014), on the other hand, indicates that the overall goal of teaching English in the Saudi context is to enhance students' ability in the four main skills of English so that students are able to speak, read, listen to and understand simple 'correct' English and to write English passages that are correct and simple so that they can easily communicate with other speakers of English.

2.5 Evaluation of English learning in Saudi schools

It has to be mentioned that in terms of the government's educational objectives, students' competence upon leaving the secondary stage is unsatisfactory (Al-Johani, 2009; Al-Seghayer, 2011). Many studies have emphasised the general underachievement of Saudi students in English despite all efforts exerted by the educational authority to raise standards and modernise the educational system (Alshehri, 2014, Al-Johani, 2009, Al-Seghayer, 2011). This general weakness has been attributed to a range of factors as expressed in various studies relevant to this point (see Al-Johani, 2009, Alrabai, 2016; Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Alkhatnai, 2011; Almeniei, 2005). Different views have been expressed by educational researchers regarding this issue and a number of factors have been identified. These include: traditional teaching methods, overcrowded classrooms, teachers' overload, lack of essential instructional materials, poor textbooks, teaching for exams, limited time devoted to teaching the language, and most important of all is the teacher who has been repeatedly criticised for his low competency and outdated teaching methods.

2.6 Importance of the EFL Teacher

According to the Saudi educational policy, English is taught as a foreign language in the KSA. This means that English has little social significance beyond classroom walls for most students as discussed in my introduction. In this case, English teaching lacks the supporting environment that sustains and encourages its use in our country. Therefore, teachers play a key role in students' success in English. Their significance lies in the fact that they represent the main channel of language introduction to students in the KSA where, for most students, English has no social function beyond their classrooms (see Al-Seghayer, 2011).

It is true that many foreigners currently work in the KSA, who, according to some arguments, might contribute towards establishing English as an additional language in the country. However, this foreign workforce is largely of south-east Asian origin and normally use their respective languages to communicate within their communities. Thus, English use is normally kept inside organizations and work environments. In addition, foreign children normally go to international schools where they study different curricula to what is being offered to Saudi students. This limits the chances of young Saudi students to mingle with other foreign children who use English as either a first or a second

language. Thus, the EFL teacher remains one of the main channels through which students are exposed to the target language especially young learners and students in rural areas.

It has to be mentioned that a number of studies conducted on EFL teaching and learning in the Saudi context expressed their concern about teachers' performance and its negative impact on students' achievement (see Alfahadi, 2012; Elyas, 2011; Al-Harbi, 2006; Assalahi, 2013). Al-Johani's (2009) study, for example, revealed that EFL teachers don't have proper knowledge of theories underpinning foreign language teaching. Most of EFL classes according to the study are traditional in nature and teacher-centred. The study also revealed that teachers lack the essential skills necessary to teach a foreign language and still teach according to the behaviourist approach. It concluded by emphasizing the need for a re-examination of and a change in EFL teachers' training programs.

2.7 TPD in KSA

TPD within the Saudi context can be divided into two main stages: pre-service training and in-service training. Higher educational institutions such as universities and teacher colleges are in charge of teacher pre-service training while the MoE is the main provider of in-service development of teachers. However, given the focus of this investigation, in-service training and development programs will be discussed in depth.

2.7.1 Initial Training of EFL teachers in KSA

Two kinds of educational institutions used to be responsible for preparing prospective Saudi EFL teachers. These are universities and teacher colleges. However, it has to be mentioned that all teacher colleges have been recently integrated into Saudi universities and currently work as part of them. Departments of English are normally found in colleges of art, education, languages and translation and are the main bodies in charge of preparing future EFL teacher in KSA (Al-Asmari, 2005). Materials and teaching methods vary greatly from department to another according to the internal policies of each department (Al-Seghayer, 2011; Al-Asmari, 2005).

Over a period of 4-5 years, student teachers earn about 130 credit hours before they finally graduate with a bachelor's degree which would make them eligible to work as EFL teachers at any K-12 stage. Teachers normally graduate with a bachelor's degree in English language and literature. Teachers graduating from institutions other than colleges

of education have to undergo a year-long teacher preparation program in teaching methodology before being able to teach at public schools (Al-Asmari, 2005) (see also Alfallaj, 1998 cited in Al-Asmari, 2005).

According to Al-Seghayer (2011) two distinct phases of prospective English teachers' preparation programs can be identified in KSA. The first one which marked the beginning of EFL teacher preparation in KSA began in early 1970's and the second phase, which is quite distinct from the former one, started in the early 1980's and is still operational today. During the first phase, high school graduates who expressed their desire to be English teachers studied English for one academic year then they underwent a comprehensive exam by MoE. Upon successfully completing the exam, candidates were then offered a chance to study at British universities for 100 weeks before earning a teaching certificate (ibid). Thus, they were qualified to teach at the intermediate level where English was being taught before its introduction to the primary stage. From early 1980's until the present time English teachers are mainly prepared locally at the English language departments of our local universities and colleges (ibid).

An overview of previous research related to teacher pre-service preparation in KSA reveals that current training programs are inefficient (Albahiri, 2010; Albedaiwi, 2014; Al-Seghayer, 2014a). According to Al-Hazmi (2003) those programs are inadequate for good EFL teacher preparation. Albedaiwi (2014) emphasized this point indicating that academic preparation of EFL teachers in educational institutions does not meet the needs of prospective EFL teachers. Those programs according to his opinion are inadequate and weak.

Moreover, EFL teaching methodology, which is highly needed by Saudi prospective teachers, normally receives less emphasis at the pre-service preparation stage. Only one course is normally given to students (see Albedaiwi, 2014; Al-Seghayer, 2014a). Student teachers normally take a number of standard education courses that are supposed to prepare them for their future job. Courses on English teaching methods represent no more that 10 % of the total hours students normally receive before earning their BA (Al-Seghayer, 2011). These include educational psychology, curriculum studies, evaluation and school administration. According to Albedaiwi, (2014), none of those courses meet the needs of prospective EFL teachers.

2.7.2 In service TPD

Within this part, I discuss how TPD for in-service teachers is managed and conducted in the Saudi educational context. It first talks about training events and workshops as they are the most dominant forms of institutional PD within our context. It also presents other forms of professional help and TPD opportunities that are made available to Saudi EFL teachers by MoE. These include supervision, formal certification programs, portfolios, Khebrat and Fulbright.

2.7.2.1 Formal training events and workshops

In-service training sessions and workshops are the main venues of TPD for Saudi EFL teachers and the most dominant forms of TPD in the Saudi context. These learning opportunities are highly centralised. The centre, which is the educational authority, is responsible for determining the training needs of teachers and the training activities that are to be delivered to training centres in local educational directorates where they are delivered to teachers by their local supervisors (see Alharbi, 2011; Sywelem, & Witte, 2013).

As an experienced Saudi EFL teacher, I have been exposed to the above forms of development and it seems that they are top-down forms of TPD and mostly used as a delivery means wherein attendees, who are normally chosen by the Educational Directorate, receive new knowledge that they are requested to apply as accurately as possible in their respective contexts. This form of development is almost always delivered in a lecture format with special emphasis on theoretical consideration. No follow up activities are normally conducted to evaluate the extent to which teachers benefited from these forms of development, or to evaluate their overall impact on students’ classroom achievement. In addition, teachers are rarely asked for feedback about those programmes, and if they are ever asked for their opinion, then this would consist of verbal expressions normally given at the end of each programme.

As highlighted in my introduction, literature on teacher in-service training in the KSA shows that current training programmes are ineffective in terms of content, structure and management (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Alharbi, 2011; Albedaiwi, 2014). Alharbi (2011) for instance, emphasised that the nature of TPD offered to Saudi teachers is characterised as being one-size-fits-all with what seems a total disregard to teachers' diverse needs and

abilities. As such, it lacks efficient strategic planning to upgrade teachers' knowledge and skills (see also Almulhim, 2013).

Furthermore, in his discussion of EFL teachers' preparation programmes in KSA, Al-Hazmi (2003) concluded that most of those training programmes are offered by former teachers and supervisors who lack adequate training and proper qualification. According to his argument, it is ironic that the MoE has done a lot to modernise curricular and develop infrastructure, however, when it comes to the EFL teacher, very little has been done to develop his skills and improve his competence. His study stresses that EFL training programmes in KSA are limited, short in duration, non-obligatory for teachers and offered by unqualified trainers.

2.7.2.2 Supervision

In addition to in-service training, supervisors provide another source of TPD for Saudi teachers. They are part of an inspection system used by MoE to monitor educational progress and teacher performance in particular. Supervisors usually pay a number of visits to schools every academic year. However, their visits are neither systematic nor frequent as some teachers may receive more than two visits per year while others might receive none at all. The main aim of the visits is to observe teachers and evaluate their performance according to criteria set by MoE; they also provide feedback to both teachers and the educational authority. Teachers are normally graded after each visit; and this grade is largely determined by how close teachers are abiding by directives drawn by MoE while teaching their respective subjects. However, speaking from a personal experience, this mechanism is more of a top-down approach to educational management than a TPD technique.

2.7.2.3 Formal qualification programmes

Practicing teachers without proper educational preparation in teaching methodology may choose to enrol part-time in education courses at any university that offer such courses. Enrolling in such courses is non-obligatory if teachers prefer not to join in. In addition, aspirant teachers, who work in remote areas which are not served by any higher-education institutions, have no other choice than continuing to work with their former qualifications as obtaining a leave to enrol in these courses is not normally offered to teachers.

Moreover, outstanding teachers could also apply to pursue their postgraduate studies if they have achieved a certain level of achievement set by the MoE. Saudi teachers can now obtain higher qualifications either from domestic universities or from overseas educational institutions if they meet the criteria set by the MoE. These criteria include having high GPA in the undergraduate certificate (excellent or very good), getting excellent in teachers' overall annual evaluation report for at least three consecutive years, earning a considerable number of in-service training hours, and serving for at least three years in the profession. However, this process is not easy and is in fact very competitive. It could take teachers years in order to get a chance. For example, I have been trying to apply to do a doctorate in the UK since 2008 and I was only offered the chance in 2013 after going through a long process of repeated applications.

2.7.2.4 Portfolios

Saudi EFL teachers are frequently asked to keep portfolios. Portfolios are normally collections of documents that may include samples of students' assessments or students' work, lesson plans, reflections, TPD procedures, studies conducted, teaching goals, etc. Such documents can be used as a way of development for teachers as they provide them with tangible evidence of the course of their classroom practice. They can also showcase their progress towards achieving their goals. However, they are not obligatory as some teachers may choose not to keep them at all.

2.7.2.5 FLTA Fulbright

The Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) Program is a non-degree training and cultural program that is available to Saudi EFL teachers and supervisors although in a very limited manner. For instance, only one teacher is normally chosen from Al-Qunfuthah Educational Directorate (QED). Candidates for this program work as Arabic language teaching assistants at US institutions where Arabic is taught. This gives them a chance to refine their teaching skills, improve their English proficiency and learn about American culture. The program is only targeted for early careers teachers and therefore teachers more than 30 years of age are out of this program's range. In addition, candidates have to be fluent in English and have the capacity to teach Arabic language (see FLTA, 2018).

2.7.2.6 Khebrat (Qualitative Professional Development Program)

Khebrat was started in 2016 by MoE for developing Saudi teachers; which, according to the MoE, coincides with the Saudi vision "2030" and comes in response to the requirements of development and change in line with the MoE future plans. It is a special training program aimed at developing the professional practices of teachers, student advisors, head teachers and supervisors within a framework of specific international standards. It is implemented within the framework of international partnerships in leading countries with rich and distinct educational experiences.

In this program, the MoE sends teachers to receive practical professional training in distinguished school environments in advanced countries in order to receive practical experience. The aim is to let those teachers work alongside their peers in those countries so that they gain practical experience after having completed a language preparation program for about 3 months. They also undergo a short training program offered by partner universities in those countries to update them on the latest educational practices and orientations. To join this program teachers should have at least two years of experience, achieve good in the last academic qualification, score 4 in IELTS or an equivalent score in other tests such as TOEFL or STEP, attain 75 hours of training, and pass a personal interview at the MoE (see Tatweer Company for Educational Services, 2017).

2.7.3 Challenges

Professionalising EFL teachers in the KSA is not without any challenges. An aspect that has to be mentioned with regards to this point is the absence of induction programmes for new teachers in our educational system (see Alharbi, 2011). New teachers are often employed and left to struggle in a swim or sink game (ibid). In some cases, those teachers are given short training course in the form of lectures and workshops which are often theoretical in nature and do not address the actual needs of their classroom practice. In addition, mentoring as a form of support and as a means of enhancing new teachers' professional growth is also non-existent in our context (ibid).

Despite what is being done by the educational authority with regards to TPD, the overall picture might look gloomy. A number of problems have been identified in the literature that stand in the way of establishing healthy modes of TPD. For example, the idea of having TPD programmes away from schools (normally in local training centres) is one

of the major problems in our context. I think this matter is an issue for female teachers especially that the majority of women in KSA do not drive, which could limit their participation. This matter is also problematic for teachers working in remote areas as it entails travel (see Elyas, 2011).

Head-teachers have also been identified as one of the obstacles to the implementation of TPD. Teachers' participation in development programmes means absence from school; and this causes trouble to head-teachers who may not find someone else to cover teachers' absence. Therefore, some head-teachers may refuse to let teachers attend those programmes (see Alharbi, 2011; Aldkheel, 1992). Another serious issue that can be added to the previous discussion is the absence of teacher encouragement and incentives. This is significant especially if we talk about self-driven TPD which, based on my own experience and observation, is not encouraged among teachers nor do teachers engaging in informal leaning opportunities get incentives or promotion for upgrading their knowledge and skills. At the end of each academic year, teachers are evaluated and graded by the educational authority; however, this grade does not affect their status, nor does it involve any kind of promotion.

To sum up this section, evidence suggests that the educational policy towards teachers' professional growth in the Saudi context is oriented towards short sessions of in-service training programs rather than development oriented. Most of those programs serve short-term goals and do not sustain or encourage life-long learning among teachers. However, it has to be mentioned that some educational reform initiatives that are being currently designed and implemented by the Saudi educational authority include components of TPD activities for teachers that aim to improve teachers' skills and knowledge as is the case with Tatweer, which is the topic of discussion in the next section.

2.8 King Abdullah Development Project (Tatweer)

Tatweer is a comprehensive reform initiative that was launched in 2007 (Saqlain, at all., 2013) to improve the Saudi educational environment. With a total budget of about SR9 billion (Albahiri, 2010), the program aims at developing the educational system in a way that brings it in line with what has been internationally recognized as good practice. Aims and policies reflected in this project pay careful attention to the teacher for his/her role in the educational achievement of students (Alghamdi & Li Li, 2011). A number of steps have been identified by MoE to implement this massive reform initiative (Sywelem, M

& Witte, 2013). TPD is one of these steps and a considerable part of the funds has been allocated for training and developing teachers (see Albahiri, 2010).

Curricula Development	Develop educational curricula to meet psychological, social, mental, physical, vocational and knowledge needs of students
Teacher Training and PD	Train and prepare teachers to professionally perform their educational tasks
Improve Learning Environments	Create a school environment that motivates students to learn and achieve at the highest level
Extra-Curricular Activity Support	Promote self-confidence, awareness, skills and creativity

Table 1: summary the main goals of Tatweer (Albahiri, 2010).

In what follows is my translation of the main aims of Tatweer with regards to English language and English language teachers:

- "Develop high-quality English curricula that comply with the modern national curriculum standards.
- Extend CPD for teachers and support them to understand English language teaching methods and strategies in line with the twenty-first century skills.
- Build professional learning communities in order to enable English language teachers exchange experiences and to continually improve their practices.
- Enhance the capacity of teachers to integrate information and communication technologies in the process of English language teaching and learning.
- Develop teachers' skills to create opportunities that facilitate students' access to native English speakers.
- Design and adopt additional educational materials that will act as sources of teaching and learning, including digital resources in order to support English language teaching and learning". (Tatweer, 2012)

While TPD policies before the introduction of this programme have mainly concentrated on short-term training programmes and long-term rehabilitation programs, Tatweer, according to Alghamdi & Li Li (2011), reflects both concepts and adds to them the concept of CPD. However, despite what has been done so fare to boost and enhance TPD, the writers indicated that the objectives of TPD in KSA have remained the same even

after the introduction of Tatweer; and the change has been limited to policies. They cited a number of studies (Alhajeri, 2004; Alharbi, 2008; Altrjmi, 2010; Rosa, 2001) that investigated TPD before and after the introduction of Tatweer, which revealed that TPD is still not obligatory and that teachers still do not receive enough financial and moral support. The studies also revealed that developing teachers is still far away from reflecting the concept of CPD in terms of design, implementation and assessment

2.9 Summary

In this chapter I have provided a panoramic view of the context where my investigation took place. I started the chapter with general information about KSA my home country and the context of this study. Then I briefly presented a historical background of the Saudi educational system, together with the main educational institutions and the educational structure. This was followed by a historical background about EFL teaching in KSA, its current status and the controversy surrounding it. After that, I outlined the importance of the EFL teacher in the Saudi context. Then, I discussed TPD in our context: pre-service teacher education and in-service TPD available to teachers. Tatweer was then discussed as one of the latest and most innovative educational reform initiatives in the Saudi context. The following chapter reviews literature pertinent to TPD and professionalism.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

Given that the main concern of this study is the TPD of practicing EFL teachers within the Saudi context, literature reviewed in this part will mainly focus on in-service TPD forms and practices both in general educational literature and second language teacher education (SLTE) literature. The first section highlights literature on TPD. It starts by discussing multiple perspectives on TPD conceptualization, the contested nature of TPD, and some of the major theoretical and philosophical perspectives informing teacher education movements. Following this, it presents a definition of TPD and an overview of the wide range of learning opportunities available to teachers. It then discusses the nature of effective TPD and the main purposes it serves. After that, it shifts focus to explore teacher professionalism and its connection with TPD. It then highlights the nature of language teacher knowledge base and contrasts two main approaches of imparting knowledge to teachers. Next, it explores some of the main factors that both impact and shape TPD including macro conditions, the individual teacher, the school factor, and the learning activity. The chapter concludes by discussing recent and relevant studies on TPD.

3.2 Conceptualising TPD: different perspectives

An important observation in literature is the lack of an agreement on a single precise definition of TPD due to the changing nature of both the processes and practices of TPD which influenced what this concept stands for (Glover & Law, 1996). This diversity may also be attributed to the complex nature of this phenomenon and to the diverse ways of describing and conceptualising it (see Muijs et al., 2004). A quick survey of literature shows not only a multiplicity of labels to describe TPD but also a wide range of definitions as well. These different interpretations, in my opinion, reflect different philosophies and approaches to TPD, as well as the different purposes for which TPD is mainly conducted. However, it has to be acknowledged that an implicit assumption of most current conceptualisations is the fact that TPD is about teacher learning (see Avalos, 2011).

Indeed, the multifaceted and contested nature of TPD was asserted by many researchers including Evans (2002) who emphasised that the construct of TPD is shrouded in

conceptual ambiguity and therefore, a precise definition of this construct is almost absent from literature (see also Friedman, & Phillips, 2004). Hence different writers from different backgrounds use different terminologies and give different interpretations to TPD. This is confirmed by literature wherein the concept of TPD is normally found under many key terms including, but not limited to, professional development (PD), teacher professional development (TPD), continuous professional development (CPD), staff development, and in-service education and training (INSET). Although, these terms are sometimes used interchangeably in literature to represent a single phenomenon (Craft, 2000; Dean, 1991; Glover & Law, 1996), there is a countervailing view emphasising the uniqueness of each of them (see Cole, 2004; Easton, 2008; Mann, 2005; Mitchell, 2013; Timperley, 2011a). However, a quick survey of literature reveals a complex overlap between these terms and as thus they are far from being unproblematic (Day and Sachs, 2004).

The problematic nature of the terminology is highly evident in the development versus learning divide (Cole, 2004; Easton, 2008; Evans, 2014; Timperley, 2011a). The difference between the concepts of development and learning, according to Easton (2008), is that the former implies a top-down approach to education where agendas are decided by experts, while the latter is bottom-up in nature and starts at the school level with teachers identifying their learning needs based on their assessment of their students' learning needs. Indeed, this opinion was confirmed by Timperley (2011a) who stated that one of the key differences between learning and development is that the former entails teachers' engagement in the process of their learning, while the latter implies a mere participation on the part of teachers. The contention of researchers emphasising learning over development is that whenever a culture of learning permeates an institution, teachers often experience considerable changes in their practices, attitudes, behaviours and even their conversations. The same argument and conflict of opinions is also evident in the training versus development divide; where both concepts are pitted against each other as representing different phenomena (see section 3.4.4).

The developing focus in literature on the role of professionalism in conceptualising and understanding TPD has grown considerable recently. In defining TPD, Evans (2014), for instance, puts the concept of professionalism at the heart of her conceptualisation of this process arguing that it is people’s professionalism that we intend to change through TPD initiatives. It could be argued that the increased governmental controls on education was the catalyst for the evolution and development of such conceptualisations. Coinciding

with the rise of accountability and the push towards performance management, teaching practices and teacher learning have become more regulated by governmental policies giving rise what has been called new professionalisms (Evans (2008). These new forms of professionalism have reshaped and swept all previous conceptions of the autonomous professional who used to have full control over critical decisions pertinent to his profession. The implications of this on the educational landscape involved a change to both the professional practice and TPD conceptualisation (ibid). It is well-acknowledged nowadays that teachers are working within increased levels of performativity and accountability generated by governmental policies (Forde et al, 2006). These issues have severe consequences on teachers' professionalism, identity, and TPD practices. Such agendas promote managerialist discourses wherein notions of teachers as expert professionals are curtailed (ibid).

Principles of personal and professional identity have been central to various conceptualisations and models of TPD. Drawing on this, two opposing conceptualisations of TPD are noticeable in literature that draw from the distinction between the "defect" and the "growth" approaches to TPD (Christie, Harley & Penny, 2004). The first approach sees teachers as mere technicians who lack sufficient knowledge and need training; and whose roles are limited to simple implementation. On the other hand, the growth approach conceives of the learning process as embedded in the act of teaching; and the teacher as a reflective practitioner who is capable of developing complex and creative responses to the challenges of his profession (ibid). The teacher as technician has its origins in the needs of systems or institutions; whereas the teacher as a reflective practitioner has its origins in deeply held beliefs about the teacher as a person and as a professional (ibid).

In defining TPD, Kelchtermans (2004) explained that this concept implies a kind of learning by the teacher. Although simplistic it might seem at first glance, this conceptualisation brings to the forefront the idiosyncratic nature of TPD and its rootedness in teachers' personal lives (ibid), making it imperative for researchers to include this aspect in any conceptualisation of this phenomenon. Therefore, he argued for a conceptual framework that includes the "close intertwining of both teachers' (more effective) actions in their work and the (increased) validity of the beliefs and knowledge underlying them" (p.220). Teacher learning, according to his perspective, reflects not only on teachers' classroom practices, but on their thinking process as well. This thinking process manifests itself clearly in what he referred to as the "teacher's personal interpretative framework" (p.220) which Kelchtermans defines as "the set of cognitions,

of mental representations that operates as a lens through which teachers look at their job, give meaning to it and act in it" (p.220). This framework, as he explains, have two main important dimensions: the professional self and the subjective theory. The first dimension refers to teachers views of themselves and their roles as teachers. The other dimension reflects teachers' personal knowledge, beliefs, and theories about teaching.

Another conceptualisation of teacher learning centres on the interrelationship between practice and theory in terms of knowledge location and generation (Day, 1999a). Assumptions underpinning this stance are fuelled by the uncertainty, spontaneity, and situatedness of the act of teaching (see Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). Knowledge-in-practice, as advertised by Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999), is the kind of knowledge that enhances the teaching practice, and which is embedded in teachers' actions, reflections and inquiry. Consistent with this view is Schön's (1983) "reflective practitioner" which represents an epistemological shift from what has been termed as "technical rationality" (see also Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999) which bases teachers' learning and application of knowledge on the positivist paradigm, wherein the teacher role is limited to the application of formal knowledge and theory generated by experts for improved practice. A consequence of this conceptualisation is the legitimacy it gives to the teaching profession as "a knowledge-based, intellectual activity" (Day, 1999a, pp.26-27). The concept of the reflective practitioners blurs the distinctions between theory and practice making the kind of knowledge embedded in practice and in teachers' reflections, or what can be termed as practical knowledge, as an essential component of the teaching profession (see Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

Other studies have focused directly on the domain of action in which the process of learning takes place. Reid's quadrants of teacher learning is one prominent example (Fraser et al. 2007) (see section 3.3.1). According to this conceptualisation, learning professional opportunities comprise two main dimensions "formal–informal and planned–incidental" (see Fraser et al. 2007, p. 160). In line with this strand of thought, Lieberman (1995) argued for an "expanded view" of teacher learning as it can be located in three different settings. These contexts are direct teaching, learning in school, and learning out of school; to which Day (1999a) added a fourth which is learning in the classroom. Researchers such as Day and Sachs (2004) argue that these learning contexts are essential to teacher development as teachers normally draw on all of them in their ongoing pursuit of development.

In their review of literature, Opfer and Pedder (2011a), indicated that most recent conceptualisations of TPD have been grounded in process-product approaches to teacher development which emphasise that effective forms of TPD often lead to the desired levels of educational change. This conceptualisation, according to their perspective, misses much of the complexity of this process especially the conditions under which teachers work and which do shape and influences their experiences and learning. Therefore, they argued for a new conceptualisation that acknowledges the complex nature of teacher learning. Their conceptualisation adopts a complexity theory perspective to address teacher learning. Doing so, according to their perspective, shifts the focus from "a cause-and-effect approach to a focus on causal explanation so that we understand under what conditions, why, and how teachers learn" (p. 378). Thus conceptualised, TPD is therefore a complex system which combines a multiplicity of elements and sub-elements that interact in unpredictable manner in different ways and in different directions.

In conceptualising TPD, Kennedy (2005, 2014) categorised professional learning opportunities into three main types according to the purposes they serve: transmissive models, transformative models and transitional (malleable) models. Transmission forms of TPD depend on top-down forms of training sessions delivered by external experts with a total focus on technical aspects of teaching (Kennedy, 2005 and 2014). Teachers roles within this approach is limited to implementation. Transformative forms of TPD, on the other hand, support teachers' professional autonomy and contribute to transformative practice. Transformative models of TPD such as action research and critical reflection seem to fit this category (see also Fraser, et al, 2007). Transitional forms of TPD according to Kennedy (2005) "have the capacity to support underlying agendas compatible with either of these two purposes of CPD" (p. 248). Standards-based models, coaching/ mentoring models, and communities of practice (CoPs) are the main learning opportunities that fit this from of development.

Most importantly, recent conceptualisations of teacher learning mark a shift in perspective from transmission approaches to emphasise the situated nature of teacher learning wherein sociocultural and political contexts are seen as major factors impacting the learning process (Johonson, 2009b; Crandall & Christison, 2016). This stance is substantiated by evidence from literature emphasising that decontextualised learning experiences are unlikely to be translated and applied in teachers' immediate environments (Timperley, 2011a). This conceptualisation is also reinforced by works of Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) on the power of CoPs on TPD wherein teacher

learning is dynamic, ongoing, and embedded in their daily lives (Crandall & Christison, 2016; Desimone, 2009; Guskey 2000).

3.2.1 Perspectives Underpinning Teacher Education

As can be elicited form the discussion above, professionalising teachers have been influenced by many trends that helped shape how people think of and conceptualise TPD (Johnson, 2009a). These trends have been triggered and fuelled by corresponding epistemological shifts in human perspectives regarding human learning in general and teacher learning in particular (ibid). Underlying any approach to teacher learning is a set of beliefs and principle which represent a framework of reference and feed into what would constitute good practice in teacher education and preparation. Therefore, this section provides details of what I would consider as some of the main philosophical schools of thought informing teacher education movements:

3.2.1.1 The science-research conceptions of teaching

This stance draws on behaviourism as a conceptual framework. It is perhaps the most widespread model of teacher education programmes (see Wallace, 1991; Olson, 1992). Underpinning this worldview is an emphasis that human behaviours can be modified through demonstration, imitation, reinforcement, practice and habit formation. It views effective teaching as a matter of mastering a range of discrete skills and competencies. Process-product research, which was dominant in the 1950s through the 1970s, represents the main source of knowledge for teachers within this perspective. The implications of this on teacher education is that teachers were presented with discreet chunks of knowledge and experiences that have been proven effective by external experts.

In short, teaching within this approach, is assumed to be a science and thus can be rationally and objectively examined. Findings from scientific knowledge and experimentation are transmitted to trainees by experts who are far removed from the day to day realities of the context. Knowledge within this model is context-free, generalisable, and transferrable. Trainees are provided with some exercises and know-how techniques that are supposed to be functional in all contexts. Any failure on the part of trainees to apply the new acquired knowledge is often attributed either to their misunderstanding of what has been learned or to improper application.

However, it has to be mentioned that this philosophical perspective has been considered problematic by researchers for its technical view of teacher professionalism (see Olson, 1992; Carlgren, 1999). One of the main disadvantages of this approach is the creation of a gap between theory and practice. It has also been criticised for applying scientific solutions to complex human phenomena, devaluing teachers' practical experience, and relying heavily on knowledge transmission approaches (see Wallace, 1991; Richards, 1998).

3.2.1.2 Teacher learning as a personal construction:

The growing recognition that teaching is a highly complex process that involves "higher-level cognitive processes" led teacher educators to shift focus from direct teaching to more inquiry-based, discovery-oriented, context-based, and teacher-driven approaches to teacher learning (see Richards, 1998). To realize this vision, a constructivist epistemological perspective was adopted.

Constructivism is a theory about the nature of knowledge and how it could be developed. It emphasises the centrality of the person in the process of knowledge construction. Hence the name constructivism. It stands in stark contrast to behavioural principles implicit in the science-research model of teacher education which is predicated on the notion that knowledge can be transmitted to learners by others. Constructivism is grounded in the assumption that learning becomes deeper and long-lasting when learners conduct their own learning and construct their own understandings through active engagement (Marlowe & Page, 2005).

Although the constructivist approach would see the meaning-making process as an individualistic process as envisaged by early Piagetian constructivism proponents, recent psychologists have inserted the social element into the constructivist framework in recognition of the importance of the social milieu in the learning process (Richardson, 1997). This gave rise to social constructivism (some might prefer to call it Vygotskian constructivism) which stresses the centrality of the social factor in both knowledge construction and appreciation (ibid). Thus, the social orientation, extended the scope of learning from "the individual cognitive development" to "social transformation" (Vadeboncoeur, 1997). More of the role of this social element in teacher learning can be seen in the next section.

3.2.1.3 Teacher learning as a socio-cultural process

Recent understandings of the complexity of the nature of teacher learning coupled with the rejection of the simplistic notion of knowledge transmission from experts to novices has led to the rethinking of SLTE programs' content and mode of delivery (see Burns & Richards, 2009; Johnson, & Golombek, 2011). As a result, many researchers and educators developed an interest in the situated nature of teacher knowledge and how teachers contextually draw on their existing knowledge base to construct and develop professional knowledge through participation in communities of learning (Burns & Richards, 2009; Johnson, & Golombek, 2011; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Mann, 2005;).

In defining the sociocultural perspective, Johnson (2009a) explains that "the epistemological stance of a sociocultural perspective defines human learning as a dynamic social activity that is situated in physical and social contexts, and is distributed across persons, tools, and activities" (p. 1). This is significant, because cognition, according to this understanding, is situated in the social life and not universal as presumed by behaviourist and cognitive theories of human learning (ibid). Thus, from the perspective of a socio-cultural theory much of what humans learn is "grounded in social context" (Smylie, 1995, p.98). This means teacher learning takes place in a given context that shapes and controls the learning process; and learning contexts, according to Burns & Richards (2009), exert powerful effects on the process of learning as they can either "enhance or inhibit learning" (p.4).

So, instead of seeing teaching as transformation of knowledge, the sociocultural perspective identifies teaching as "creating conditions for the construction of knowledge and understanding through social participation" (Burns & Richards, 2009, p. 6). Learning develops through participants' collaboration, cooperation and participation in social activities within their context. Therefore, the action of learning is not seen as "translating knowledge and theories into practice but rather as constructing new knowledge and theory" through teachers' participation and engagement in cooperative and collaborative activities (ibid, p.4).

Concurrent with this strand of thought is the emphasis placed on the role of collaboration in effective and meaningful TPD (see Day, 1999a). Research evidence suggests that collaboration and collegiality have been acknowledged as powerful forces for teacher growth and school effectiveness (Hargreaves, 1994; Day, 1999a). Participating in a community of teachers who share the same interests, values, goals, responsibilities, and

practices is a powerful source of development for language teachers (Richards, 2011). Learning within this conception is being viewed as a collective process and results from co-participation in social practices through lived experiences (Fuller, 2007). Such practices, according to Hargreaves (1994) push TPD “beyond personal, idiosyncratic reflection, or dependence on outside experts, to a point where teachers can learn from each other, sharing and developing their expertise together” (p. 186). Knowledge generated from collaboration is said to be both sensitive to teachers’ contexts and relevant to their immediate concerns (Lieberman, 1995). Hence, an interest in the role of CoPs in TPD has developed among teacher educators (see Vescio et al., 2008).

CoPs have their origin in Lave & Wenger’s (1991) seminal book *Situated learning: legitimate peripheral participation* which is built on the understanding that the process of knowledge acquisition is dynamic, social, situated and results from participation in social communities (see Wenger, 1998). Learning within this conception is being viewed as a “situated activity” requiring practitioners to participate in the sociocultural practices of the community of practice for knowledge and skill mastery (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 29). Wenger et al. (2002) define CoPs as “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” (p. 4). Such communities help teachers share knowledge, insights, and advice. They also provide a platform for discussing teachers’ troubles, aspirations, concerns, and needs (ibid). Knowledge, according to Wenger et al (2002) is “a living process than a static body” and the process of knowledge building is an interactive process wherein practitioners engage with other members in the real social context (p. 9). Thus, this notion develops a view of teachers as active learners and constructors of their own knowledge (Lieberman, 1995).

Professional learning communities are significant in TPD as they take into account teachers’ immediate contexts (their schools), their actual needs, and their empowerment since they are given the chance to be active agents in their own development (see Kelchtermans, 2004). Professional learning communities are built into the very culture of the school. They are not extraneous to schools and therefore teachers normally have an active role in establishing them to network and communicate with other colleagues instead of waiting for external help. Learning opportunities that can support and encourage a sense of a community can include such examples as mutual discussions, collaborative action research, reading groups, critical friends, peer observation, team teaching, and study groups. These forms of learning give teachers the chance to assume

new roles in their practice such as "team leader, teacher trainer, mentor, or critical friend" (Richards, 2011, p. 6).

Nevertheless, collaborative and collegial approaches to TPD are not free from criticism (Hargreaves, 1994). The difficulty associated with the implementation of such approaches has been a major concern among critics. These include the issue of the allotted time during which teachers can interact with one another and the issue of teachers' prior familiarity with those approaches (ibid). Another strand of criticism levelled at these approaches is centred on the various meanings and conceptualisations to which they are attached among teachers (ibid). Effective collaboration might also be hampered by many challenges. Johnston (2009) classified these challenges into two main types: internal and external. The former constitutes "the inherent power imbalances" that might be found in many collaborative relationships, while the latter constitutes institutional support. Although they can take many forms and can be practiced anywhere, collaborative and collegial forms of TPD cannot thrive if institutional support is lacking. Institutional support, as Johnston (2009) pointed out, is twofold: "logistical and financial" and "moral" (p. 246). Firstly, teachers must receive sufficient funds to support their embarkment on various forms of collaborative TPD. They also require logistical support in reduced workloads and free time to engage in collaboration. On the other hand, educational officials must recognise the value and potential of collaborative TPD in regard to teachers' practices; therefore, these officials must provide due motivational and moral support to their staff.

3.2.1.4 Teacher learning as a reflective practice:

Reflective practice has been identified as a key model for teacher education (Wallace, 1991; Hargreaves, 1995; Pedder, James, & MacBeath, 2005) and as a key component of effective TPD (West-Burnham & O'Sullivan 1998). Reflection has also been described as being one of the dominant paradigms in teacher educational programs by Wallace (1991). In Richards' (1998) view, reflection stands for "an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose" (p.21). According to Day (1999b) reflection engages teachers in "a *critique* of practice, the values which are implicit in that practice, the personal, social, institutional and broad policy contexts in which practice takes place, and the implications of these for improvement of that practice" (p. 222). It is, therefore, a self-evaluative form of TPD that enables teachers to periodically recall their experiences to examine and evaluate them for future plans and actions.

Another value placed on reflection for teacher development lies in its ability to offer teachers the chances to exercise autonomy, to be agents in their development, to achieve self-evaluation, produce valid practical knowledge about their practice, and to emancipate their practices from the shackles of routinized actions (see Day, 1999b).

Reflection was also highly stressed in SLTE by Richards (1998) who indicated that this process gives teachers' the tools that enable them to be guided by informed decisions instead of mere intuition or routine. This is also confirmed by Mann (2005), who indicated that reflection helps language teachers develop an awareness of their practice, and this awareness, in his opinion, is " an outcome of a reflexive dialogue between knowledge and practice" (p. 108). A variety of activities can help teachers develop a reflective approach to their practice such as action research, ethnography, journal writing, video recordings, portfolios, and analysis of critical incidents (Richards, 1998, 2011). On the other hand, a number of reasons have been identified by Day (1999a) that may discourage teachers from engaging with reflective practice such as teachers' readiness, teaching loads, time limitations, difficulty to challenge routinized practices, increasing accountability, and the culture of the school where teachers' work.

A quick survey of literature reveals the presence of three different kinds of reflection: reflection-on-action, reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983) and reflection-about-action (Day, 1999a). Reflection-on-action is a form of critical review of practice that can be undertaken either before or after the practice. Reflection-in-action refers to the ability to make decisions and judgments and adapt teaching styles accordingly during the teaching process. Reflection-about-action carries with it an emancipatory desire and involves teachers in reflection on broader social, political, and economical issues (Day, 1999b).

3.2.1.5 Teacher learning as an adult education

Adult learning is defined and understood differently, however, a common notion that underpins all different understandings is the concept of the "adult" (Merriam, & Brockett, 2007). Approaches to teacher learning within this stance emphasise that teachers are adult learners whose learning is different from that of young learners and thus require different learning strategies (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2011). The argument emphasises the existence of a set of notions and values that underlie this kind of learning which makes it different from what is appropriate for young learners (Knowles, 1980).

The term 'andragogy' was first used by Knowles (1980) to describe how adults learning differs from children's learning (pedagogy) (see also Bubb & Earley, 2007). However, instead of being seen as an independent theory of learning, andragogy as emphasized by Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) cited in Merriam, & Brockett (2007) is being viewed as "a set of assumptions and methods pertaining to the process of helping adults learn" (135). This was also acknowledged by Knowles (1980) himself who indicated that andragogy is just another "model of assumptions" that characterise learners (p.43).

Merriam, and Brockett (2007) define adult education as a set of "activities intentionally designed for the purpose of bringing about learning among those whose age, social roles, or self-perception define them as adults" (p.8). Although this definition specifically associates this process with educating adults as being different from adult learning which, according to this conception, is "a cognitive process internal to the learner," others define it more broadly to incorporate both elements (education and learning) (see Knowles, 1986; Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2011). The assumptions implicit within this worldview emphasise the importance of the individual experiences in the process on learning and construction of meaning; and the subjective nature of the learning process. It has a view of the learner as an active constructor of knowledge whose self-conception, self-direction, readiness, motivation, former experience and actual needs are integral to the process of learning; and of learning as an "interactive process of interpretation, integration, and transformation of one's experiential world" (Pratt, 1993, p.17).

3.2.1.6 Teaching as a moral endeavour

In addition to being practical and intellectual, the activity of teaching is also being conceived as a moral enterprise (Day, 1999a; Day & Gu, 2007; Johnston,2003; Mann, 2005). Teaching, according to Day (1999a), "has an essential moral purpose in the sense that it is always concerned with the betterment or good of pupils" (p.15). It is more than just passing of information to students (see Wilson & Demetriou, 2007) as it requires informed capacities for independent judgments (Hargreaves, 1995). According to this perspective, whatever a teacher does and how he behaves inside his class is morally driven and value-laden (see Bullough, 2011). In addition, what goes on in classrooms between students and teachers affects the development of students' characters either for the best or the worst (Jackson, Boostrom and Hansen, 1993, cited in Day, 1999a).

The argument implicit in this notion is that given that the clients of teachers' products are children, then the exercise of their actions and decisions have ethical and moral

implications (Carr, 2000). Based on this stance, teacher professionalism is moral at its core rather than being instrumental (Sockett, 1993, cited in Johnston,2003). Therefore, the drive towards teacher development and effectiveness should be moral and grounded in teachers' values (Johnston,2003); and this has paved the way for an alternative conceptualisation of teacher learning (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997). Although this ethical dimension has been well emphasized in literature, it might still be unacknowledged in TPD attempts in many educational contexts (ibid). It might also still be the case that some teachers are not consciously aware of it despite being the underpinning principle of most of their classroom actions and judgements (Johnston,2003).

3.3 Defining TPD

Building on the above discussion, it seems that defining TPD is not an easy task. However, my work will be guided by Day's (1999a) stipulative and encompassing definition of TPD, which is widely cited in literature (see Evans, 2002 and 2008) and which I do believe is one of the few definitions that to some extent captures the real essence of what we mean by TPD. This is partly because Day was able to make precisely clear what he means by TPD rather than presenting a description or an interpretation of the features or processes of TPD as is the case with other attempts at defining TPD (Evans, 2002). TPD, according to Day

> consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to individual, group or school and which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives (p.4).

The value of this definition, in my opinion, lies in its ability to draw attention to the complex, multifaceted, and interactive nature of teacher learning. In addition, it takes into consideration the different stakeholders involved in the educational process and the direct or indirect impact of TPD on all parties concerned. Furthermore, it not only focuses on the effect of learning on teachers' knowledge and skills, but includes their commitment as change agents and their moral purposes, which other definitions failed to mention. It

also includes in the equation teachers' planning and thinking, in addition to their actions. All this is carefully considered together with teachers' career phases and their working contexts which act as powerful forces on TPD (see Muijs et al., 2004).

Thus conceived, TPD is a career long process that begins with initial pre-service teacher training and ends with retirement. It is an ongoing process of continuous learning and adjustment to the various variables surrounding one's profession. However, it has to be acknowledged that the above definition is far from being unproblematic to me. Various concerns are raised by the fact that theories are continually evolving, and research is expanding so fast adding to the complexity of developing a clear-cut definition or conceptualisation of this process (see Bolam & McMahon, 2004).

It has to be mentioned that part of defining and conceptualising TPD within this study is based on an acknowledgement of the idea that learning is highly embedded in teachers' lives and working contexts (Opfer & Pedder, 2011a). Therefore, learning is contextually situated meaning that the learning activities pursued by professionals cannot be conceived in isolation from the working environment wherein teachers conduct their daily activities. This brings to the discussion the complex nature of teacher learning (Opfer & Pedder, 2011a). Therefore, far from simplistically assuming that teacher learning is linear, serial, and additive, I subscribe with Opfer & Pedder's (2011a) views that teacher learning is a complex process wherein a multiplicity of elements, systems, and factors interact in unpredictable ways to either support or inhibit the learning process. This is partly influenced by my own views that basing teacher learning on a process-product approach might limit our ability to understand the mechanisms by which teacher learning occurs and the factors that influence this process.

Although I agree with literature that TPD has a generative impact on the students and the school in general, I side with Evans's (2014) views that TPD relates to the practitioner himself in the first place; and that other important beneficiaries should not be considered as integral to its conceptualisation. Evans argues that integrating the generative components of TPD in the process of conceptualisation is an over-simplification of a complex and multidimensional process such as TPD. In addition, my conceptualisation takes into account the distinctiveness of foreign language teachers which has been previously highlighted by Borg (2006). Foreign language teachers, as suggested by Borg's study, are different and unique in terms of the nature of the subject they teach, their content, the methodologies they use, their relationship with their students and the

continuous contrast between them and the native speakers of the target language. Therefore, they require specific abilities, qualities, and specialised TPD opportunities so that they can participate effectively in their students' success in learning the foreign language (see also Wichadee, 2011).

Moreover, my conceptualisation is also built on an expanded view of TPD (Lieberman, 1995) which acknowledges the multidimensionality of knowledge generation and its potential sources (see also Day & Sachs, 2004). This broad conceptualisation, as reflected in Day's definition, recognises the fact that TPD opportunities can be provided in many different ways ranging from formal to informal, and from incidental to planned activities. TPD can also be institutionally mandated or self-direct by professionals themselves (see diagram 1). It can be provided in a top-down manner through external expertise via training sessions, workshops, courses and qualification programmes. It can also be locally initiated through self-driven and collaborative activities including networking, action research, critical reflection, coaching, mentoring and informal collegial chats (see Desimone, 2011; O'Connell, 2010; Patton et al. 2015). Each way has its own virtue and serves specific aims (Avalos, 2011).

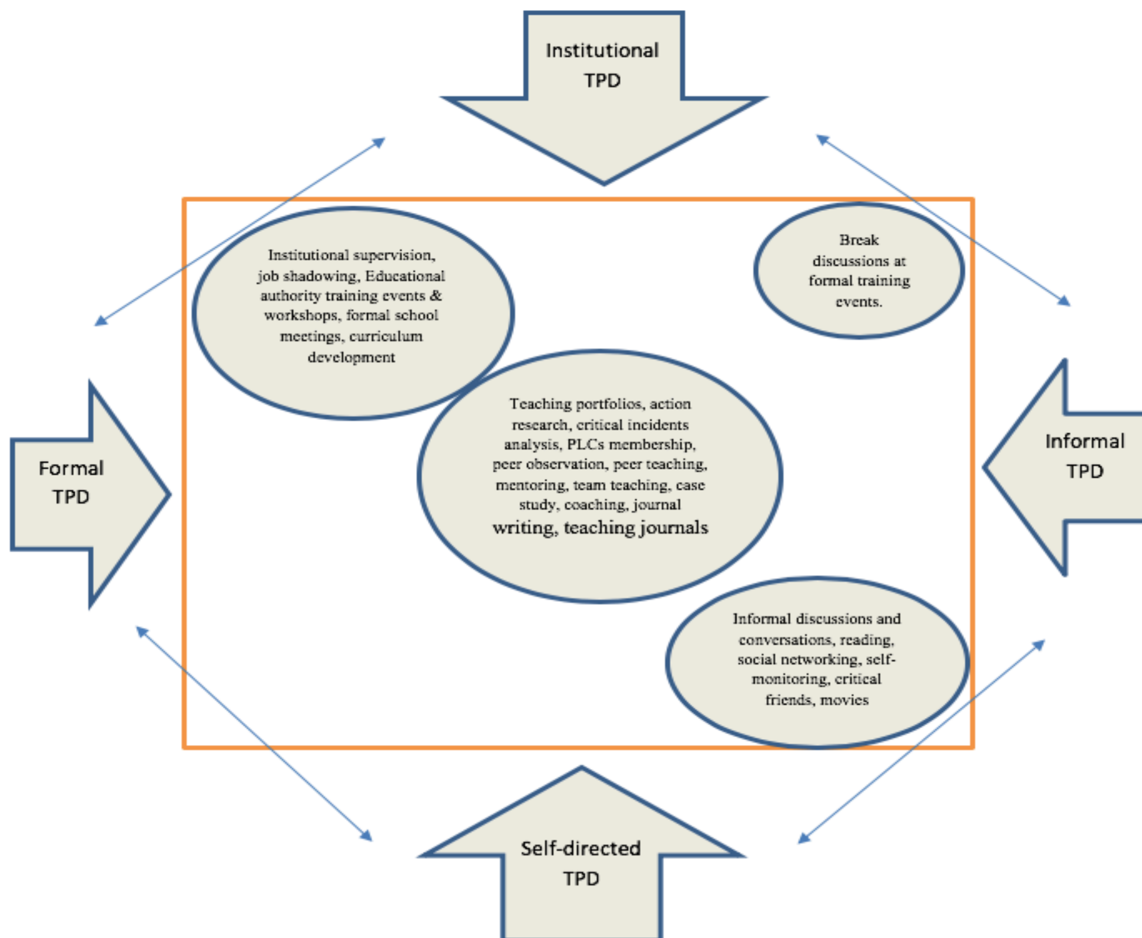

Diagram 1: potential sources of TPD.

3.3.1 Opportunities for teacher learning

In line with Day's (1999a) definition and drawing on Reid's quadrants of teacher learning (see diagram 2), TPD covers a wide range of opportunities, sources, and possibilities for teacher learning as will be discussed in the following sections:

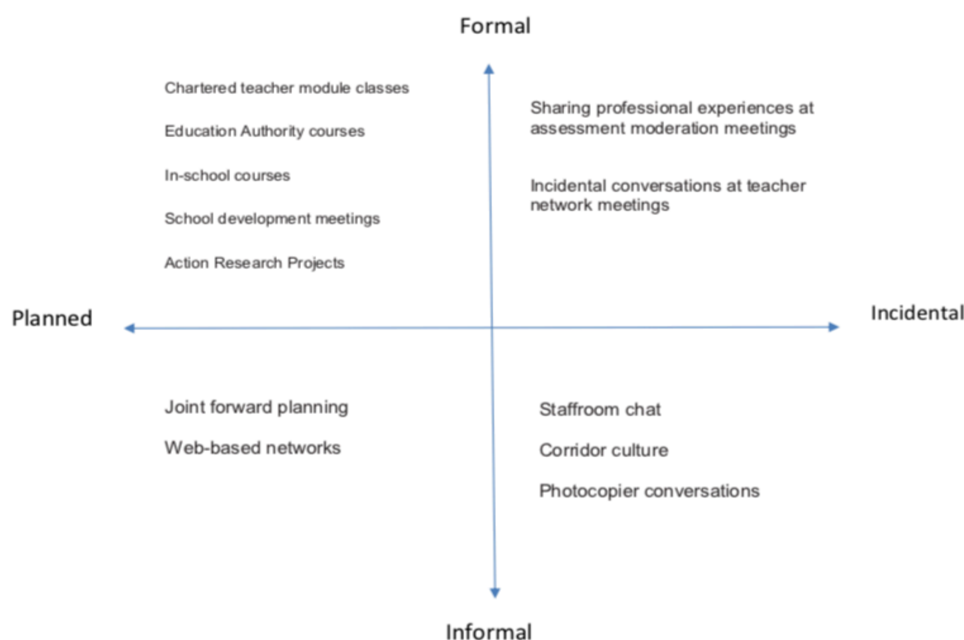

Diagram 2: Reid's quadrants of teacher learning adopted from Fraser et al. (2007)

3.3.1.1 Formal and informal opportunities

Learning opportunities offered by the educational institution for the staff are often categorised as formal. In most cases, such learning opportunities are planned and administered by external experts other than the teaching staff. Training sessions, one-shot workshops, and courses are some of the main channels through which activities are conducted. This form of development is seen as a major part of the institution's or the larger educational authority's development policies. In addition, formal learning can be pursued in a self-directed manner beyond any institutional requirement such as joining a degree program at a university.

Informal TPD, on the other hand, are forms of professional learning opportunities that can be planned or unplanned, and often initiated and directed by teachers themselves beyond institutional requirements. These forms of learning opportunities can be pursued

either within the institution or externally; and they can be also self-directed or collaborative. They are intentional forms of TPD that could be school-based or non-school-based forms of learning. Informal learning activities include engagement in teachers' networks, incidental talks with colleagues, or contact with other experienced teachers or former colleagues (see Wilson & Demetriou, 2007).

3.3.1.2 Incidental and planned opportunities

Incidental learning opportunities are forms of TPD that often occur unintentionally in everyday practice. This form of learning normally takes place during the action of doing and is enriched by both successes and mistakes (Smylie,1995). In most occasions people may not be aware of it. The main difference between incidental and formal and informal learning opportunities is that it is neither intentional nor prearranged. According to Smylie (1995) such forms of development presume “that learning takes place under conditions of surprise and nonroutine circumstances” (p.100). Incidental forms of PD are "spontaneous and unpredictable" such as teacher informal chats during coffee times (see Fraser et al, 2007).

Planned learning opportunities are forms of development that can either be institutionally sponsored or self-initiated. They can be either formal or informal and often refer to learning incidents that are often prearranged and intentional.

3.3.1.3 Standardised TPD

This type represents the top-down centralised approach to TPD which is used by educational authorities to disseminate information, skills, procedures and techniques to large numbers of teachers. As implied in the name, traditional one-size-fits-all procedures such are workshops, training events, and courses are the main methods used to establish TPD goals. Although, this form represents a good technique to expose large numbers of teachers to new forms of knowledge and expertise, it is being criticised for a number of issues including its neglect of site-based or contextual issues, tendency towards technical rationality, dependence on knowledge transmission approaches, overreliance on one-shot approaches, lack of follow-up and continuous support, and devaluation of teachers' practical experience.

3.3.1.4 Self-directed TPD

This approach stands for the independent learning of teachers either individually or in groups. This often happens when teachers decide to pursue development at their discretion with or without institutional support using existing resources. Responsibility is laid on the shoulder of the teacher to set some TPD goals and to choose the appropriate kinds of activities that will help him/her establish these goals (see Villegas-Reimers, 2003). This form of learning is important in that it recognises the value and power of both "experiential and action-based learning" (Richards, & Farrell, 2005, p. 14). Process such as inquiry, self-appraisal, experience, personal construction, contextualised learning, and planning are central to self-directed TPD (ibid). This form of learning can be carried out individually such as self-monitoring, analysis of critical incidents, journal writing, and reflection. It can also be done on one-to-one basis such as peer coaching, peer observation, critical friends, and team teaching. In addition, it can be group based such as case studies, and teacher support group. Some activities such as action research fits all the previous three groups. Further, it can be institutionally facilitated (ibid).

This form of TPD might be more effective with advanced teachers who have already developed their teaching skills and attained high levels of subject mastery, and who are motivated to further enhance their abilities and refine their skills. However, this model, according to Gaible and Burns (2005) should not be considered as the main venue of TPD. Instead, it works well when used in conjunction with the institutionalised forms of TPD.

3.3.1.5 workplace learning

Workplace learning is a general term used here to refer to all forms of TPD opportunities teachers engage with at the school level, be it formal or informal with or without assistance from external facilitators (see Avalos, 2011). The importance of workplace learning to professional growth in general and professional identity formation in particular is well established in literature (Forde et al, 2006). According to McLaughlin (1994) the most meaningful sort of TPD is that which " takes place not in a workshop or in discrete, bounded convocations but in the context of professional communities" (p. 31) where teachers engage in meaningful interactions at their workplace contexts.

A significant contribution of this source of knowledge lies in its ability to help novice practitioners bridge the gap between theory and practice (see Wilson & Demetriou, 2007).

Although this form of development is often underestimated in many educational contexts, it is still considered to be a significant factor in the process of professional growth (Craft, 2002). Indeed, it is in the workplace context that professionals live the experience of being part of a professional community.

Learning in the workplace alongside experienced professionals is important especially for new teachers during the phase of initiation into the teaching profession (Forde et al., 2006). The process of transition from the university into the school context is not an easy straightforward process. Although novice teachers graduate with a good stuck of codified knowledge (content knowledge) relevant to their practice, it is in the workplace context that they develop their context specific knowledge which is necessary for the process of development (Eraut,2004). This is the type of professional knowledge that is not easily codified and presented in textual forms. Rather, it is practical in nature and usually " acquired informally through participation in social activities;" and that most practitioners are unaware of its influence on their behaviour and practice (Euraut, 2004, p.263).

3.3.2 Effective TPD

Despite the acknowledged complexity of TPD (Evans, 2014) and the inherent difficulty of finding universal truths (Guskey, 1995) of how people develop professionally as most of the models presented tend to be based on theories stripped away the context-specificity of teacher learning (Evans, 2014), there seems to be a consensus in literature on the existence of a number of characteristics that define the parameters of what could be termed as effective TPD (Craft, 2000; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Desimone, 2009; Desimone, 2011; Fullan, 1995; Ganser, 2000; Guskey, 2003; ; Hayes, & Chang, 2012; Kerka, 2003; Lieberman, 1995; Patton et al. 2015; Timperley, 2008). However, research supporting the identified features of good practice in TPD is inconsistent and sometimes contradictory (Guskey, 2003). Therefore, to avoid simplification, I do agree with Opfer and Pedder (2011a) that TPD is far beyond being simple or straightforward given the numerous factors that might interfere with its effectiveness and in some cases obstruct the process of learning (see section 3.5).

In developing a high-level guiding framework for the professional learning of teachers and school leaders throughout Australia, Timperley (2011b) promotes a flexible notion of professionalism wherein teachers are being viewed as adaptive experts working in environments of high adaptive capacity (see also Timperley, 2011a). However, adopting this notion requires numerous shifts in thinking and practice and a break away from

traditional conceptions and approaches to TPD as she argues. Therefore, she presents a framework of effective TPD that, according to her argument, have been powerful in promoting the kinds of teacher learning that have demonstrated to make a difference to teachers' performance and students' outcomes. This framework is based on "fundamental shifts" in thought about TPD, leadership and classroom practice (Timperley, 2011a, p.3).

The first shift requires a movement from adopting a delivery model of TPD into focusing on approaches and processes consistent with how teachers actually learn. Thus, for more effectiveness, policy makers and educationists have to shift thinking from development to learning. Solving educational problems, as she argues, requires "transformative" rather than "additive" change to teachers' practices (p. 5) and this can only be supported through the internal processes of learning. Learning, as opposed to development, requires serious engagement on the part of the teacher rather than mere superficial participation.

The second shift focuses on the centrality of the student and the ultimate primacy of students' achievement to the learning process. Instead of being seen as a by-product of teacher learning, student achievement and well-being should be seen as the main driving force behind teachers' engagement. Students' outcomes should be the criteria for judging which practices have to be changed and whether if that change achieved its intended goals. (see also Timperley, 2011b). An indication of success is therefore not in terms of teachers' mastery of new teaching strategies, rather the impact of their changed teaching practices on students' outcomes.

The third shift involves a focus on professional knowledge and skills rather than on forms or delivery methods of TPD. Timperley argues that a great deal of emphasis was placed on descriptions and details of the learning activities themselves rather than on the resultant learning. According to her perspective, best evidence synthesis of TPD emphasises that generic knowledge defined and provided by experts and which is devoid of immediate classroom demands is not helpful in bringing desired improvements to teachers' practices and learning. What is required instead is practical knowledge that is meaningful to teachers and immediately relevant to their needs and contexts.

The fourth shift is about the nature of teacher learning that makes a difference to their practices and their students' results. It stresses the need for active involvement and systematic inquiry into effective teaching practices based on self-regulated principles. Effective learning happens when teachers take control of the learning process by framing

their own goals, create partnerships to ensure that their learning is effective and focused, engage in collaborative inquiry into their practices, and engage in ongoing assessment of the value and effectiveness of their practices so that they can adjust their teaching accordingly.

The fifth shift emphasises the strong connection between professionalism and TPD. “How and what teachers learn must be underpinned by an explicit and defensible theory of professionalism” as argued by Timperley (p. 8). In addition to that, main decisions about the nature of knowledge and skills that teachers need to acquire as supported and promoted by institutionalised practices, stem from implicit assumptions about the nature of professionalism. Such assumptions relate to visions of professionalism that conceive teachers as either technicians or reflective practitioners. In contrast, for more effective TPD, Timperley argues in favour a vision of professionalism wherein “evidence about students, their learning and well-being” (p. 8) is the driving force towards effectiveness. By establishing a close link between the teaching practices and student learning, teachers will seek new approaches to solve their entrenched problems.

The sixth shift is focused on those who are responsible for teacher support either inside or outside schools (see also Muijs et al., 2014, p. 249). Insuring that the right conditions for effective TPD are in place is central to teacher effectiveness. Teachers may not be able to meet the challenging demands of their profession alone. Therefore, professional learning, according to Timperley’s perspective, have to be enhanced at all levels along the chain of influence to ensure that the right conditions are created and sustained for effective teaching and learning practices. School leaders have to shift their role from “organizing professional learning to taking a leadership role for learning within their schools” (ibid, p.180).

3.3.3 Purpose of TPD

A review of the relevant literature suggests that the various models of TPD reflect different approaches to teacher learning and serve different agendas and purposes. According to (Day & Sachs, 2004) TPD can serve three main functions: align teachers’ classroom practices to institutional policies, improve students’ learning gains by improving teachers’ performance, and improve the status of the teaching profession in general (p. 22). However, I found Kennedy’s (2005) framework (see Diagram 3) to be quite helpful in understanding the purpose of TPD as she stresses that TPD models serve two main purposes:

1- To equip teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and pedagogies in order to adequately prepare them to implement the educational reforms proposed by educational authorities.
2- Or to empower and inform teachers and to provide a critique of educational reform agendas. In this sense, TPD models are useful to support teachers to contribute to and shape policies and practices within their educational contexts.

It is evident from Kennedy's (2005, 2014) conceptualisation that the fundamental purpose of TPD opportunities is to serve as a means of knowledge transmission or to support "transformative practice". Based on these two main purposes, Kennedy developed her categorisation of TPD opportunities as was discussed in section (3.2).

Therefore, it could be argued that these two main purposes of TPD are directly linked to the forms and provisions of professional learning opportunities that are dominant in many educational systems worldwide. For example, the conventional approach to TPD, or what Day & Sachs (2004) call the deficit model of development, serves the first purpose. It assumes that teachers are lacking certain forms of knowledge and skills and that it is, therefore, the job of the educational authority to cater for this need and adequately prepare them to implement educational reform. On the other hand, the growth paradigm, or what has been termed as "the aspirational" model of development by Day & Sachs (2004), serves the second purpose and conceives of teachers as expert professionals who can build on their knowledge and expertise to further their development and to improve their schools.

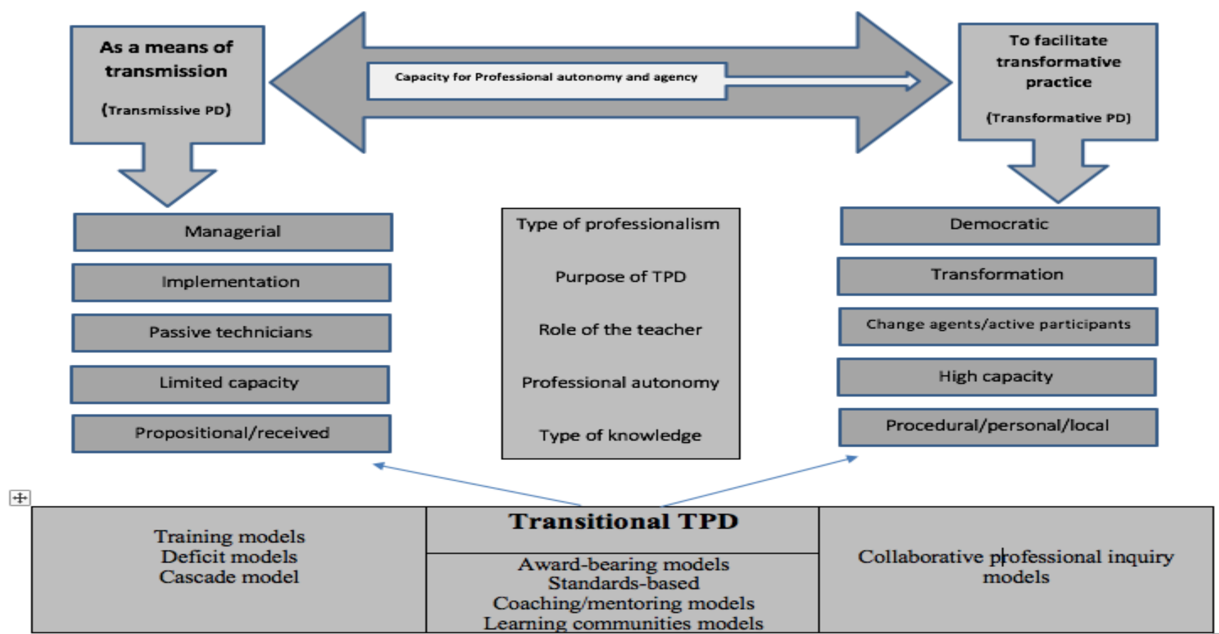

Diagram 3: summary of Kennedy's (2005, 2014) framework of PD purpose.

3.4 Professionalising language teachers

A considerable degree of professionalisation has taken place in the field of second language teaching and learning over the last 30 years (Barduhn, & Johnson, 2009). Countries and institutions alike began to see the centrality of English language teachers and teaching to effective participation in global economy (Richards, 2008). This triggered an increasing demand for competent language teachers and for effective approaches to prepare and develop them. SLTE and professionalism were shaped and are being constantly shaped and influenced by their response to various externally imposed factors (Richards, 2008). These include globalisation, international trade and communications, increased national demands for competent language teachers, effective educational procedures, new educational policies, centralisation of decision-making, standardisation, and increased accountability. Therefore, capturing the complex ways of language teachers' professionalisation and how language teacher professionalism is shaped is essential to develop an understanding of how language teachers' roles and education are being conceptualised (see Richards, 2008).

The relationship between TPD and professionalism has been highlighted in literature by many theorists in general education (Day and Sachs 2004; Evans 2008, 2011) and in SLTE as well (see Burns & Richards, 2009; Leung, 2009; Richards, 2011). The various forms of TPD activities that are being used by educational authorities worldwide are

intended in a way of another to bring a change to or reshape teacher professionalism. In addition, attempt at shaping or reshaping professionalism is equal to attempts at developing teachers professionally (Evans, 2011). Professionalism and professionals are bound up with each other in complex ways. Professionalism, according to Evans (2008), is a mixture of different individual professionalities, and professionality represents a single constituent element of the construct of professionalism. Thus, professionality determines and influences the shape of professionalism and professionalism, in turn, influences the professionality orientations of individuals (ibid). Hence, the link between both constructs is so strong and worthy of a lengthy discussion.

3.4.1 Conflicting discourse on Professionalism

According to Kennedy (2014) it is essential to interrogate the context within which TPD operates and the underpinning professionalism discourse informing educational policies. A closer examination of literature reveals the existence of different perspectives regarding the concept of professionalism (see Day & Sachs, 2004; Leung, 2009). The existence of these different perspectives, according to, Kennedy (2014), provides a "conceptual framework" for understanding "the ideological and political driving forces" informing TPD goals, practices and policies (p. 694).

In his discussion of language teacher professionalism, Leung (2009) contrasts two forms of professionalism: sponsored professionalism and independent professionalism, which, according to his view, are both important to inform teachers' practices. Sponsored professionalism is the kind of professionalism that is institutionally prescribed as envisaged by authorities and teacher educators to achieve accountability and ensure quality education. To adopt Leung's words, this form of professionalism is collective in nature and is "promoted by regulatory bodies to introduce reform and/or by professional associations to advocate change" (p. 49). According to Richards' (2011) view, this form of professionalism reflects a top-down perspective that aims to achieve accountability by specifying the kind of knowledge teachers are expected to possess and the nature and quality of teaching practices.

The second form of professionalism (independent) represent teachers' own perspectives and views on the teaching process and the processes whereby they can develop their practice (see also Richards, 2011). It represents the " more individually oriented notion of professionalism" which engages teachers in continuous examination of their practice, values, beliefs and assumptions (Leung, 2009, p. 50).

These two forms of professionalism have been earlier noted by Day & Sachs' (2004) who emphasised that educational policies regarding teacher professionalism are dominated by two distinct discourses: democratic professionalism and managerial professionalism. These discourses, according to their perspective, " set the limits of what can be said, thought and done with respect to debates and initiatives which are designed to enhance the political project of teacher professionalism" (p. 5). Both discourses inform practitioners' practice and shape their professional identity. An underpinning goal of both forms of professionalism is the desire to develop teachers, refine their skills and enhance students' achievement. However, they differ greatly on how to establish their agendas (see also Sachs, 2001).

3.4.2 Professional identity

The issue of identity is significant in that it accounts for how teachers view themselves and how they conduct their roles in accordance with those views. According to Richards (2011), an important issue for a language teacher is to understand "what it means to be a language teacher" (p.4).

Richards (2008) defines teacher identity as "the differing social and cultural roles" enacted by teachers during their daily interactions (p. 167). Sachs (2001) views identity as " a set of attributes that are imposed upon the teaching profession either by outsiders or members of the teaching fraternity itself" (p. 153). Kelly (2006) defines identity as "the ways in which practitioners see themselves in response to the actions of others towards them; that is, they are the constantly changing outcomes of the iteration between how practitioners are constructed by others, and how they construct themselves, in and away from social situations" (p. 513).

Based on the identification of the two prevalent discourse on professionalism (Democratic and managerial professionalism), Sachs (2001) identified two types of teacher identities that are significantly shaped by those two discourses. These are entrepreneurial and activist identities. Entrepreneurial identity emerges from and responds to managerialist discourses. According to Sachs' view, construction of this identity is determined by "issues of accountability, economy, efficiency and effectiveness" (p.159). The activist identity, on the other hand, emerges from the democratic discourse of professionalism and flourishes in working contexts where collegial and collaborative cultures are well established. Activist professionals develop

networks and work collectively within communities of practice to achieve mutual strategic goals (see also Whitty, 2006).

As indicated by Sachs, these identity formations are not fixed. Rather, teachers at various stages of their careers negotiate and co-construct different identities. This process in her view is mediated by teachers' "own experience in schools and outside of schools as well as their own beliefs and values about what it means to be a teacher and the type of teacher they aspire to be" (p.154).

"Adaptive experts" is another type of professionals that was highlighted by Timperley (2011a) in her analysis of the concept of teachers as learners. Adaptive, here, implies a dynamic process of ongoing learning and adjustment. Adaptive experts, as explained by Timperley, are self-regulated learners who have adequate mastery of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and who also have high adaptive capacities. They are highly aware of their deeply ingrained assumptions, beliefs and values, and the way these impact on or inform their practice. Their professional knowledge is built on constant assessment and analysis of their students' needs and thus adjusting their expertise accordingly in order to be responsive to those needs. Their professional knowledge is in a state of flux and constantly changes according to the challenges facing them and their students. When routines cease to function with their students in normal situations, they appeal to their expertise for innovative alternatives. At the heart of this form of professionalism is ongoing engagement with "inquiry and knowledge-building cycles" (p.88). Professional learning rather than development is the theoretical framework underpinning this form of professionalism wherein knowledge is constructed by learners themselves through active engagement.

3.4.3 Nature of language teacher knowledge base

One of the main influences that helped shape current developments and conceptualisations of SLTE is what Richards (2008) referred to as a changed understanding of the field's essential knowledge base and affiliated instructional practices. Therefore, understanding teacher knowledge base has always been important in shaping educators' understanding of how to think of and support teacher learning (Day, 1993; Johnson; 2009a; Richards, 1998; Verloop, Van Driel & Meijer 2001). Underlying this focus on teacher knowledge is an argument emphasising that preparing teachers according to its content will ensure effective teaching and desired students' outcomes (Freeman, 2016; Richards, 1998). Therefore, a great deal of educational research, both in

general education and in SLTE (Day, 1993), has focused on understanding, conceptualising and/ or developing teacher knowledge base (Verloop, et al., 2001). This is quite normal given that decisions on how to prepare effective teachers and teaching practices are normally based on concurring conceptualisations of the body of knowledge, skills, and expertise teachers need in order to carry out their profession properly.

The concept of teacher knowledge base, according to Johnson (2009a), "reflects a widely accepted conceptions of what people need to know and are able to do to carry out the work of a particular profession" (p. 21). In SLTE this concept informs three important areas: the content knowledge or "what L2 teachers need to know," the pedagogy or "how L2 teachers should teach," and how institutions deliver content and pedagogy to teachers or "how L2 teachers learn to teach." (p. 21).

Although, a consensus on the nature of the core knowledge a second language teacher needs is lacking, attempts have been made to define what this kind of knowledge looks like (Vélez-Rendón, 2002). Careful examination of literature reveals that a number of attempts have been made to define and describe the nature and the content of the language teacher knowledge base. Different typologies and a plethora of terminologies have been proposed; the first of which centres on the types of knowledge language teachers need in their profession. Drawing on Day (1993), these can be categorised into four main types: content knowledge, pedagogic knowledge, pedagogic content knowledge, and support knowledge. Content knowledge stands for the subject matter (e.g. English language and all aspects related to it such as syntax, phenology, semantics, etc. in addition to the cultural and literary aspects of English). Pedagogic knowledge is "knowledge of generic teaching strategies, beliefs and practices, regardless of the focus of the subject matter;" and encompasses knowledge and awareness of essential teaching practices as diverse as class management, lesson planning, assessment, etc (ibid, pp. 3-4). Pedagogic content knowledge stands for the ability to present the subject matter to the students. In other words, teachers have to be cognizant of the specialised body of knowledge essential for teaching English language. Implicit in support knowledge is an understanding of "the various disciplines that inform our approach to the teaching and learning of English" (ibid, p. 4). This means that teachers have to be well aware of the different disciplines that inform and influence their approach to English language teaching and learning (e.g., linguistics, sociolinguistics, second language acquisition theories, etc.).

Another strand of research focused more on the location and sources of teacher knowledge base. Most notable of these typologies is the distinction made between “received knowledge” and “experiential knowledge” (Wallace, 1991). Received knowledge relates to findings from scientific research and experimentation and is mainly transferred to teachers via experts in the field. For example, in teacher education programs, language teachers are acquainted with some linguistic theories and second language teaching methodologies which are mainly based on research rather than practice. Experiential knowledge, on the other hand, is the kind of knowledge practitioners usually develop through their actual practice. It, therefore, addresses the role of the teacher in the process of knowledge creation (see Freeman, 2016). This kind of knowledge has been emphasized by Kumaravadivelu, (2012) as being the most important aspect of teacher knowledge. Its importance stems from the fact that it is constructed by teachers themselves and reflects their individual endeavours. It is imbedded in teachers' practice and represents the sum of their critical inquiry and thoughtful reflections on their practice (ibid).

The final distinction, which is closely related to the previous one, distinguishes between implicit and explicit knowledge (see Richards, 2008). Explicit knowledge establishes the basis of teachers' received knowledge, while implicit knowledge refers to teachers' personal beliefs, assumptions, theories and knowledge underlying their practices and constitutes the basis of the more personal and experiential knowledge (see Richards, 2008).

However, a note to be made is that the plethora of terminologies and labels pertaining to teacher knowledge in literature is a clear indication of the long-debated nature of this concept. It is also an indication of its richness, complexity and sometimes ambiguity (see Kumaravadivelu, 2012). This contested nature led many theorists and educators to call for a reconceptualisation of teacher knowledge base in a way that captures this complexity and avoids oversimplification. Freeman & Johnson (1998) for instance, were among the pioneers who called for “a broader epistemological view” of SLTE that is connected to the act of teaching itself and values both the personal and the social. Therefore, an ideal framework for the knowledge base of a second language teacher needs to address three interrelated elements: “the teacher learner, the social context, and the pedagogical process” (406). Such a framework, as they argue, more appropriately captures the complex sociocultural contexts wherein the activities of teaching and learning take place.

3.4.4 Imparting knowledge to teachers

The evolving understandings of the content, location, and the sources of teacher knowledge base (see section 3.4.3) underpin how that knowledge could be imparted to teachers. Therefore, this section, presents two complementary and sometimes conflicting views of how knowledge can be imparted to teachers: *training* and *development*. While teacher education stands for the overall process of teacher learning, teacher training and development are two broad different approaches through which teacher learning can occur (Freeman, 1989, 2016). Although, they share the same purpose, these perspectives represent two distinct conceptualisations of how teachers learn; and much of recent educational reform initiatives with regards to TPD are caught between these two perspectives. The following table provides a general overview of the main characteristics of both constructs:

Training perspective	Development perspective
Top-down control.	Bottom-up and collaborative decision making
Learning is behaviourist	Learning is constructivist.
knowledge is external.	Knowledge is social, experiential and local.
One-size-fits-all techniques.	Tailor-made techniques.
Remedial approach.	A growth-driven approach.
Decontextualized.	Context-sensitive.
One-shot.	Long-term.
Fixed methods.	Multiple and varied methods.
Pedagogical instruction.	Androgogical instruction.
Lack of proper follow-up and evaluation.	Continuous support and assessment.
Subject-centered.	Life-centered.

Table (2): Training vs. Development adopted from (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004).

3.4.4.1 Training

The training model has been the most dominant form of TPD in recent years (Kennedy,2005). Teacher learning within a training perspective is compatible with the behaviourist model of learning which normally focuses on building specific skills. Training, according to Freeman (1989), is a direct intervention strategy, whereby discrete chunks of knowledge and skills are transmitted to teachers via external expertise; the mastery of which, it is presumed, improves teachers' competence and effectiveness.

According to Richards & Farrell (2005) training refers to the kind of activities closely linked to professionals' current responsibility and is normally focused on short-term and

immediate goals. Institutions normally conduct training to "introduce the methodological choices available and to familiarise trainees with the range of terms and concepts that are the 'common currency' of language teachers" (Mann, 2005, p.104). The value of this model lies in its ability to present new kinds of knowledge to practitioners and to raise their awareness of certain educational phenomena (see Kennedy,2005; Timperley, 2008). It also gives practitioners an opportunity to consider their existing practice from a new perspective. This is basically based on the assumption that teachers' existing beliefs and assumptions about teaching and learning may constrain their growth and obstruct their innovation (Timperley, 2008). Training is also a good technique to implement large-scale educational reform (Hayes & Chang, 2012; Richards, & Farrell, 2005). However, it is more effective at establishing its aims if built on teachers' actual needs and models practically the behaviours teachers are expected to implement (Hayes & Chang, 2012).

However, training has been heavily criticised for maintaining a narrow view of teaching and learning (Kennedy,2005). Training is normally top-down in nature and supports a "skills-based" model of teacher education where content is delivered to teachers by outside experts with an aim of updating their skills so that their competence is improved (Kennedy,2005). It is also compatible with a "standards-based" view of teacher education wherein the focus is on standardisation and coherence to ensure that teachers' performance is in agreement with national standards (Kennedy,2005). Furthermore, training tends to reflect a deficit model of TPD (Lieberman, 1995; Sandholtz, 2002). Deficits in teachers' knowledge and skills are traditionally determined by external experts, thus leaving teachers as objects rather than subjects of their TPD (Huberman & Guskey, 1995). In addition, the training model offers a perspective that is compatible with a techinicist view of teacher education (Craft, 2000). Teachers, according to this perspective, are reduced to passive technicians or knowledge transmitters whose primary duty is to implement educational reform as envisaged by the educational authority (Kumaravaddivelu, 2003; Benson, 2001). Lastly, training has been criticised for its inability to satisfactorily bridge the gap between theory and practice as well as between what teachers learn and the realities of their classrooms because it normally takes place in a decontextualised manner (see Kennedy, 2005).

3.4.4.2 Development

The growing acceptance of teaching as a distinct profession that is dynamic, and complex coupled with the acknowledged limitations of traditional approaches to TPD led many educationists to shift their thinking from training to development (Villegas-Reimers

2003; Broad & Evans, 2006; Mitchell, 2013). In search for a paradigm that suits the complexity of the teaching profession, teacher educators drew upon theoretical models derived from concurrent advancements in cognitivism and constructivism. This gave rise to the growth paradigm (Huberman & Guskey, 1995) or the aspirational model of teacher education (Day & Sachs; 2004) which shifted the focus of TPD approaches from a top-down perspective to a more bottom-up approach, that acknowledges the centrality and importance of teachers' experiences and ways of knowing to their development, wherein teachers are seen as active learners who initiate and design their own development activities based on their contexts (Crandall & Christison, 2016).

Thus, the growth paradigm is seen as a countervailing model to conventional approaches to TPD (Huberman & Guskey, 1995). It consists of a variety of site-based, situated, and interactive professional learning opportunities including but not limited to, inquiry, reflection, mentoring, coaching, observation, collaboration, partnerships, networking and CoP. External expertise plays a minor or no role in the creation or direction of these learning events and schools are acknowledged as legitimate learning sites (Smylie, 1995; Huberman & Guskey, 1995). In addition, the role of the teacher is highly emphasised within this model of learning whereby he/she is being viewed as an active participant engaged in concrete tasks immediately related to his/her classroom practices (Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Lieberman, 1995; Timperley, 2011).

3.5 Factors impacting and shaping TPD

According to Opfer and Pedder (2011a), a significant amount of research has focused on elements and process of effective forms of TPD that are expected to improve teachers' instructional practices and lead to improved students' achievement. This rather simplistic conceptualisation was neither able to account for how teachers actually learn from TPD opportunities (Borko, 2004) nor the conditions which encourage/ discourage teacher learning (Opfer & Pedder, 2011a).

In addition, success of TPD opportunities, according to Hayes and Chang (2012), only partially depends on the teacher himself; meaning that other important aspects have to be considered when exploring effectiveness and success. Therefore, this section explores and addresses some important considerations that have deep implications for the nature of teacher professionalism, types of teacher learning, teachers' engagement with TPD opportunities, teachers' understandings of TPD and their perceptions of themselves and

their roles as well. Emphasis has been on forces closely linked to macro conditions, the school factor, the individual teacher, and the learning activity (see O'Connell, 2010; Opfer and Pedder, 2011a; Avalos, 2011).

3.5.1 Macro conditions

Several important issues are included under this concept. These include policy implications, reform agendas, and teachers' roles and working conditions (see Avalos, 2011).

Teacher educational programs rest on educational policies that shape and guide practice (Bernier & McClelland, 1989; Bolam & McMahon, 2004). Educational policies within which schools and professional operate make a big difference to how professional learning is conceptualised and provided (Timperley, 2011a). Therefore, effectiveness might be reduced by conflicting policies and learning approaches inconsistent with how people actually learn (ibid).

According to Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995) educational policies explicitly or implicitly send messages about how schools should function and how teachers are valued and rewarded. Therefore, reform initiatives that intend to bring about effective change in teachers' practices may not thrive if they are embedded in policies that conflict with the vision of practice the reform intends to achieve. Many institutionalised practices may prevent a transformation of teachers' practice. These may include standardised tests, prescriptive curricula, mandated textbooks, teacher evaluation measures, just to name a few. In Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin's (1995) words, these practices and the policies that sustain them "create incentives to continue traditional forms of teaching"(602). Therefore, a shift towards new conceptions and practices of teaching and learning require a supportive policy that conceives of teachers as life-long learners and of schools as learning institutions (ibid).

Furthermore, trends in TPD and views regarding this process tend to be affected by how teachers' roles are being conceived by their educational systems (see Blackman, 1989; Johnston,2003). Teachers tend to be viewed by educational authorities as either technicians or educators. Technicians are normally perceived as mere implementers of enforced educational packages. Educators, on the other hand, are informed by educational policies, however, they can reinterpret them according to the reality of their contexts and actual needs of their students (Blackman, 1989). This debate is typically reflected in the

training-development distinction which reflects the deeply rooted value placed on the teacher himself/herself and on his/her role in the process of learning (see Johnston, 2003).

In my view, based on the above, fostering an image of the teacher as a professional educator whose roles go far beyond the implementation of classroom instructional methods to that of a change agent who is constantly looking for innovative ways of teaching and who is responsible for setting goals for his/her own development is a necessity in today's educational landscape. Indeed, this has been confirmed by Blackman (1989) who stated that changing the view of teachers from being technicians to being professionals brings considerable changes to the focus of TPD agendas, broaden its scope and even changes the sources of TPD agendas.

3.5.2 The individual teacher

Although organisations have their own professional needs that have to be satisfied by TPD agendas, learning is still an individual undertaking that is subject to teachers' personal beliefs, orientations, prior experiences, motivations, priorities, and their career stages (Opfer & Pedder, 2011a; Villegas-Reimers, 2003; West-Burnham & O'Sullivan 1998). The intersection and confluence of these factors have implications on teachers' decisions about their learning (Opfer & Pedder, 2011a).

The significance of the construct of beliefs in determining and shaping teachers' actions, orientations, dispositions, and decision-making processes is well-documented in literature (Borg, 2011; Kumaravadivelu, 2012); and the failure to recognise them in implementing educational change might lead to frustrating results (Anders & Richardson, 1994). Research indicates that teachers bring former experiences and beliefs to the processes of learning and teaching (see Opfer & Pedder, 2011a). Such beliefs not only impact on the way they teach, but on their orientation to learning as well (ibid). Teachers' tacit beliefs and implicit theories might be at odds with what educational experts and administrators want and expect to achieve, and this might restrict the effectiveness of TPD agendas (Anders & Richardson, 1994).

Furthermore, studies on teacher motivation, commitment, and satisfaction also emphasise that such factors are important in determining teacher learning and its potential translation into good practice (see Ololube, 2006; Timperley, 2011b; West-Burnham & O'Sullivan 1998). The impact of these critical issues on teachers' performance is strong (Ololube, 2006). Gemeda and Tynjälä (2015), for instance, found out that the main motivational

challenges which often discourage teachers from participation in TPD are underpayment and the absence of a link between teacher performance and reward. Intensification of teachers' work is another contextual factor that influences and shapes teachers' beliefs, working lives, professional identity and professionalism (see Hasan; 2015). Many signs of this intensification appear in many forms in teachers' daily practices including, for example, higher expectations from teachers, mounting accountability demands, increasing institutional demands, teachers' administrative work, diversification of teachers' roles, stress, and lack of time (see Hargreaves, 1994). Alshahrani's (2010) study of English language teachers' beliefs and perceptions about TPD at Al-Jubail English Language School in the KSA showed that heavy workloads were among of the main problems that restricted participants' involvement in TPD activities. Students' overall achievement has also been found to be one of the main motivating factors for teachers to continue to grow and excel (Addison & Brundrett, 2008, cited in Feng, 2010). Teachers' attitudes and perceptions might only be changed if they see clear evidence that their students' outcomes have improved (see Guskey; 2002).

3.5.3 The School factor

The environments wherein teachers carry out their practices strongly influence teachers' approach to and engagement with TPD (Timperley, 2011a). Schools are the workplace contexts where teachers are based and where the teaching process takes place. For this reason, the school factor has been singled out as one of the main factors that could determine the extent to which TPD agendas and activities fulfil their potential. Therefore, important issues such as the school capacity, structure, organisation, and culture are essential in developing any conception of TPD (see Hargreaves, 1994; Merriam, & Brockett, 2007; Opfer & Pedder, 2011a, 2011b).

The influence of school cultures, for instance, on teachers' practices, decisions, and teaching styles is well documented in literature (Forde et al., 2006; Hargreaves, 1994; Peterson & Deal, 1998; Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). According to Diaz-Maggioli (2004), school cultures are responsible for how teachers view themselves, their relationships with their colleagues, and their institution as well. A given school culture, according to her perspective, can either encourage or suppress teacher learning and development. Without the presence of a supportive culture, educational reform may not achieve its intended goals (see Peterson & Deal, 1998).

When talking about school culture, I mean the overall practices within the school. This includes the set of norms, beliefs, perceptions, values, and traditions developed overtime within the school as the staff works together, solves problems together, and face challenges together (see Hargreaves, 1994; Peterson & Deal, 1998). More specifically, Hargreaves (1994), defines teaching cultures as the "beliefs, values, habits and assumed ways of doing things among communities of teachers who have had to deal with similar demands and constraints over many years" (p. 165). These issues provide a framework for how people think and perform within organizations. Their effect is highly noticeable on the way teachers perceive their professional duties, their preferred teaching styles and strategies, their interaction with colleagues, and the situated forms of TPD they engage with (see Avalos, 2011; Hargreaves,1994; Sato and Kleinsasser, 2004).

Peterson & Deal (1998) warn of toxic school cultures wherein the general atmosphere is dominated by negativity, unproductivity, hopelessness, and frustration. These are kinds of cultures wherein some staff members are often "disgruntled" and stand in the face of innovation and constructive reform initiatives (ibid). In contrast to this negative image, there are also some schools dominated by positive cultures wherein all staff members work collaboratively and collegially towards that achievement of mutual goals in an environment that supports and encourages innovation, continuous learning, and celebrates students' achievement (ibid).

3.5.3.1 School leadership

Creating and sustaining conditions within schools that foster and support best practices in TPD such as encouraging collaboration, collegiality, learning communities, and networking need organisational and administrative support (see Opfer & Pedder, 2011b; Avalos, 2011). The presence of a supportive administration is among the key factors of modern conceptions and realisations of effective TPD (Hayes & Chang, 2012; Richardson, 2003; Timperley, 2011a). School administrators' roles, according to Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995), have to be structured in ways that support teacher learning and growth.

Therefore, the role played by leadership in the success of educational change cannot be underestimated (see Hayes & Chang, 2012; Reimer, 2010). It could be argued that all current reform initiatives that are directed to the improvement of teaching and learning at schools depend in their success to a large extent on "the motivations and capacities of local leadership" (Leithwood et al, 2004, p. 4). Therefore, the effectiveness of the school

leadership, according to Fullan (2002), is instrumental for large-scale reform implementation.

The school leader is a key factor in creating, shaping and sustaining school cultures. Their roles in determining these cultures is pervasive (see Peterson & Deal, 1998). They are models and their language, behaviour and accomplishments are all important in fostering change, innovation, and success (ibid). In addition to his responsibility of evaluating staff, the head teacher is also committed to the creation and sustaining of an effective and positive growth-oriented context that is conducive to teacher learning and student success (Blackman, 1989; Diaz-Maggioli, 2004). Effective head teachers are also committed to sending positive messages to the teaching staff, through their attitude towards them, that they are respected as competent professionals whose knowledge and skills are highly valued (see Blackman, 1989).

3.5.4 The learning activity

The learning activity, according to Opfer & Pedder (2011a), is a complex system that has to be reckoned with in discussions about TPD. The nature of the TPD activities made available to teachers, for instance, play a major role in the effectiveness of this process (ibid) and how teachers interact with it (see Raza, 2010; Assalahi, 2016). Unless teachers see a real value in what they do or a real enhancement to their practice, their interaction with the TPD activity might be restricted (Evans, 2008). Although the concept of effectiveness might seem simplistic to some researchers as discussed in section (3.3.2), literature emphasizes that seeing TPD as an ongoing process that engages teachers in active learning opportunities grounded in their context and responsive to their immediate needs within a community of learners leads to a long-lasting effect on teachers' knowledge, skills and classroom practice (Craft, 2000; Desimone, 2009; Ganser, 2000; Guskey, 2003; ; Hayes, & Chang, 2012; Timperley, 2008).

3.6 Studies on language teacher professional development

Although TPD has been well-researched in general education literature (see O'Connell, 2010; Wan, 2011), there is still a dearth of literature on how in-service EFL teachers perceive and experience this process. While most of the studies that have looked at TPD among language teachers have been conducted at higher education institutions (see Al-Ghatrifi, 2016; Assalahi, 2016; Raza, 2010), I was able to find a few studies that examine EFL teachers' perspectives and experiences of in-service TPD at K-12 education (see Al-

Lamki, 2009). Therefore, this section presents a summary of some of the key studies that have been informative to the development of my own research.

The first study was conducted by Al-Lamki (2009) to explore the beliefs and practices of Omani English language teachers with regards to their CPD. The researcher used a mixed method approach to identify the main CPD activities teachers engage with and their stated beliefs about their learning. The majority of teachers described CPD as an on-going learning process. Teachers agreed unanimously on the importance of CPD to their practices with the majority emphasising its value in improving their teaching performance, language skills, and self-confidence. Teachers' reports implied that they valued formal training course more than other types of CPD. Language training courses were rated as the most important element in teachers' CPD. The study also detailed CPD activities that have been practiced by teachers before and after the educational reform in Oman. Formal courses dominated teachers' reflections about CPD prior to the reform. However, teachers reported varied CPD activities after the reform including conferences, peer observation, workshops, meetings, seminars, visits, reading and the internet. Results showed that the focus of the formal courses has shifted from improving language to improving teaching methods after the reform. The study stressed a need for language courses which are currently missing from the current CPD system in Oman. It also highlighted some of the main obstacles to CPD as reported by teachers including lack of time and coordination, workload, lack of materials and facilities; in addition to administrative difficulties.

Raza (2010) used individual and focus group interviews to explore the CPD of expatriate EFL teachers employed in federal universities in the United Arab Emirates. The focus was on teachers' understanding of CPD, the kinds of CPD activities they engage with and the factors that impact on their choices. The study was significant in that it managed to show the complex relationship between teachers' understandings and preferences of CPD and their institutional setting. CPD was mostly perceived by participants as the acquisition of specific skills related to context requirements through institutional training with an aim of improving teacher effectiveness. The study revealed that development agendas are institutionally imposed with total disregard of teachers' voices and needs. As a result, teachers reacted against all forms of institutionalised CPD and searched for alternative sources of development. This led teachers to create self-initiated CoP to cater for their TPD needs. However, interestingly despite this situation, participants still value institutional CPD activities and see it as one of the main venues of their development

alongside the actual practice of teaching. What was interesting in this study was the complex interplay between teachers' preferences of CPD activities and other institutional and personal factors. Some of these were lack of support, workloads, annual performance evaluation pressures, lack of awareness of teachers' actual needs, inapplicability of CPD to the context and to teachers' career phases, and personal commitments.

Another study conducted by Assalahi (2016) to investigate TESOL teachers' perspectives on their TPD at a Saudi university. Although some of Reza's (2010) results were duplicated in Assalahi's study, it is still significant and unique because it looked closely and critically at the state of TPD in the Saudi context although at a higher educational institution. However, given that higher education institutions and the public education sector work under the same umbrella in our country, the study was valuable to me as it managed to bring to the surface some hidden aspects about how TPD is currently managed and experienced in KSA. Findings showed that teachers overwhelmingly had negative views about TPD in their workplace. Emerging themes showed a complex dynamic of conflicting discourses at three different levels: the micro, meso and macro levels. Data showed that the kind of TPD teachers receive was top-down within a culture of compliance. As a result, teachers feel professionally compromised, and without voice and autonomy. The culture of compliance within which teachers operate generated a culture of mistrust that had severe consequences on teacher communities and collaboration. The study also managed to shed some light on a number of factors that affected teachers' attitude towards TPD.

Although conducted in general education Wan's (2011) study was useful in shedding some light of how teachers conceive of TPD and the nature of activities teacher participate in for development purposes. The study was conducted in three Hong Kong primary schools using a mixed method approach to explore teachers' perceptions regarding their CPD. The majority of participants identified CPD as a route to secure the job or get promotion, as a continuous update of knowledge and skills, and as a way of sharing and collaboration for learning. Findings also showed that neither traditional nor alternative forms of TPD dominated teachers' choice as they expressed interest in both. However, the top five CPD activities for teachers were attending conferences, peer observation, higher academic study, formal learning, and school-based projects. The researcher used "Teacher Competencies Framework" to identify teachers' professional needs. Results showed that teachers had the highest urgent need for Student Development domain for their TPD. Updating subject matter knowledge and searching for new knowledge was

also highly emphasized by participants as being urgently needed. Other aspects such as school development and professional relationships and services were perceived as being the least urgently needed TPD strand. Teachers were obviously concerned with their teaching and student development rather than policy issues. The study found out that heavy workload, time constraints, school and TPD provider factors, as well as personal factors were the main factors affecting teachers' participation in TPD.

The above-mentioned studies have contributed to my research. Each of which has its value and contribution. However, they have their own limitations and contextual specificity as well. Raza's (2010) study, as mentioned above, was conducted in a higher educational institution with an expatriate population some of whom were fluent speakers of English. This was also the case with Assalahi's (2016) study who approached this phenomenon in a different educational setting. Although, Assalahi's use of the three-dimensional conceptual framework was helpful in producing a deep understanding of teachers' engagement with TPD activities, I do believe that it also worked as a constraining factor and produced a rather vague and dim picture of TPD in our context. The focus of his study, in my view, was more on problematisation rather than on how teachers actually perceive, engage, and experience this complex phenomenon. Wan's (2011) study was important in that it showed me how K-12 teachers experience and engage with TPD in a different educational setting. However, given the specificity of the Saudi context and the nature of the study's population, Wan's study might not account for nor produce a similar image of how TPD is managed and conducted in our educational context. Al-Lamki's (2009) study was, as explained above, one of the few studies that have explored language teachers' beliefs and perceptions in a general educational setting. However, Al-Lamki's main concern was with comparing perceptions before and after the implementation of the educational reform in Oman. In addition, the study's choice of participants was problematic to me as it only concentrated on experienced teachers who were diploma holders and who have done the Leeds BA TESOL programme. This issue, in my opinion, produced only a partial image as it neglected how other less experienced teachers might have experienced and perceived TPD.

On the other hand, a quick survey of educational literature in our context reveals that the issues of TPD and professionalism among EFL teachers serving at public schools haven't been given due credit as I argued in my introduction. While there are some theoretical and small-scale studies that have referred to the problematic nature of the language teacher preparation and development in the Saudi general educational context (see; Al-

Hazmi, 2003; Al-Harbi, 2006; Al-Seghayer, 2011 & 2014), to the best of my knowledge, this study will be the first that deals with the issue of TPD among Saudi EFL teachers empirically and in a detailed manner through participants' own perspectives. Doing so will hopefully enable me to develop an insider perspective into how EFL teachers perceive and experience a complex phenomenon as TPD in a top-down educational context that is not-supportive, exclusionary, and deterministic in nature.

In addition, it is also apparent that EFL teachers' views and perspectives of their TPD, their own definition of this concept, their problems and concerns, their actual needs, their attitudes to learning and their role in their development has received little attention too in our context. Moreover, teachers' voice in educational reform with regards to their TPD choices and provisions, the general shape of their professionalism, and whether they are aware of the many possible resource of TPD at their disposal are among the main issues that haven't been given due consideration in our educational literature. Therefore, my study might be significant in that it attempts to fill this gap and brings to light a fresh insight into the above-mentioned themes.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter I have reviewed current research with regards to TPD. The chapter started by providing an outline of how TPD is being conceptualised. It has shown that TPD is far from being unproblematic as this process is underpinned by numerous theoretical positions. It also attempted to define TPD and position this thesis with regards to the numerous conceptualisations outlined. The chapter also highlighted the conflicting discourses of professionalism, the nature of language teacher knowledge base, and the two dominant approaches to impart knowledge to teachers. The chapter also addressed some of the factors that have deep implications for the nature of teacher professionalism, types of teacher learning, and teachers' engagement with TPD opportunities. Furthermore, the chapter presented a summary of some of the key studies that have been informative to the development of my own research. The following chapter discusses the methodological underpinnings that guided my thesis.

Chapter Four: Research Design and Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design employed to investigate Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences with regards to their TPD. It recounts in detail how answers to the research questions posed in Chapter One are developed. It starts by a discussion of the paradigmatic position including the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning the study. After that, it discusses the study's methodology and the data collection methods employed. Then it outlines data collection procedures including sampling and piloting. This is followed by describing data analysis, research quality and the ethical considerations.

4.2 Paradigmatic position

Social reality can be approached and explored in a number of different ways in educational research. Positivism, interpretivism and critical inquiry are three distinctive paradigms of how reality can be approached in the social sciences (Cohen et al., 2007; Willis, 2007;). The exact number of paradigms and the particular names associated with each of them vary considerably from one author to another. However, the three abovementioned paradigms are generally accepted by theorists as the main philosophical positions assumed by educational researchers (Willis, 2007). Each of these paradigms have a distinctive conceptualisation of social reality and how that reality can be approached and understood (Cohen et al., 2007).

Paradigms can be thought of as the philosophical assumptions that underlie a research project (Creswell, 2013) and work as organising frameworks for social researchers (Grix, 2004). According to Creswell (2003) and Grix (2004), paradigms represent the researcher's implicit assumptions about what and how he will learn about something in his inquiry. Willis (2007) define a paradigm as "a comprehensive belief system, world view, or framework that guides research and practice in a field" (p.8). Maykut and Morehouse (1994) see the paradigm as " a set of overarching and interconnected assumptions about the nature of reality" (p. 4). In line with these definitions, Maxwell (2005) sees paradigms as "philosophical positions" that incorporate different conceptions of social reality and how one can "gain knowledge of it" (p. 36).

My study is premised on the interpretive paradigm as I intend to explore and understand TPD by studying the social meanings Saudi EFL teachers ascribe to it. One of my aims is to draw a holistic picture of the complexity of TPD in our context through teachers' understandings and personal experiences; and this process involves going to the natural setting and reporting multiple perspective on this issue. This is typical of what interpretive researchers normally seek in their research (Creswell, 2013). Interpretive researchers often conduct research with an aim of reporting participants' multiple realities of the phenomenon being investigated. This entails studying the lived experiences of the participants and the social meanings they often associated with the phenomenon (ibid).

The interpretive paradigm began as a countermovement to positivism and is sometimes called the constructivist or the naturalistic approach by some theorists (Creswell, 1994). Contrary to positivism, the dominant paradigm in many educational contexts including our own, which adopts the natural scientific model to measure social phenomena, the interpretive paradigm places too much importance on "the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants" (Bryman, 2012, p. 380).

Interpretive research is based on the ontological assumption that "the world does not exist independently of our knowledge of it" (Grix, 2004, p. 83). Based on this assumption, meaning and social reality are socially constructed through social interaction (ibid). Interpretive researchers are not detached from their subjects. Rather, they view themselves as being part of the social reality under investigation (ibid). Reality and knowledge according to this conception is socially constructed through interaction between the researcher and the researched in their natural setting (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

To sum up, the goal of this research is to rely on the participants' points of view; their own interpretations of the phenomenon under investigation through their lived experiences, and this can be served by the interpretive approach to educational research (Creswell, 2003). The main ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning my approach to this study are constructivism and subjectivism.

4.2.1 Ontological and epistemological assumptions

The ontological and epistemological assumptions of a researcher determine his methodological choices and the subsequent choice of approaches and methods (Grix,

2004). These assumptions are also vital in shaping the theoretical perspective adopted by researchers. In addition to methodology, these underlying beliefs shape the researcher's view of the world and the way he/she engages with it (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). Therefore, addressing these issues thoroughly and extensively is important in educational research.

Ontology in Grix's (2004) point of view is the starting point in research and stands for "the way in which we view the world" (p.171). This concept concerns the very form and nature of social reality itself (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The key question in the ontological assumptions is: "What is the nature of reality?" (Maykut and Morehouse,1994, p. 3). According to Krauss (2005) ontology refers to the "underlying belief system of the researcher" (p.759). In Creswell's (2003) words, ontology represents the researchers' assumptions about what knowledge is. Therefore, ontological assumptions entail certain implicit beliefs about the nature of reality and what can be known about it (Creswell, 2013; Crotty, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Constructivism and realism are two examples that represent different worldviews. The former is consistent with the interpretive tradition of social research and asserts that reality is socially constructed through interaction, while the other is positivist in nature and asserts that reality is independent and exists outside human mind (Crotty, 1998). In addition, the interpretive paradigm "assumes a relativist ontology" which acknowledges the presence of multiple realities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). The positivist ontology on the other hand sees social reality as objective and external to individuals (see Cohen et al. 2007).

The concepts which I intend to investigate in this study are not among the variables that can be quantified and objectively measured. I am looking for teachers' subjective experiences and socially constructed meanings; and this approach reflects an interpretive ontology. An interpretive researcher views reality as subjective, socially constructed, experientially based and shared among the research subjects themselves (Creswell, 1994; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This worldview acknowledges the presence of multiple realities on social phenomena and holds that all those realities are worthwhile and valid (Creswell, 1994).

The word epistemology is of Greek origin (episteme) and stands for the theory of knowledge (Grix, 2004; Krauss, 2005). The epistemological considerations of a given research, according to Grix (2004), are based on "beliefs about the nature of knowledge" (p.166). However, the term epistemology is generally used in literature to refer to the

relationship between the researcher and what is being researched (Creswell, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). And according to Guba and Lincoln (1994) answering epistemological questions is almost always constrained by the ontological position assumed by the researcher. Subjectivism and objectivism are two examples of epistemology. A realist ontology, for example, entails "objective detachment" on the part of the researcher in order to discover that reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Epistemologically speaking, the interpretive researcher does not believe that reality is independent of his subjects, and that the researcher should remain distant from those being researched (Creswell, 1994). Interpretive researchers are subjective in their assessment of any given situation. They strive to minimise any type of distance between them and their research subjects. Thus, they interact with their participants in their natural settings to co-construct reality and produce research findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This interaction takes many forms. It could be achieved by living with participants for extended periods of time, observing them, or just collaborate with them in order to produce authentic documentation and interpretation of what is being researched (Creswell, 1994). Therefore, I do presume that my aims and assumptions are consistent with the interpretive epistemology.

My epistemological assumptions entail understanding the topic through individuals' subjective views (Creswell's, 2013). To achieve this end, I have to get as close as possible to the research subjects in their natural setting in order to better understand their subjective realities (Creswell, 2013). In my view, this process is important because it minimises the potential of "objective separateness" between the researcher and the researched (Creswell, 2013, p. 20).

4.3 Methodology

I am interested in exploring and documenting teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences with regards to their TPD in the Saudi context. This process entails capturing teachers' personal meanings, feelings, emotions and authentic experiences. To achieve this goal, I have decided to use a qualitative research design. This choice is guided by my philosophical assumptions and beliefs which are consistent with the interpretive framework as discussed above (see Creswell, 2013). Achieving my aims involves going to the natural setting and reporting teachers' multiple perspective and personal experiences on these issues. This is typical of what qualitative researchers normally seek in their research (Creswell, 2013).

Qualitative researchers look at the world through participants' perspectives and try to understand it through their own construction (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This type of inquiry is concerned with discovery rather than proof. It seeks to understand social phenomena in context by understanding the lived experiences of people (Krauss, 2005). This tradition, in critics' opinions, produce knowledge that is both deep in nature and grounded in participants' personal experiences (Grix ,2004; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

This methodological choice proved to be the best option to serve my purpose as it enabled me to explore and understand this phenomenon from within. Thus, I was given an insider perspective into the research focus (Dörnyei, 2007). Using a qualitative approach, I was able to access the participants in their natural settings; and thus, document their lived experiences and personal meanings through their own eyes (see Kvale, 2007). According to Creswell (2013) qualitative designs are often used to produce reports that reveal personal experiences and genuine thoughts and reflections. Qualitative research is interested in exploring life as it is experienced by people in their natural setting. This approach is very sensitive to participants' perspectives, lived experiences and personal meanings. It often develops rich research reports that reflect the complexity of the social life as experienced by the research subjects (Woods, 2006). Furthermore, this methodological choice also gave me a good chance to seek multiple perspectives and to produce thick data that is both rich in details and grounded in teachers' context (Willis, 2007; Woods, 2006).

Another feature that caught my attention about qualitative research is its interest in processes rather than products. This feature, according to Woods (2006), gives researchers the ability to emphasise procedural issues such as how understandings are constructed, how roles and meanings are socially negotiated, and how policies are produced and enacted.

4.3.1 Exploratory research

A qualitative exploratory research design was chosen for this study which supports my general aim of investigating teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences regarding their TPD. Exploratory research designs are useful in situations where the phenomenon under investigation is not clearly defined or adequately investigated (Reiter, 2013; Stebbins, 2001). This research design is premised on the assumption that "all inquiry is

tentative; that reality is, in part, socially constructed; that researchers are part of the reality they analyze; and that the words and categories we use to explain reality grow out of our own minds and not out of reality" (Reiter, 2013, p. 3). This kind of research can be very reliable if designed in a systematic, structured, transparent, self-aware and honest way (ibid). It also requires a high degree of reflexivity to be rigorous. Therefore, the researcher's biases, perceptions, theoretical frameworks, previous convictions have all to be taken into consideration while designing and implementing an exploratory piece of research (ibid). For effective exploration, researchers using this research design have to approach their area with two important orientations: "flexibility" and "open-mindedness" about where and how to find data (Stebbins, 2001, p. 7).

Given the discussion above, choosing this research design was highly beneficial as TPD of language teachers at Saudi public schools has, to the best of my knowledge, not been explored or clearly defined through teachers' perspectives. It was also consistent with my ontological and epistemological positions which stresses the context-specific nature of reality. In addition, this choice was also informed by my awareness of my "situatedness" as a researcher (Reiter, 2013, p. 9).

4.4 Data collection method

One of the basic assumptions implicit in my approach to this study is that participants' perceptions and perspectives on the phenomenon under investigation should be told as participants view it and experience it themselves (Marshall & Rossman,1995). To achieve this purpose, I decided to use the in-depth interview as the main data collection instrument in this research project. According to Marshall & Rossman (1995), in-depth interviewing is one of the main research methods that qualitative researchers extensively rely on (see also Punch, 2009). Therefore, this choice is consistent with my qualitative design. In addition, two other research methods (reflective essays and WhatsApp) were also employed as can be seen in this section.

4.4.1 In-depth interviewing

The data of a qualitative piece of research consists mainly of people's words and/or actions and therefore require a research instrument that gives the research the ability to capture both constructs (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). In-depth interviewing is one of the few instruments that allow researchers to capture both participants' language and

actions (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). According to Seidman (1998), interviewing is "a powerful way to gain insight into educational issues through understanding the experience of the individuals whose lives constitute education" (p. 7). The value of this method lies in its ability to let researchers go far "beyond surface talk to a rich discussion of thoughts and feelings" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.80). An essential benefit of this research method is its ability to reveal the world through participants' points of view and capture their lived experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

The interview is simply defined in literature as "a conversation with a purpose" and this purpose is definitely to collect information about a particular social phenomenon (Berg, 2009; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Kvale (2007) define it as a form of conversation where interviewer and interviewees interact to generate knowledge. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) emphasize this view and add to it the idea that the interview is in fact an "inter view" into a particular social phenomenon where the interviewer and the interviewee interact to construct knowledge (p. 2). It is also a process of guided questioning and careful listening for the purpose of obtaining deep knowledge that is often situated in natural contexts and emanates from real experiences.

The interview is one of the most important research instruments that can help delve deeper into unique personal experiences (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). This method enables researchers to understand social phenomena from within and this issue is essential to get an in- depth perspective into the research focus (Cohen et al, 2007). It is through the interview that we know about people's personal lives, their constructed meanings, their understandings of the world, the meanings of their behaviours, and their feelings and hopes (Kvale, 2007). One of the main values of the interview lies in its ability to let the phenomenon under investigation unfolds through the participants own understanding as they view it and not as the research view it (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). It also gives participants the chance to make explicit their implicit and tacit feelings, perceptions and understandings of things (Arksey & Knight, 1999).

Interviewing is also remarkable for its flexibility and this makes it one of the few data collection instruments that can be adapted to serve a wide range of research situations (Punch, 2009). The interview is also acknowledged for its ability to yield large amount of data from many participants in a very short time (Marshall & Rossman,1995). It also a very good technique to capture participants' perceptions, meanings and interpretations of social phenomena (Berg, 2009). Punch (2009) emphasizes this saying that the

interview is “a very good way of accessing people’s perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality” (p. 144).

This methodological choice gave me a better chance to seek teachers' perceptions and opinions regarding the phenomenon under consideration (Cohen et al, 2007). It also gave room for teachers' voices and opinions to be heard and this was part of my main agenda. In addition, this methodological choice offered me a better chance to engage with teachers and negotiate with them the particulars of my research in details. Thus, I was offered a chance to establish one of the main goals of this inquiry (i.e., hearing teachers’ voices and raising their awareness).

Using in-depth interviews in qualitative studies has many advantages over other research methods. Denscombe (2007) listed a number of advantages of using interviews that other data collection methods would not provide. These include:

1- Depth of information: the interview provides researchers with an opportunity to investigate topics in depth and in detail.
2- Insights: data gathered via this method provide rich and deep insights on social phenomena that other methods can't provide.
3- Equipment: the equipment required to conduct interviews are simple and affordable.
4- Participants' priorities: data yielded by interviews are normally based on participants' priorities, ideas and perspectives. The interview allows participants to develop their ideas, explain their perspectives and identify key factors.
5- Flexibility: within this method, researchers can make adjustments to their inquiry during the course of the interview.
6- Validity: the interviewer normally meets face to face with informants, and this means that data can be checked for accuracy and relevance during the time of their collection.
7- Higher response rate: interviews are normally prearranged and scheduled for a convenient time and location and this guarantees higher response rates.
8- Therapeutic: the interview has a more personal element to it. Compared with other methods, people seem to enjoy the interview as it provides them with an opportunity to talk extensively about their views to a person whose aim is to listen uncritically to what they have to say. And this can be quite rewarding for participants. (pp. 202-203).

4.4.1.1 Design of the interview employed in this study

Of all interview types available in literature I have decided to employ the semi- structured interview in this study. The semi-structured interview, according to Arksey and Knight (1999), is the most widely used type of interviewing. It is a kind of interviewing that is half way between structured and unstructured interviews. This type of interviewing loosely follows a research guide consisting of the key questions and the main topics that are to be discussed with the potential interviewees. Although the researcher should carefully prepare a set of themes or topics to be explored, this type of interviewing is open and allows new ideas to be brought up during the interview depending on what interviewees say (Denscombe,2007). It allows both the researcher and the researched some degree of freedom to elaborate more on each point and/or to further investigate whatever issues that might arise during the course of the interview (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Berg, 2009).

This methodological choice gives researchers a better chance to control the flow of the conversation and at the same time offer their participants enough space to develop their ideas and speak more widely about issues of interest to them during the course of the interview (see Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Seidman, 1998). This type of interviewing is also acknowledged for its flexibility in terms of the order and the sequence of the topics to be considered during the interview (Denscombe,2007). It also allows researchers to further explore unanticipated issues as they arise during the course of the interview (Marshall & Rossman ,1995). Furthermore, semi-structured interviewing gives researchers enough space to follow up ideas, probe respondents' answers and ask for clarifications and further details (Arksey & Knight, 1999). This last point is important because some researchers always raise the concern that participates' accounts may not be a real reflection of their reality. Denscombe (2007), for example, emphasizes this point saying that interviews provide what people say and not what they actually do. Therefore, choosing the semi-structured interview I was able to check for accuracy during the time of interviewing.

I have also decided to depend on one-to-one interviewing which is a very common approach in semi-structured interviewing. This type of interviewing is notable for its flexibility and for the quality of the data it yields (Fox, 2006). According to Denscombe (2007), one-to-one interviewing is significant because it is easy to arrange and offers the interviewer a higher degree of control over the flow of the conversation. It is also a

straightforward method to capture ideas because information in this case stems from one source during the time of the interview.

This choice enabled me to be more attentive to participants' conversations and sensitive to their feelings and emotion during the course of the interviews. Sitting with one interviewee each time, made it easy for me to control the interview and discuss my agenda thoroughly. This way also enabled me to manage silence, offer prompts wisely and use checks accordingly (Denscombe, 2007). It also made the process of transcription easier for me as there was only one voice to deal with in the recorded material.

4.4.1.2 Interview questions

I decided to use my initial research questions as the interview guide. Therefore, all research questions were first operationalised before being used in the interview guide. Another two questions were also added to the initial guide questions making the total number of the guide questions seven. The questions were all developed based on literature, my own experience as an EFL teacher in the Saudi context, and also through extensive discussions with fellow doctoral students who have an interest in this area of study.

The first question was designed to elicit initial reactions, perceptions, opinions, attitudes, and definitions with regards to TPD. The second question was actually asked to know how teachers currently develop professionally to face the demands and the challenges of their job. I used the third question to ask teachers about the kind of institutional support they receive from MoE and their evaluation of its effectiveness. The fourth question explores the extent to which teachers have a voice in educational reform with regards to various issues including decisions pertinent to their development. The fifth question centred on teachers' role in their development. The sixth question looked at the factors that might affect teachers' engagement with TPD opportunities or that might reduce the value and/or the effectiveness of those opportunities. The final question was used to receive ideas from teachers on how TPD could be improved in the Saudi context (see appendix 2).

4.4.2 Reflective essays

As discussed above, to achieve my intended goal, I decided to use semi-structured interviews as the primary means of data collection. This choice gave me a better chance

of obtaining a closer look and a well-informed insight into the inner experiences of teachers that might not have been reached otherwise.

Unfortunately, I was not able to conduct any voice interviews with female teachers in QED. Accessing female teachers proved to be difficult due to various cultural and institutional obstacles. For example, female and male teachers work in separate institutions and, to some extent, follow different rules in terms of access. In addition, females in the Al-Qunfuthah area, as is the case with many other parts of KSA, generally do not approve of meeting or mingling with males beyond their close relatives for various cultural and tribal reasons. Therefore, I had to think of another feasible alternative. I had to think of a research method that would engage female participants actively in such a way that encouraged them to open up about their lived experiences as they would in an interview. My goal was to include the voices of this important segment of teachers. The idea of using written personal documents as a research method appealed to me at this stage namely because this method has deep rotes in qualitative research (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016). Personal documents, as the previous researchers observed, can include many different kinds of documents, including, but not limited to, diaries, letters, e-mails, blogs, social networks, and notes (see also Salmons, 2017).

Through careful deliberation and consideration, I decided to use reflective essays that were written by the participants themselves. A reflective essay is one type of personal document involving written accounts of a participant's experiences and reflections regarding his/her own TPD (Taylor et al., 2016). The essays were semi-structured in nature in that, upon receiving participants' reflections, I commented on and/or asked for further clarification or elaboration on issues that needed to be enlarged for a better understanding and in-depth investigation. For the design of my essays, I adapted my interview guide questions for the new task. The questions were preceded by a short introduction about the nature and the aims of the task with which participants were to engage (see Appendix 7). Further details were explained to participants through my wife, who helped reach out to these female teachers. Once initial contact was made, further connection and communication were established through WhatsApp (see section 4.7).

The use of reflective essays to reach female teachers provided me with an effective tool with which to access and understand their experiences regarding the study's topic. Although the essays were administered to seventeen female teachers, I only received positive feedback from four. Reflective essays were also used with some teachers whom

I was keen to interview but whom I was unable to interview for various reasons. In addition, some other participating teachers, who had been earlier interviewed, were quite happy to write reflective essays and provide further details about their TPD. In this way, reflective essays were used to supplement semi-structured interviews during the data collection process.

4.4.3 WhatsApp

The internet and the ubiquitous presence of social networking sites have opened up new avenues of interaction and communication through which people may gain more insight into the research focus (Salmons, 2017; Zeller, 2017). The pervasiveness of the internet and the expansion of social networking, according to Silverman (2013), have opened up a new field for social sciences research as well as for qualitative researchers in particular. The increased presentation and use of social media among individuals in the present have paved the way for its employment not only for information dissemination, but also as a common data collection method in the social sciences (Stewart, 2017; Taylor et al., 2016; Zeller, 2017). In addition, social media possesses many advantages that are beneficial to the qualitative researcher, such as ongoing connection, interactive and networked communication, fluidity of roles, informality of exchange, and the ability to share written, visual, audio, and multimedia choices (Salmons, 2017). Therefore, I decided to utilise social media to interact with and collect data from some participants.

Most of my follow-up correspondence with teachers was conducted through the messaging application "WhatsApp". This application provided me with an ongoing link with teachers through which I used to receive feedback on transcripts as well as discuss any points that were not fully explained in the transcripts. The application enabled me to maintain regular communication with many of my participants at the various stages of my research until I finally produced the final report. Some teachers who were interviewed earlier on were quite happy and willing to use this application in order to provide extended feedback on their experiences and re-discuss many of the points raised during the interviews. These correspondences provided me with another major data source I considered quite unique and interesting. After seeking participants' permission, all messages were transcribed and saved for further analysis.

I must mention that, although I started using WhatsApp to establish communication and connection with participants, I ended up using it as a research method for data collection due to the valuable insights it yielded that possessed the potential to enrich my research.

Thus, WhatsApp was upgraded from being a mere connection app to a data collection instrument that supplemented interviews and essays. A great portion of the exchange through this medium of communication included follow-ups to what had been previously discussed in either the interviews or the essays. Furthermore, the application was used for validation purposes. Moreover, it should be mentioned that my choosing WhatsApp was largely determined by my own positionality and knowledge of the context that this social media platform is the most popular messaging application in Al-Qunfithah. I additionally preferred using WhatsApp due to its privacy features, which distinguish it from other popular social networks (Rosenfeld, Sina, Sarne, Avidov, & Kraus, 2018).

Thus, data of this study was actually drawn from three different but closely related methods: semi-structured interviews, reflective essays, and WhatsApp correspondence. Furthermore, visiting different schools in Al-Qunfuthah gave me also a good experience of the situation as it enabled me to observe the structure of many schools and the equipment inside them especially those used to aid language instruction in the area. Documentation of those observations also provided me with a valuable source of contextual information that could supplement my interviews and also help in interpreting the findings.

4.5 Sampling

I adopted a purposive sampling procedure to choose the participants of my study which is a dominant way of sampling in qualitative research. All of the participants have been thoughtfully recruited to better answer the research questions and present a fuller picture of how teachers experience TPD in the Saudi context (Bryman, 2012; Denscombe, 2007; Punch, 2009). In Purposive sampling, the researcher chooses his participants deliberately to serve specific purposes in his mind (Punch, 2009). Researchers within this sampling procedure depend on their experience and knowledge to choose participants whom they think have some characteristics that represent the wider population (Berg, 2009). Purposive sampling, according to Bryman (2012) gives the researcher a better chance to chooses his participants strategically “so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed” (p.418). This sampling, according to Maykut and Morehouse (1994) acknowledges the complexity of human phenomena and the limits of generalisability resulting from positivist sampling procedures. It allows researchers to deeply understand social phenomena as experienced by a carefully selected sample (ibid).

The actual sample size of a qualitative piece of research is hard to determine in advance. This is acknowledged by Maykut and Morehouse (1994) who indicated that qualitative researcher cannot decide a priori the sample size that will be recruited in their study. However, the sample in qualitative research tends to be smaller compared to quantitative research; and choice of participants, as explained above, is often based on "non-probability sampling" where people are intentionally chosen by the research for the valuable potential contribution they are expected to make and for the deep insights they may shed into the research focus (Denscombe, 2007, p. 189). An important factor in determining sample size in qualitative research is reaching a point of saturation (Bryman, 2012; Flick,1998; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Seidman, 1998). This usually happens when new ideas cease to emerge, and the researcher starts to hear the same ideas repeated again and again (Bryman, 2012; Seidman, 1998). Therefore, I continued sampling for this research till I reached theoretical saturation.

In order to recruit the persons whom I thought would better answer my research questions, I used the maximum variation sampling technique (Creswell, 2013, p. 156). It is one of the most useful sampling strategies because it allows the researcher to choose specific people and settings that he thinks might represent the widest differences possible for understanding a social phenomenon (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Although generalisation is not an aim in qualitative research, maximum variation sampling gives the researcher a chance to address the concept of variability that characterises random sampling in quantitative research (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). My aim was to choose a sample that represent the broadest range of experiences on the phenomenon under investigation (see Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This matter was significant as it provided me with an opportunity to explore the phenomenon from a multiplicity of perspectives in different locations (Seidman, 1998).

4.5.1 Participants and setting

The participants of this study were all from QED. A total number of 25 EFL teachers (21 males and 4 females) were invited to participate. Their experiences ranged from one year to thirty years in service; and they came from different areas affiliated with QED. Twenty teachers hold a BA, four hold a master's degree, and one teacher holds a diploma. Five teachers work at elementary schools, two at intermediate schools, four at both elementary and intermediate schools, nine at secondary schools, and five teachers at both intermediate and secondary schools (see Table 3). This choice proved to be useful for the study as it provided details of how the issue under investigation was actually perceived

and experienced by a wide range of teachers of varying levels of experience from different geographical locations within QED.

A number of criteria were adopted to choose the most suitable participants for my study. The issue of accessibility was the first, given the time limitations I was working with. Readiness and willingness to participate and provide information that is significant to the study were also taken into consideration. When I first started the process of choosing participants, I tried to focus on participants to whom I had been referred by supervisors as being distinguished for their performance and accomplishments so that I can get as rich data as possible form persons who are supposed to be well-informed (see Creswell, 2013). However, this situation did not stop me from choosing teachers who were singled out as having certain problems in their performance and discipline; and this was actually important because it helped shed some light on specific issues relevant to the phenomenon under investigation from a different perspective.

No.	pseudonym	qualification	level	Years in service	Method employed
1	Fayz	BA	Elementary	More than 20	interview
2	Ali	BA	secondary	14	Interview + WhatsApp
3	Arif	BA	secondary	1	interview
4	Basim	BA	Elem + Int.	13	Interview + WhatsApp
5	Hassan	BA	Intermediate	8	Interview + WhatsApp
6	Adil	MA	Secondary	7	Interview
7	Misfir	BA	Int. + Sec.	15	Interview + WhatsApp
8	Barakat	BA	Secondary	4	Interview + WhatsApp
9	Majdi	BA	Secondary	10	Interview + WhatsApp
10	Mahmood	BA	Secondary	15	Interview + WhatsApp + Essay
11	Mansour	BA	Secondary	15	Interview + WhatsApp
12	Sadiq	MA	Secondary	5	Interview + WhatsApp
13	Sameer	BA	Int. + Sec.	14	Interview
14	Yassir	BA	Elementary	13	Interview
15	Ibrahim	BA	Int. + Sec.	10	Interview + WhatsApp + Essay
16	Hatim	BA	Int. + Sec.	10	Interview + WhatsApp
17	Waleed	MA	Elementary	20	Essay + WhatsApp
18	Essa	Diploma	Elementary	11	Essay
19	Sayed	BA	Elementary	8	Essay
20	Hani	BA	Int. + Sec.	7	Essay
21	Adnan	MA	Secondary	17	Interview
22	Mona	BA	Intermediate	1	Essay + WhatsApp
23	Jameelah	BA	Elem. + Int.	4	Essay + WhatsApp
24	Hayat	BA	Elem. + Int.	13	Essay + WhatsApp
25	Raniah	BA	Elem. + Int.	5	Essay + WhatsApp

Table 3: demographic information of participants.

The data was mainly collected in QED in KSA. Al-Qunfuthah Governorate is located on the eastern coast of the Red Sea in KSA. It is one of the main ports on the western coast

of KSA and is administratively part of Makkah region since its establishment. Al-Qunfuthah is located almost half way between Makkah city and Jazan. It lies to the west of the city of Abha, the capital of Asir region, and used to serve as its main port before the unification of KSA (Al-Qunfuthah Educational Directorate, 2016). It is one of the biggest governorates of Makkah region with a total population of about 185,000 according to 2011 national statistics (Gunfdhnet, 2016). About 606 schools of different educational stages are affiliated with QED with a total number of about 6950 teachers (male and female) serving at those schools (Al-Qunfuthah Educational Directorate, 2016).

(Figure 1) a map showing location of Al-Qunfuthah in Makkah Region.

4.6 Piloting

Doing a pilot study before staring the journey of a qualitative piece of research is highly recommended. According to Janesick (1998) the time spent on piloting a particular study is both valuable and enriching. The outcome of this process can help the researcher in a number of different issues relevant to his study. For example, doing pilot interviews with some participants gives the researcher an opportunity to focus on some areas that may not have been clear to him before. This process also allows the researcher to test his/her questions before conducting his inquiry. Preliminary interviewing may also provide new insights into the study in a way that might not have been apparent beforehand. It also

gives the researcher enough time to establish good rapport with his participants and to develop good communication techniques.

Therefore, after obtaining ethical clearance, the first step of my data collection procedure was to pilot my interview questions. My pilot study was conducted with participants who were members of the target population. My aim was to shed light on and improve many aspects of my study including, for example, the research process, the interview questions, the method itself, the population, and even my role as the main instrument in the research process (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). I did the first pilot interview here in the UK with a Saudi EFL teacher who was on a temporary visit to the UK. The interview was transcribed and then sent back to the participant. He was then asked for feedback on the interview, on how the questions could be improved, and whether he had any comments with regards to issues of structure and clarity. This process was also repeated with two EFL teachers in KSA before the actual process of data collection. Feedback was used accordingly to make amendments whenever needed. Most of the points raised by teachers in the pilot centred around clarity, structure, and sometimes repetitiveness. However, the main guide questions remained intact.

4.7 Data collection procedures

Since the interviews were to be conducted in KSA, the English version of my questions was first translated into Arabic. I did the translation myself. However, upon completing the translated version, I approached two fellow doctoral students to make sure that the translated version accurately reflects the original one. After that, the questions were piloted as discussed in section (4.6).

To start the process of data collection I had first to obtain ethical clearance from the University of Exeter. Then I had to receive permission to the study site from MoE and QED. Going through those official channels was necessary to avoid facing any unexpected obstacle such as access denial and/or teacher resistance. I then approached supervisors to discuss the issue with them so that they might help with the initial choice of teachers.

I was referred to a considerable number of teachers by supervisors. Upon receiving ethical clearance from QED, I immediately contacted those teachers in order to discuss the issue with them, provide them with enough details about me and my project and give them

information sheets and consent forms. Upon receiving consent forms from participants, additional documents containing enough information about the project and the interview questions were sent to each participant prior to interviewing. This was important to give teachers enough details before the actual time of interviewing so that they prepare themselves well.

Teachers who agreed to participate where then approached in order to choose a convenient time and location for their interviews. All interviews were conducted face to face with teachers. However, the process did not go as smoothly and swiftly as I had initially envisaged it. In some instances, for example, I had to spend a week or so without conducting any interview mainly because of teachers repeated excuses due to various personal reasons. Cancellation was another major issue I had to struggle with throughout the process. A number of teachers cancelled the appointed meetings in the last minute and decided not to have the interviews for no obvious reasons. So, I had to search for new teachers myself. In many instances, I recruited participants myself especially in remote areas where I used to visit schools, meet EFL teachers and see if they would accept participation in my project.

During the time of interviewing I used two digital recorders so that I can listen as attentively as possible to my participants. I also took some notes during and after each interview. For example, upon ending each interview, I used to sit with teachers for some time to chat about various issues that may or may not have relevance to my study. However, some participants used to divert the conversation to the topic of the interview and sometimes say things which are quite unique and important, so in order to capture those precious moments I took permission form participants to put them down in my notebook. Thus, I was able to glean much invaluable information about TPD from various teachers after the actual time of interviewing.

Interviews were immediately downloaded to my personal computer so that they are safe from damage and/or loss. I was determined at first to transcribe each interview before proceeding to the other because I thought this would provide me with a good opportunity to make any changes or amendments as early as possible so that mistakes can be avoided in future interviews. However, my slow typing in Arabic stood as a barrier in my way. For example, the first interview which was about fifty minutes in length took me about two days to transcribe and this was a very long time given the time framework set for my data collection trip to KSA. So instead of transcribing them I was satisfied with just

listening to each interview and taking notes before proceeding to the other. This process allowed me to reflect on my data and also to take the necessary action in due time. However, this did not mean that I did not do any transcription at all at the time of data collection. Rather, the process was very slow.

As explained in section (4.4.2), I was not able to do any voice interviews with female teachers in QED, and therefore, I thought of another alternative in order to reach them, and this was achieved through reflective essays. I adapted my interview guide in designing the essays. Then they were checked and send to female teachers. My wife did most of the job in terms of initial correspondence and explanation. The first essays sent to female teachers consisted of just a brief introduction into the topic and the task teachers are requested to do. However, upon receiving the first essays from them, I discovered that most of the essays were rather superficial and far away from the main topic. Therefore, I decided to do some changes to the introduction and to add some prompts and questions so that teachers might use them to accomplish the task. The results were much better than the first attempt. I read the essays, commented on them and sent them back to teachers. All female teachers responded to my comments and questions accordingly by enlarging their essays; and my subsequent correspondence with them was mainly done through WhatsApp.

I also used reflective essays with some male teachers as well (see section 4.4.2). They provided me with an excellent opportunity to overcome potential obstacles. An outstanding teacher, for example, explained to me that he is not good at interviews and might write all the answers to my questions. So, I introduced the task to him and he liked it. This process was also repeated with a number of teachers whom I was not able to meet. In addition, two teachers who have been interviewed earlier were also quite happy to write essays. Most of correspondence and communication between me and those teachers who agreed to write the articles was conducted through WhatsApp. I first read the articles, commented on them, and sent them back to participants for more feedback on certain points. Feedback was sent to me as text messages, voice messages and sometimes photographs of handwritten documents. All of them were transcribed and attached to the original documents. See appendix (1).

4.7.1 Role of the researcher

Researcher positionality (reflexivity) is an integral part of a qualitative piece of research (Corlett & Mavin, 2018; Creswell, 2003). This process, according to Atkins and Wallace

(2012), involves careful consideration and clarification of the relationship between the researcher's values, assumptions, practices, choices, interests, experiences, and the research practice. The acknowledgement of positionality opens up the research for scrutiny by questioning the way the research was conducted (Corlett & Mavin, 2018).

As pointed out in my introduction, I am an EFL teacher who shares the same context, concerns, and interests with my participants. During the course of this inquiry, I was fully aware of my dual role as both a teacher and a researcher. Assuming the roles of both an insider and outsider simultaneously was complex and challenging. However, I was fully aware of the implications of this dualism on my research. Therefore, I tried my best to minimise the effect of my role as an insider on teachers' responses as well as their recruitment. For instance, during the first round of recruitment, I depended mainly upon supervisors to recommend teachers who they believed were likely to participate. However, most of the teachers who were referred to me were considered to be outstanding performers, according to the educational directorate. Therefore, my insider identity started questioning this choice, which side-lined many other teachers who might have contributed significantly to the research focus. The knowledge that being an insider would give me an advantage in the context of approaching and giving voice to many other excluded teachers inspired me to begin looking for potential participants from various schools who might have some stories to share. This approach managed to bring to the surface hidden stories that could not have otherwise emerged.

Furthermore, my insider identity was also strongly present during the interview process, although I tried as strongly as possible to assume the perspective of an objective outsider. Rooted deeply inside me was the realisation that our experiences and lives, to some extent, mirror one another, as we are from the same context. For instance, I presumed to be an outsider who did not have adequate knowledge of the context and the issue under investigation while interviewing participants. In this way, I was able to acquire rich details from the interviewed teachers. And, to be honest, this approach was neither easy nor straightforward, because much of what they dictated was quite familiar to me. However, it should be mentioned that I neither led nor controlled the teachers during the interview process. Rather, I utilised probes and hints in order to dig more deeply into their personal experiences about TPD in each participant's specific context. In addition, some of the participants had extended experiences, and therefore, I do not believe they were affected by my own positionality. Their experiences should have made them feel confident about expressing their own views and engaging both critically and

argumentatively in the discussions. Moreover, I felt that my insider nature worked positively to assure participants of the aims and desires of both the research and the researcher. Therefore, many teachers opened up about issues that might not have been revealed to an outsider who hoped their voices would make their way toward educational authority through a teacher who shared the same context, concerns, and aspirations. Therefore, my close connection to the context and the participants created new possibilities by providing access to hidden voices and stories (Postholm & Skrøvset, 2013).

Finally, it should be mentioned that I shared my findings with the participants before initiating my discussion. I was concerned that, being the main research instrument myself, I might be inclined to become unconsciously influenced by my own biases while interpreting and discussing data. Therefore, I thought that, by sharing the findings with the participants, I would assume a degree of objectivity and fairness (Creswell, 2013).

4.8 Data analysis

Data analysis, according to Altrichter et al. (2013), is a process of making sense of data. It is the process whereby the researcher brings order, structure, and meaning to his data (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). This process covers data management, categorisation, theme generation and development, and report writing (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). It is a time-consuming process that is both creative and fascinating, as it breathes life into recorded material (ibid).

All data was transcribed verbatim, including nonverbal utterances such as pauses, hesitations, and laughs. Although the process was tedious, daunting, and time-consuming, it actually represented the bedrock for my analysis because it provided me with a golden opportunity to understand the nature and depth of my data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At first, I was quite unsure as to how I should deal with the WhatsApp data. However, upon consulting with my two supervisors, I was advised to attach WhatsApp messages to the end of each interview or essay transcript, as the messages were mainly follow-up correspondences to issues and discussions raised in the interviews and/or essays. The same process was implemented for the essays written by teachers who had been earlier interviewed, as their essays were mainly reflections and elaborations on issues that had been partially or superficially discussed during their actual interviews. Transcription was then followed by a reading and rereading of all the transcripts before the process of

analysis was initiated in order to gain a deeper understanding of the dataset as a whole and to ensure that all subsequent findings reflected original data as accurately as possible (Harding, 2013).

Thematic analysis was the main analytic method that was used to analyse data in this particular study. Thematic analysis, according to Bryman (2012), is one of the most common methods of data analysis in qualitative research. It is one of the main qualitative data analysis methods that is compatible with a wide range of epistemological and theoretical positions, is widely recognised for its flexibility and usefulness, and often yields rich and complex data accounts (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Insights drawn from Braun and Clarke's (2006) model provided me with a general framework and a sense of direction throughout the analysis process. Braun and Clarke (2006) proposed a six-phase thematic analysis model for analysing qualitative data. These stages, according to their opinion, involve:

1- Familiarising oneself with the data;
2- Code generating;
3- Searching for themes;
4- Reviewing themes;
5- Defining and naming the themes;
6- Writing the report. (see Appendix 10 for more details).

All six stages were followed throughout the data analysis process. However, this choice did not imply that this model was used rigidly in a linear fashion. Rather, the process of analysis was actually a more flexible, iterative, and recursive process of moving back and forth across my data. Furthermore, to avoid being superficial in my analysis of data and presentation of findings, all my transcripts were examined critically and scrutinised carefully and regularly so I could reach deeper levels of understanding as well as the hidden structures. For instance, continuous reflection provided a vehicle for rigorous critical analysis and thus a further in-depth understanding (Willis, 2007).

To begin, I printed and read each transcript carefully while highlighting and taking notes of key issues and ideas. After familiarising myself with each transcript and having generated an initial list of important issues in my data, I started the process of coding manually on paper. This was an important step for the development of a deeper understanding of my dataset (see Appendices 6 & 8). Having finished the first round of

my coding, I was essentially overwhelmed by the size of my data and the question of how it could be managed and compared with other transcripts. Therefore, I opted for data reduction by developing a summary of each transcript, which made it easy for me to compare transcripts (Harding, 2013) (see Appendix 9). This process was quite helpful, as it gave me a chance to check data for patterns that might suggest commonalities, differences, distinctions, and relationships. This initial phase was important for the development of a holistic understanding of some of the commonalities and distinctions across my data. I ended up with a large number of categories and subcategories that were then revised and refined. Once my categories were compared with one another and consolidated in several ways, I was able to transcend the reality of my data toward the development of the thematic map (Saldaña, 2009). Therefore, the process of my analysis began with reading, then coding, summarising, comparing, categorising, analytically reflecting, and finally, developing the main themes and sub-themes.

However, due to the bulk and complexity of my dataset, I decided to use a computer programme (MAXQDA) for storage, management, organisation, classification, coding, and easy access. The programme proved to be both helpful and useful. For example, it helped me easily cluster codes into categories and enabled me to easily allocate each quote to its particular category. Furthermore, the programme enabled me to enter many coded data under different categories without losing my track of my data.

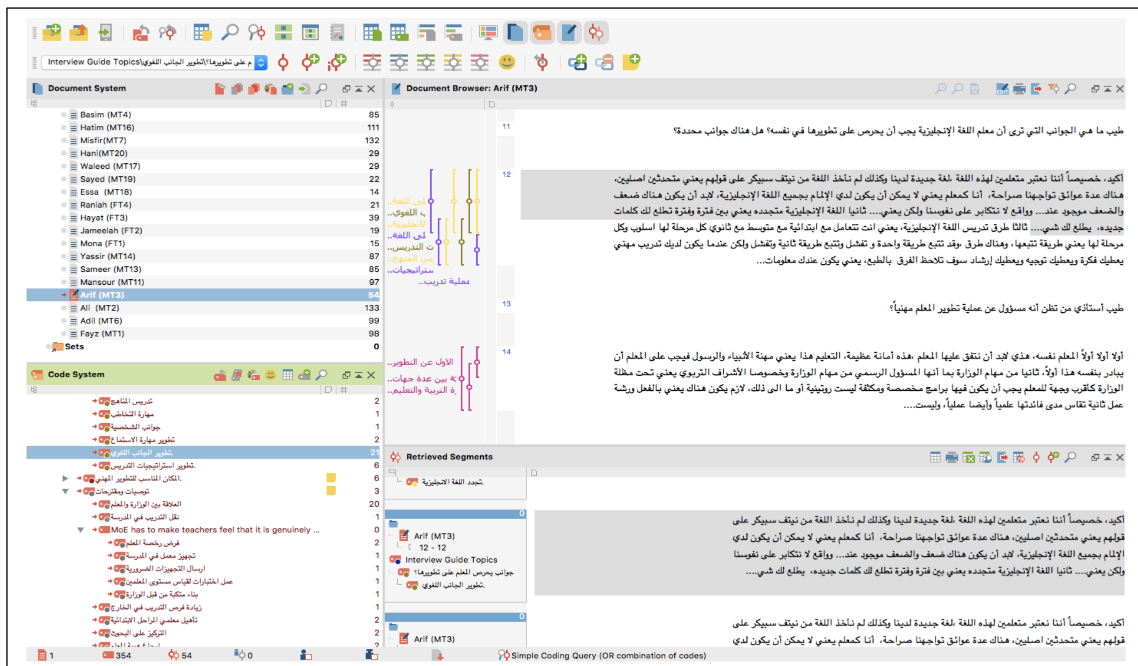

Figure (2) An overview of coding using MAXQDA 12

4.9 Research validity

According to Maxwell (2005), the term validity stands for " the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account" (p. 106). Some researchers use trustworthiness to refer to the credibility and believability of the research findings (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This process entails careful justification and detailed explanation of what the researcher has done in terms of designing, carrying out, and reporting his/her study to convince his/her audience of the credibility of his/her findings (ibid). Creswell (2013), on the other hand, calls this process validation and sets a number of strategies for assessing the accuracy and credibility of a research report. These include prolonged engagement, triangulation, peer review, negative case analysis, clarifying researcher bias, member checking, thick description and external audits. He also emphasised that a qualitative researcher should use at least two of these elements to guarantee the validity of his study.

In this particular study I used three of the aforementioned validation processes: member checking, rich description, and clarification of the researcher's bias. By member checking I mean the systematic feedback I constantly received from participants about my data during the initial phases of my inquiry in order to make sure that I produced a valid and truthful account of their lived experiences (see Maxwell, 2005; Maykut & Morehous, 1994). This procedure is an important validation method in qualitative research as it ensures higher degrees of credibility in qualitative studies (Seale, 1999; Woods, 2006). Maxwell (2005) emphasises this point saying that this procedure is " the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misrepresentation of what they say and the perspective they have on what is going on" (p. 111). To achieve this, I used the messaging application WhatsApp which kept me connected to some of my participants throughout my research journey and this might add to the validity and truthfulness to my report. In addition, once my final interpretation was developed, I contacted participants to check the validity of my themes and that what is included in the report is actually what they wanted to say.

Thick and detailed description of the research report, according to Maykut and Morehouse (1994) is one of the essential requirements of the qualitative inquiry. This process, in their opinion, opens up the research process for potential readers and invites them to consider the credibility of work themselves. For me, this process entailed the inclusion and presentation of detailed and comprehensive information of all the research parts and stages to provide the reader with an authentic picture of the phenomenon under

consideration (ibid). In addition, qualitative researchers are often perceived as subjects and actors within their inquiry and not just outside the scope of their inquiry as objective observers (ibid). Therefore, to insure higher degrees of trustworthiness, qualitative writers have to position themselves within their writing. A good qualitative research is one that contains an explicit position of the inquirer (Creswell, 2013). For this reason, my position, biases, values and assumptions that might have an impact on this inquiry have been made as clear and explicit as possible throughout this inquiry.

4.10 Ethical considerations

Addressing ethical considerations is very important because they have significant impact on the integrity of the social research (Grix, 2004; Bryman, 2012). The importance of this issue is even more emphasised in qualitative research given its interactive and contextual nature (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). According to Bryman (2012) ethics should be a paramount concern for social researchers and should be kept at the forefront of any research project. Researchers, according to Berg's (2009) perspective, have ethical obligations because they "delve into the social lives of other human beings" (p.60). These ethical implications arise from the complexity and sensitivity of "researching private lives and placing accounts in the public arena" (Mauthner, et al. 2002, p.1).

A researcher has a duty to respect his participants, ensures their rights and protect their privacy (Berg, 2009; Bryman, 2012). One of the main priorities of the researcher is to eliminate any potential harm or risk to his participants (Bryman, 2012). He also has a duty to seek his participants' permission, explain to them how data will be collected, analysed and how his research findings will be disseminated (Grix, 2004).

Therefore, to keep with the norms and regulations of the university, all participants involved in this research project were sent consent forms and participant information sheets prior to their involvement. A major ethical concern for me is the assurance that the research subjects are voluntarily participating in this inquiry and that they will not suffer any risk of harm or detriment (Berg, 2009).

Prospective participants of this study were given information sheets in due time in order to provide them with detailed information on the nature of the research, its aims, participants' roles in it, potential risks, assurances of protection, anonymity and confidentiality so that they can make informed decisions on whether to participate or not.

Once they have gained enough details about the project and decided to take part, they were given consent forms to sign. The aim of this move was to inform participants of the voluntary nature of their participation, any risk of harm that might affect them as a result of their participation, and how I will preserve their anonymity (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). It also ensured that each participant completely understands his role in this inquiry and voluntarily agrees to take part in it.

To maintain anonymity within my inquiry, all participants were given pseudonyms instead of their real names. Confidentiality was maintained by removing from all records anything that might reveal the true identity of the research subjects (Berg, 2009). One of my priorities was to make sure that the research participants do not suffer any physical or emotional harm in their context.

4.11 Summary

This chapter presented a description of the research design employed in this thesis. It highlighted the research questions that guided this inquiry and provided a description of the research paradigm and the methodology I employed to answer my questions. It also provided a thorough description of the research instruments, sampling, research collection procedures, piloting, and the actual data collection process. It also highlighted the data analysis method I employed to analyses data, the research validity aspects, and the ethical consideration observed throughout this research journey. The following chapter presents the main findings obtained from the study's participants with regards to their TPD.

Chapter Five: Findings of the Study

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings obtained from Saudi EFL teachers about their lived experiences of TPD in the Saudi context. Data were obtained via semi-structure interviews, reflective essays, and WhatsApp correspondence. Data were then thematically analysed using the model proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Both inductive and deductive analysis techniques were employed to code data. I used my research questions and aims as a framework for analysing interviews. In total, six main themes emerged from the data: perceptions on TPD meaning, current practices of TPD, perceptions on institutional support, factors impacting on teachers' engagement with TPD, suggestions for improvement, and general perspectives related to TPD. Each of these main themes is further divided into several sub-themes (see Diagram 4). In the following sections, the findings related to these themes and sub-themes are presented in detail along with the relevant evidence from the data.

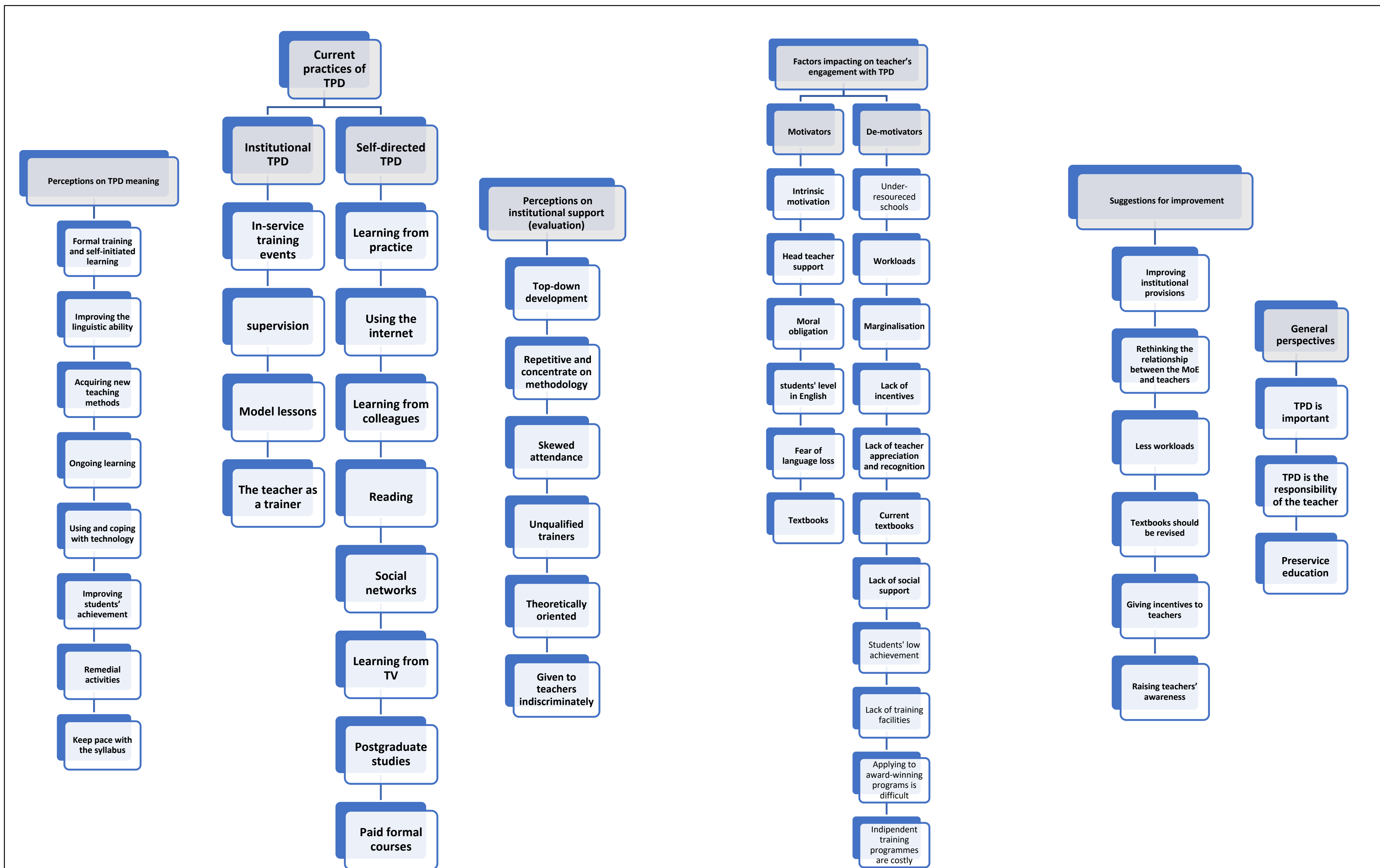

Diagram 4: summary of the study's findings.

5.2 Perceptions on TPD meaning

This part reports teachers' perceptions with regards to their understanding of what the process of TPD stands for which is one of the main themes emerged from the data. A number of sub-themes have been identified (Table 4). Although teachers' perceptions vary greatly, as I report below, all of them shared the idea that TPD involves a kind of learning that is both contextual and problem-centred.

Theme	No. of teachers	Sample Quote
Formal training and self-initiated learning	25	"[TPD]is developing yourself by yourself; and it is also development from the educational directorate…it is actually both cases: training and learning." **(Ibrahim)**
Improving the linguistic ability	15	"I perceive development as learning everything new in the language. Of course, grammar, listening and reading have always been important to me." **(Majdi)**
Acquiring new teaching methods	13	"[It is] developing yourself by learning new teaching methods. This is the basic thing." **(Hassan)**
Ongoing learning	11	"[It] is a life-long continuous process; and he who falls a victim to vanity and pride and thinks that he does not require development, is a person who does not want to work" **(Sameer)**
Using and coping with technology	10	"[TPD] is developing staff to cope with the rapid technological advancements and the ability to adapt to them and deal with them positively." **(Sayed)**
Improving students' achievement	9	I feel that I am professionally developed when my students get better grades; and when the level of the less able students is developed; and when I manage to develop their standards and skills in the conversation, retention of vocabulary, and reading as well. And also, when I feel that they pay more attention to the subject and become attracted to it **(Hatim)**
Remedial activities	9	"Sometimes I see myself deficient in one aspect; and then I feel that I have to improve it… and also when I feel that I became week; or if I saw that my performance fell below the required level, I don't waste any opportunity" **(Ali)**.
Keep pace with the syllabus	8	"it is to improve your knowledge and information regarding your syllabus…we have to develop in order to cope with the current situation" (**Hassan**)

Table 4: themes emerging from data with regards to TPD meaning.

5.2.1 Formal training and self-initiated learning

TPD is a mixed process of both formal training and self-initiated forms of learning according to some perspectives. It is therefore an interactive process that can either be institutionally provided and/or sought and sustained by teachers themselves. This can be clearly seen in **Ibrahim'**s response (see Table 4). **Adil** also provided another typical response when he said that TPD is "a mix between learning and training."

This conception was also shared by **Sadiq** who justified his response saying that "I have to develop myself for my own benefit and I also need someone else to develop me… so that I will be good in the subject I teach." Both learning resources were central to **Sayed's** personal development. He emphasised that saying "we can't do without either of them." This mixed conception, according to his perception, which is shared by many others, is integral to the development of EFL teachers in their context because institutional training links teachers to MoE agendas and self-learning caters for their context-specific needs that might not be served by institutional provisions.

5.2.2 Improving the linguistic ability

The linguistic component appears to be an indispensable aspect of EFL teachers' conception of TPD. Some participants tend to associate TPD with their linguistic development as can be seen in **Majdi'**s words (see Table 4). **Ali,** who strongly agrees with **Majdi** on this point, added:

> the linguistic aspect is one of the most important issues that the language teacher must develop.

Adil, who was fluent in English, was very supportive of this idea too. He was even critical of teachers who "try to develop themselves in other areas far away from the field" saying that this "doesn't help a lot if the teacher's linguistic ability is week." Therefore, teachers should concentrate on "the four skills of language" in their development because these are the skills they basically need in their area as he stressed.

Teachers' identification of TPD with their linguistic development was partly due to the nature of their job as language teachers and to the nature of English in their context. English, according to **Sadiq** "is a second language and it is acquired as well." Therefore, EFL teachers, according to his opinion, have to continuously work hard on their language, or otherwise they are at risk of losing it.

This emphasis was also driven by a deep feeling inside some teachers that their language is still weak. An instance of this can be seen in **Arif**'s words who justified his emphasis on the linguistic component of his development saying:

> it is impossible for me as a teacher to have a proper grasp of the English language; there should be weakness and it is there; it is real, and we should not pretend otherwise**.**

5.2.3 Acquiring new teaching methods

Some participants also see TPD as a way of acquiring new teaching methods as can be seen in Table 4. This identification was confirmed by many participants including **Misfir** who believes that learning and understanding new teaching methods is essential to the development of EFL teachers:

> Well look, because of our work as teachers, I believe that developing and acquiring new teaching methods is priority number one for us in terms of development.

Teaching English, as he proclaimed, is not an easy task and requires teachers to use innovative strategies to make language accessible to their students. He explained that "not every teacher can enter the hearts of his students" and that "not all teachers can reach a high percentage of student understanding." However, the teacher "who has new strategies and does understand strategies well and always changes his style" is the one who is expected to "achieve the highest student understanding and achievement," as he pointed out.

Some participants seem to agree that methodology is fundamental to their development because it provides them with better pedagogical practices, sound decision making, and appropriate teaching techniques. It also offers teachers a repertoire of various techniques that enables them to function in different situations depending on the level and the stage of their students as explained by **Arif**. **Majdi**, further explained that having a good command of various teaching methods helped him avoid conventionalism and allowed him to adapt his lessons to the various abilities and interests of his students.

5.2.4 Ongoing learning

Some participants defined TPD as an ongoing learning process that entails continuous improvement, update, and adjustment. Evidence of this was articulated by many participants including **Sameer** as can be seen in Table 4.

Part of teachers' justification for this definition is that ongoing learning is essential for teachers to be adaptive to change. This implies that teachers are fully aware of the changing nature of their profession and therefore they have to continue learning in order to increase their readiness. The teacher, according to **Mansour**, "needs to develop himself according to the new developments; and according to the new trends which may accompany his profession". Any teacher, as he observed, has to "keep up with these things" throughout his career, otherwise he will be lagging behind. Some participants also spoke of the effectiveness of ongoing learning on their students' performance. **Raniah** commented on this point saying that "whenever teacher development is a continuous process, the student attainment will always be high." Ongoing learning, as she pointed out, gives her the chance to revise her practices, make adaptations and explore new alternatives with her students.

5.2.5 Using and coping with technology

TPD was also defined as the ability to use and keep pace with modern technology. **Sayed**'s response (see Table 4) is a clear example that supports this conception. His words were echoed by many others including **Adil** who stated that TPD is "to be aware of using technology." In a similar manner, **Sameer** emphasised that "technology is fundamental for the development of the English language teacher."

It seems that the pedagogical potential of technology was one of the reasons behind this identification. Many participants referred to the role technology played in the facilitation of their instruction and in the achievement of their students as well. **Raniah,** who relies heavily on technology in her classes, explained that modern technology has provided her with "many chances to make education more agreeable and fun" to her students. To highlight the importance of technology to her instruction, she said: "whenever technology is connected to one of my classes, the more the lesson is absorbed fully by the student."

Furthermore, advancements in modern technology, especially the internet, facilitated teachers learning because it allowed easy access to information. As a result, teachers were given a degree of independence and a chance to tailor their development to their own needs. This was the case with **Waleed** who explained to me how he learned to use the computer well in order to overcome some noticeable weaknesses in his linguistic abilities that used to cause some embarrassment to him.

5.2.6 Improving students' achievement.

Some participants viewed TPD as the ability to raise the educational attainment of their student. **Hatim,** for instance, explicitly pointed out that his students' attainment and success in English is an indicator of this development (see Table 4). Some participants have a deep believe that the end result of their development is the student and his achievement as can be seen in **Yassir**'s words who stated: "I am always keen to keep the student's level as the most important thing; and it is the most important thing to me."

Teachers embracing this perspective pointed out that the betterment of students' learning and achievement is central to teachers' engagement with TPD opportunities. Therefore, teacher learning, is not only for himself, it is for his students as well, as explained by **Ali**. Engagement with TPD opportunities, according to **Sameer**' perspective, is a kind of service they do to their students. If not practiced, then students would stop learning effectively. **Misfir** mindful of the centrality of his students' achievement to his conception of TPD, exclaimed saying:

> By the way, what is all this development for? It is to get results; good and honourable results. This student is our weapon.

However, in justifying this position, some participants pointed out that students' outcomes are used as a criterion for judging the effectiveness of their learning by their institutions. Talking about this issue, **Yassir**, for instance explained:

> when someone visits your class… the focus will be on the level of your students not on you. The student's grades are the true measure of the teacher.

5.2.7 Remedial activities

Some teachers tend to understand TPD as remedial activities which they often engage with whenever they face complex situations in their classes, when they feel that their knowledge, skills or capabilities need to be updated, or when they stumble upon a difficult situation. **Ali**'s excerpt (see Table 4) is one example that links TPD with deficient performance. **Ali**'s words are echoed by many others. The following excerpt, for instance, was said by **Hassan** to comment on when he normally resorts to development:

> Sometimes the person feels that he himself got week and his information is decreasing…I mean sometimes I feel that my knowledge is weakening; and then I feel that I have to update it, I have to read, and I have to look for new things

This was also the opinion of **Sameer** who feels that a determining factor in his engagement with development is his ability to deliver his content to his students. If he feels that he can't deliver it properly, then he looks for development. **Ibrahim** was also another teacher who conceives of TPD as being a kind of remedial intervention that is normally employed whenever he notices a deficiency in one of his skills especially his linguistic competence:

> I have to develop myself when I feel that I am at risk; I mean when I feel that my language is beginning to get lost.

5.2.8 Keep pace with the syllabus

Some participants kept talking about the changing nature of their textbooks and how they can deliver them effectively to their students; and therefore, development is seen by some of them as a way to keep up with their textbooks (see Table 4). **Hatim,** like so many others, put this issue explicitly when he stated: "For me, it comes with the development of the syllabus." This association, according to his opinion, stems from that fact that recent textbooks are quite different from the old ones. Their level is very high, and they need the teacher to exert more effort:

> We taught the old syllabi, and they were very easy; even the secondary was something easy; it is incomparable to the intermediate level nowadays **(Hatim)**

EFL Teachers are currently experiencing frequent changes of their textbooks. They explained to me that they have taught three different sets during the last four years; and therefore, I do believe that this identification is prompted by that experience.

5.3 Current practices of TPD:

This theme shows how teachers develop professionally to meet the challenging demands of their daily practices. It depicts the full range of resources and choices that EFL teachers have at their disposal for development purposes. These can be classified into two main forms: institutional support and self-directed development.

5.3.1 Institutional TPD

Teachers' reports imply that they receive considerable institutional support from the educational authority (see Table 5). Therefore, it is one of the most important sources of learning for teachers as was clear from their accounts. This support is normally given to teachers in the form of training events, workshops, online courses, model lessons, and supervisions.

Theme	No. of teachers	Example quote
In-service training events	25	"I currently seek to develop my professionalism through participation in some specific programs that are being presented to us by the educational office: the training events." **(Basim)**
supervision	10	"I used to develop myself through exchanging experience with my supervisor… [he] used to send me some circulars and I benefited greatly from them in improving my performance." **(Adnan)**
Model lessons	9	"by attending the development events in which some teachers give model lessons to her fellow English teachers." **(Hayat)**
The teacher as a trainer	3	"the teacher himself can prepare and deliver a training session. This means a teacher may look for new knowledge or a new skill; and he prepares it well and then presents it to his colleagues and discuss it with them." **(Fayz)**

Table 5: themes emerging from data with regards to institutional TPD.

5.3.1.1 In-service training events

As can be seen from Table 5, part of teachers' development comes from institutional in-service training and workshops. Although participants were highly critical of this form of development for various reasons, some of those events, according to their perceptions,

were relatively good, close to their needs, and far from being traditional. The following is an excerpt descripting the lived experience of **Hatim** with regards to this issue:

> training is now far better than before… the last training event I have been to was just before the final exam. It was to develop us. They even gave us some laptops, and it was beneficial. It was talking about an aspect of our development: concept maps and something like that.

Some participants revealed to me that they received an international online training course; and which, according to their perceptions, was one of the best training courses they have ever had since joining service. The programme lasted for a full year and targeted teachers' linguistic competence as explained by **Ali**:

> we participated for a full year in a program called English Town on the improvement of English language. It was part of King Abdullah development programme (Tatweer) and we have in fact benefited a lot from it.

This programme gave teachers an opportunity to refresh, practice, and update their language. What was unique about the programme, according to **Majdi**, is that it was delivered "by native speakers to raise the [linguistic] level of the teacher." It has to be mentioned that just a limited number of teachers have been selected to do this course. Teachers' choice was determined by supervisors through criteria that were totally vague to the teachers who were not included. However, given the uniqueness of its method of delivery and the sensitivity of the area it targets, some teachers like **Misfir**, who have not been able to enrol, managed to log on through their colleagues' accounts.

I understood from participants that the number of the training programmes they receive from their institutions varies from time to time and place to place. **Barakat**, for instance, spent two years in Al-Mudhaylif educational office without receiving a single programme. However, when he moved to Al-Qunfuthah city itself, he received three programmes in one term.

5.3.1.2 Supervision

Supervisors, as can be seen in **Adnan**'s excerpt (Table 5), represent a source of development for some participants. Although their main duty was to monitor teachers'

performance, participants' attitude towards supervisors' visits was entirely positive. Their importance is highly emphasised by teachers who are working alone or tend to be in isolated areas for their coaching services. Supervisors' classroom visits and subsequent follow up were so important to teachers because they give them a sense of direction, guidance, and expert advice. This can be clearly witnessed in **Sameer**'s account on his supervisor's visits:

> He does not leave until he tells me about the areas I have to improve myself in…He is like a mirror to me; I mean he gives us feedback and some professional development points to observe. This is good, and I liked it.

Another part of the supervisor's duty is also to help teachers identify their training needs. This issue is manifest in the following excerpt which describes a supervisor's visit to one of **Ali'**s classes:

> he gave me some guidance as usual, but he also gave me the idea of joining a training programme. He told me that I needed training in how to plan for understanding; and he told me that he would write my name in that programme.

However, the ratio of supervisors to teachers raised concern among some participants. Normally one supervisor is assigned to each educational office and therefore some teachers, especially in outlying areas, do not receive proper supervision as is the case with **Adil**.

5.3.1.3 Model lessons

Another source of TPD comes from institutional model lessons as can be witnessed in **Hayat**'s words (Table 5). "A distinguished teacher in a certain area of teaching," as pointed out by **Fayz**, is normally chosen by the educational authority to deliver a lesson to a group of his colleagues, who gather from various schools, with an aim of training those teachers on certain educational methods, skills, applications or strategies.

Some participants explained to me that the value of those lessons lie in that fact that they provide them with an opportunity to visit their peers at different schools and observe how

they conduct their classes. **Majdi**, among others, explained how such lessons allowed him to draw on his peers' insights and experiences to improve his performance. He argued in favour of those lessons saying that:

> every teacher has his own style of course; even if he is less experienced you can still benefit from him. Some teachers do have less experience, but we actually benefited from them as if they were 20 years in service.

However, lessons' organisation and teachers' choice are mainly the supervisor's responsibility. Some supervisors were very active in organizing model lessons, while others were not as stressed by participants.

5.3.1.4 The teacher as a trainer

The teacher as a trainer has been recently introduced to teachers for the aim of development as indicated by three participants. Any experienced teacher, according to **Fayz**, can nowadays provide training to his colleagues through the educational authority which in turn facilitates the process (see Table 5). Although described as being "timid practices" in **Waleed'**s words, he saw them as a step towards teacher recognition and appreciation. He also praised this initiative for its potential positive consequences on teachers' motivation. This is further elaborated in the following excerpt:

> [the teacher] is then provided with certificates stamped by the department of training [to give his colleagues], which would have a good impact on the psyche of the teacher because he finally found someone who values his efforts **(Waleed).**

This issue, according to his opinion, is expected to give the teacher a kind of recognition especially that trainees will be leaving the training centre with his name on their certificates. However, as explained in the aforementioned excerpts, this initiative has just been recently introduced, and therefore, not so many teachers benefited from it so far.

5.3.2 Self-directed TPD

This part reports teachers' experiences of the forms of TPD that are self-initiated and driven by teachers themselves. What distinguishes all these forms is that they are all personally pursued by teachers themselves beyond any institutional support and/or

requirement. Self-directedness, collaboration, cooperation, and contextual relevance are some of the key features that hold these forms of development together (see Table 6).

Theme	No. of teachers	Example quote
Learning from practice	25	"the actual practice of teaching is a source of teacher development… I always discover mistakes and find new ways to deliver information through my daily practices" **(Misfir)**
Using the internet	19	"the best way of learning nowadays is through the internet. We learn everything; everything. If you search the internet for any question in life you will find an answer. It is the only thing that can meet all of my needs at any time." (**Hassan)**
Learning from colleagues	14	"when I feel that something gets difficult for me, or if I did not find what I am looking for, or if I did not recognize something fully, the first choice for me is my colleague himself." **(Hatim)**
Reading	9	"I develop myself through reading" **(Adnan)**
Social networks	8	"I use social networks to benefit from other teachers and share my knowledge…the use of personal learning networks has the greatest impact on my PD" **(Mona)**
Learning from TV	4	"In my spare time, I watch English movies which help improve my English, especially listening and speaking skills and also expand my vocabulary." **(Mona)**
Postgraduate studies	4	"Formally I engaged in Al-Baha University. I studied there, and I had a master's in applied linguistics." **(Adil)**
Paid formal courses	3	"I enrolled in many institutes where I took training courses. I paid for them myself; and I travelled to Jeddah although I did not like travel." **(Sadiq)**

Table 6: themes emerging from data with regards to self-directed TPD.

5.3.2.1 Learning from practice

All participants indicated that their daily practices and their ongoing engagement with their students represent a major source of development for them (see Table 6). Proof of this can also be found in **Yassir**'s words who said: "undoubtedly the classroom is a major source of learning because a student or a particular situation might generate a new experience to you." Each year, according to his perspective, was unlike the previous one because his classroom encounters always refine and improve his skills and teaching styles. Participants' learning in this case is supported and sustained by their ongoing trails and pursuit of new methods and better ways that work for them and their students.

Furthermore, teachers reported that assuming new roles inside schools was another source of development. This was highly emphasised by secondary school teachers who were

sometimes given some administrative roles inside their schools. **Ali**, for instance, worked as an "academic advisor" at his school and claimed that "assuming this post is effective and develops the teacher as well."

In addition, working with students on school projects has also been identified as a source of learning for some teachers. **Adil**, for instance, reflected on the days when he started a student club inside his school and recalled how that experience had enriched him and how his students had lifted him up with them:

> we used to sit, talk, make different activities, giving different programmes at the level of the school…okay; but for me when we used to sit and talk it was like sitting with teachers. They come up with different words and expressions which I don't know; their level was very high, and they lifted me up with them.

Many participants also described reflection as a tool of learning. They explained to me how the ability to think about and reflect on specific aspects of their practice helped them improve their performance and informed their future decisions. **Misfir** for instance, was one of the teachers who referred to the role of reflection in his development when he said "reflection improves my performance; this is real… I always criticise myself." **Mahmood** also adopts a critical attitude to his classroom behaviour and performance as can be seen below:

> I ask myself: why did the student do that? I discuss it within myself and find answers. My method might have been wrong. The question might have been asked incorrectly. My attitude to the student might have been unsuccessful. This makes me learn from my mistakes and change for the best.

5.3.2.2 Using the internet

The internet was another choice for many participants in terms of self-development. It provided them with an affordable and easy platform where they can network, seek help and sustain their professional learning. **Hassan**'s quote (see Table 6) is just one example to illustrate this point. **Arif**, among others, described the internet as being one of "the best things for self-learning because it can provide whatever teachers need immediately and in the easiest manner." In terms of their personal experience, many participants explained

to me how they used the internet to improve their pedagogical practices. **Barakat**, for instance, explained that he “always browse for strategies and try to watch videos demonstrating their use in websites and YouTube.” This was also echoed by **Hatim** who always uses YouTube to see how other teachers conduct their lessons.

The internet gave some participants an opportunity to personalise and customise their development according to their own specific needs. The most important of those needs, as was evident to me, was their linguistic proficiency; and the internet was the ideal source for linguistic development. **Barakat,** for instance, described to me how he benefited from the internet in developing his language through “live chat with natives.”

The internet also provided teachers with ready-made material that could be used in their classes. This feature saved them both time and energy. Some participants, for example, visit sites like “Saudi English” to exchange expertise with others and to download materials related to their subject such as “new experiences, explanations, examples, ready-made tests… and teachers’ books” as pointed out by **Mansour**.

5.3.2.3 Learning from colleagues

Hatim’s quote (see Table 6), and many others similar to it, show that learning from and with colleagues has always been an integral part of participants’ professional growth. Many participants described in their reports how they work collectively and in a collegial manner to address various issues related to their classroom practices:

> We collaborate on many things. We benefit from each other. We try to work together to use things and technologies. We do that a lot. We also try to gather bad performing students together in small classes and we give each one of us a specific area to address based on his specialisation (**Hassan**).

Sadiq, among others, also stressed the importance of informal collegial chats to his growth. **Adil** reported to me how he and his colleagues would chat informally on various aspects of their daily practices and how those talks enriched their repertoires. In a similar manner, **Mahmood** explained to me that he is always keen to mix with other teachers in the breaks to chat informally about many topics related to their practice. Those chats were

highly important to him because “a friend might bring up an idea and you take it and benefit from it” as he explained.

Informal classroom visits were another form of voluntary collegial development inside schools where teachers observe and being observed by colleagues. Although most of those visits happen between EFL teachers themselves, there were some instances of classroom visits to teachers from other disciplines. This can be seen in **Ali’**s description of the following experience:

> I visited the biology teacher and I benefited from the way he controls his class, the way he directs questions, and the way he arranges [the lesson]**.**

Although most of this collaboration remained at the level of talking about practice and advice giving, there were some hints that teachers’ collaboration sometimes goes beyond mere talk and extents to joint work on issues of mutual interest inside schools as was evident to me at **Hassan**’s school.

5.3.2.4 Reading

Reading was another source of development for nine participants (see Table 6). However, those participants emphasised that their reading was mainly for linguistic proficiency. Describing his lived experience, **Majdi** explained to me how he sometimes resorts to reading to enhance his linguistic competence. He reported to me one of his experiences when he came across a book on language development at “Jareer Bookstore.” The book was “comprehensive” and “talks about everything in language.” It was a milestone in his development because it taught him how to function in different situations as he claimed. **Adil** also explained that he is **“**a big fan of reading.” However, the act of reading at his school was rather collaboratively organized. He explained that he and some of his friends had started a small “English reading club” where they normally meet three times a week “outside school” to “read and discuss” a book that has been decided by the group. As is the case with other teachers, their reading club was geared towards linguistic development. **Essa** was one of the few teachers whose reading was not mainly focused on linguistic aspects. Rather he was mainly interested in learning more about innovations in his field. His reading focuses on “specialised teachers’ outlooks and their ways of innovation in other countries.”

5.3.2.5 Social networks

Some participants resorted to social networking in order to learn and exchange expertise as can be seen in **Mona**'s excerpt (Table 6). **Mona** stressed the value of social networking to her practice because it kept her connected to the wider community around her. **Ibrahim** was another teacher who used social networking to develop his practice. He justified his emphasis on this type of development because "there is an exchange of expertise and a diversity of cultures; and you may communicate with people who may enrich your knowledge." Social networks are also a source of linguistic development for participants as is the case with **Sameer** who uses twitter for this purpose. He also referred to Facebook where he has connections with English speaking friends.

However, it has to be mentioned that WhatsApp has been the most widespread tool of communication amongst EFL teachers. Each educational office has a closed WhatsApp group for EFL teachers which is normally used for communication and development. I have been added to one of those groups and I have experienced first-hand how teachers engage informally with one another in lively discussions about their daily practices. However, some teachers have been critical of their WhatsApp groups because they have been mainly used formally as is the case with **Adil**. Other groups, in other areas, have been criticised for overuse of Arabic.

5.3.2.6 Learning from TV

Some participants have been using TV shows, films and programmes as a source of linguistic development. One of the positive sides of watching TV, as reported by participants, was that it exposed them to real-life language input as being practiced by native speakers. This was reported by four participants including **Mona** who talked briefly about this source of learning and its importance to her personal growth (see Table 6). **Barakat** was another participant who resorted to TV in order to improve his language:

> I started to watch many programmes especially in English; sometimes all TV programmes in general. Sometimes they are not translated so that I can try to learn. This way vocabulary and terminology sticks more.

5.3.2.7 Postgraduate studies

Enrolment in a postgraduate course is a source of development for some teachers. **Adil** (see Table 6) is one of the participants who joined a master's degree course at a local university which managed to increase his knowledge on many vital educational issues such as "curriculum, students, and [educational] environment in general." **Sadiq,** who also obtained a Master of Education from a local university, emphasised the importance of this source of learning to his experience saying that "it overturns balances and concepts." The following excerpt describes how he felt after obtaining his degree:

> I can say that I am in full control of the syllabus and also of the proper methods used to teach skills. Thus, I find good interaction from my students

Some teachers haven't engaged with this kind of development yet but have the intention to do so in the future as is the case with **Arif** and **Ibrahim** who are waiting for their opportunity.

5.3.2.8 Paid formal courses

Three participants talked about how they sought training courses beyond their institutions. Such courses are not normally offered in Al-Qunfuthah. Therefore, teachers have to travel to other big cities in order to enrol in them as is the case with **Sadiq** (see Table 6). **Sadiq**'s experience was also echoed by **Adil** who joined "Wall Street Institute in Jeddah" for two months where he underwent two extensive language courses. **Ali** enrolled in an online training course at "McMillan" to improve his linguistic competence. These three participants spoke extensively on how this form of development positively affected their professional lives and enriched their repertoires. However, this form of development, as said earlier, is very limited in the area and therefore not so many teachers search for it nor benefit from it.

5.4 Perceptions on institutional support (evaluation):

This theme presents teachers' opinions and evaluations of the institutional support they receive from their employer (see Table 7).

Theme	No. of teachers	Example quotes
Top-down development	25	"I don't remember that either me or anyone of my friends have ever been consulted on the name or the nature of those events" **(Barakat)**
Repetitive and concentrate on methodology	23	"in the last four or five years, all what we received was just teaching strategies" **(Misfir)**
Skewed attendance	13	"I am always keen to attend them…I have never apologized unless I was travelling." **(Mansour)**
Unqualified trainers	11	"I feel that the trainer himself needs to be trained on the material he is presenting. He is weak, superficial, and unattractive." **(Misfir)**
Theoretically oriented	8	"programs are not up to aspirations; they are mostly traditional…there is no practice; there is no real training. At the end, I am listening to a lecture for about two to three hours and then you come back with nothing…there are no tangible experiences" **(Fayz)**
Given to teachers indiscriminately	8	"[they] are given to teachers from all disciplines; not just the English teachers. Basically, the same programme and the same approach. Everything is the same" **(Majdi)**

Table 7: themes emerging from data showing participants' evaluation of institutional TPD.

5.4.1 Top-down development

All participants emphasised that institutional training is almost always top-down in nature and randomly delivered to teachers. Teachers' voices with regards to their training needs have always been neglected as explained by **Barakat** who was echoed by many others (see Table 7). Teachers spoke of ready-made packages distributed from MoE to supervisors who in turn deliver them to teachers without consultation or consideration of their actual needs. The following excerpt is said by **Misfir** with a great sense of dissatisfaction and resentment to further elaborate on this point:

> they are given to us randomly. There is no specific method of evaluation of the things I desperately need; or of the things I am weak in; and then provide training based on my actual needs…There is no criterion for this.

Institutional provisions are therefore decontextualised and irrelevant to teachers' immediate needs. This was stated by many participants including **Mahmood** who said, "Just a few of the training events do actually keep pace with the needs of the school." **Barakat** confirmed this saying that he has witnessed three different textbooks in the last three years and that he has not received any training that gives him direction on how to

teach them. Furthermore, many participants emphasised that they do not receive institutional provisions that cater for their linguistic needs which represent a main concern for them. Educational officials, as argued by **Hatim**, "don't pay attention to this issue." He, among others, feel that the educational authority seems not interested in their linguistic competence and therefore does not prioritise it in its training plans. This is "a serious problem," according to **Misfir**'s perspective, because he feels its negative impact on his practice.

5.4.2 Repetitive and concentrate on methodology

The majority of participants reported that institutional training programmes were mostly repetitive. Their content does not vary considerably from year to year. Evidence of this can be seen in **Majdi**'s words who articulated that:

> [programmes] are repeated every year…If I take this programme, then I will take it again next year under another name; but the same content

Coupled with their lack of diversity, institutional provisions mostly concentrate on teaching methods and strategies. This can be seen in **Misfir**'s words (see Table 7) who emphasised that other important aspects such as "personality building, character building or class management," are completely out of the range of those provisions.

Mansour was also highly dissatisfied for the same reason. He thinks that the basis upon which institutional provisions are built are completely wrong because suppliers seem to target students and neglect the teacher who is the real channel through which students can learn. The following excerpt provides an insight on how he feels about this issue:

> we don't have any academic programmes…the teacher is mostly forgotten, and then he will be held accountable for everything: why didn't you do that?...all those strategies concentrate on the student; they do not concentrate on the teacher.

Sadiq emphasised this issue saying that the MoE is mainly interested in efficient material delivery, rather than teachers' actual development. He feels that it is the curriculum that is targeted by the MoE's development plans and not the teacher himself. This approach, according his perspective, fails to enhance teachers' ongoing learning and to make them adaptive to change:

> Ok, when you focus on the curriculum, I will keep pace with you in the curriculum, but where is my share? Ok, I will deliver the material, but I need more than that to keep pace with you when you change the textbook.

5.4.3 skewed attendance

As can be seen in Table 7, some participants expressed their eagerness to attend institutional training events regardless of whether they cater for their needs or not. Several reasons were cited for assigning this importance to attendance. The first reason is that training events represent an English language forum for teachers where they feel a sense of community. Attending them gives teachers a chance to mix with their peers, practice their language, exchange ideas, and seek help. This issue was highly emphasised by teachers who tend to work alone at their schools. The following excerpt, for example, describes carefully what those events represent to **Hassan** who used to be the only EFL teacher at his school:

> They are the only shelter where I meet [colleagues] and benefit from their help: like discussing the difficulties I face right now or asking for books, for stuff; for all information.

Some teachers attend training sessions because they are obligatory. **Jameelah**, for example, pointed out that attendance is "compulsory;" and that if a teacher misses one of them, then he/she is expected to be questioned. Still other teachers attend them just to obtain certificates. Training hours are counted for teachers in competitions for a new post or for attending an award-wining training program. Therefore, teachers attend to get certificates and to collect as many points as possible as is the case with **Majdi.** When I asked if he attends training events to benefit from them, his answer was:

> No, no; I don't think so. To be honest, the goal is just to receive a certificate.

Surprisingly, some teachers, especially those at big schools, confessed to me that they sometimes attend just to run away from their classes. Training, in this case, gives them a chance to take some time off and rest. For example, **Yassir** sometimes heads for the training centre just "to run away from the class." This was echoed by **Ibrahim** who

explained that he sometimes attends training events "to get rid of work… out of the pressure of classes."

5.4.4 Unqualified trainers

Some participants shared an established believe that trainers were not sufficiently qualified. Training events are mostly delivered by local supervisors who don't have the experiences nor the qualification to conduct programmes efficiently, as stressed by some participants. **Misfir**'s response (see Table 7) is just one example that shows part of teachers' dissatisfaction. According to **Waleed**'s perspective, training in Al-Qunfuthah is normally "presented by a person who is at the same level as the teacher or perhaps even less than him." This is one of the main factors that limit the quality and effectiveness of institutional training in the area, as he observed.

I have also discovered that the name of the programme presenter was sometimes a determining factor in participants' attendance. When teachers see the name of a person whom they think does not have the qualification to deliver the training event properly, they might not attend. This was carefully illustrated by **Ibrahim**:

> First, I take a look at the person who will deliver it. If I know his background and feel that I might not benefit, then I don't attend.

5.4.5 Theoretically-oriented

Some teachers' reports imply that institutional training events are theoretically-oriented and abstract with little or no attention devoted to actual practice. Participants claimed that institutional training was mainly delivered to them in the form of lectures that were both traditional and boring. Part of teachers' dissatisfaction can be witnessed in **Fayz**'s excerpt above (Table 7). Participants expressed their desires to have practical workshops that give them tangible experiences, direction and insight. Some teachers, for instance, have never been to any practical workshops as is the case with **Mona** who stated, "until now I have not been on any practical courses."

Lack of demonstration prevented new experiences and knowledge from being assimilated into participant's teaching practices and therefore, they were unable to try out new knowledge in their classrooms:

> I can't transfer the idea to the class in a good manner; this real. Why? Because I did not receive any practical training on the idea. I did not understand it well (**Misfir**).

5.4.6 Given to teachers indiscriminately

Majdi's words (see Table 7) illustrate that the kind of training presented to participants is not specific to EFL teachers. Rather, it is given to teachers indiscriminately regardless of their discipline or level; and this reduces its value and effectiveness. Implicit in teachers' accounts is an argument emphasising that EFL teachers should receive training programmes different in quality and nature from other teachers. Their justification centred around the uniqueness of English in their context:

> it is necessary to receive different professional development programmes because it is a foreign language with little practice in the wider community **(Ibrahim)**.

Even the few training programs that have been designed for EFL teachers did not satisfy all their needs. Some participants spoke of how teachers of varying teaching experiences, ranging from novice to experienced, were normally grouped in one training event "regardless of their levels, skills, and readiness" as explained by **Waleed**. This issue, according to his opinion, limited the efficiency of those programs; and therefore, "they are unlikely to improve a skill, teach a skill, or modify incorrect behavioural or educational practices."

5.5 Factors impacting on teacher's engagement with TPD

This theme reports factors affecting teachers' engagement with TPD opportunities either positively or negatively. Two main factors have been identified in teachers reports: motivators (drivers) and de-motivators(challenges).

5.5.1 De-motivators

Participants identified a number of inhibiting and demotivating factors that affected and interfered with their engagement with TPD opportunities (see table 8). However, these

factors did not in any way stop teachers from pursuing development as was evident in this report. These factors are fully discussed under this sub-theme.

Theme	No. of teachers	Example quote
Under-resourced schools.	19	“the educational environment is not motivating; there is a shortage of educational tools, technologies, and even classroom facilities.” (**Adnan**)
Workloads.	19	“stressing teachers mentally and physically contributed to a large extent to the unwillingness of some teachers to develop themselves.” **(Hani)**
Marginalisation.	18	“we have no voice in our educational context; the MoE is informed by experts and we just apply; we are just machines.” **(Basim)**
Lack of incentives.	16	“Why don’t they provide a sum of money as a motivation for teachers? let them have motivation and desire for development.” (**Misfir).**
Lack of teacher appreciation and recognition.	15	“no matter how professional I was, at the end, I and the one who does not do anything will be in the same situation, the same level and the same view from the directorate.” **(Barakat)**.
Current textbooks.	13	“[the textbook] was also one of the things that frustrated the teacher. There is even a kind of aversion among teachers from the curriculum…it is not suitable for the student nor the teacher…it is full of stuff and presents things far above students’ levels.” **(Mahmood)**
Lack of social support.	11	“The social culture towards schools has become so dispiriting. The school is being viewed like an enemy [by families]; and sadly, this issue is so obvious…these are some of the things that participated in the teacher’s frustration and decline.” **(Mahmood)**
Students’ low achievement	10	“Above all, we need students' own efforts; because once we found the interest, we can then achieve what is hoped from us.” **(Basim)**.
Lack of training facilities.	7	“when I came here I was shocked and I was like frustrated. Yes, this is the word: frustrated… No facilities to help the teachers develop themselves. No big libraries if you want to hire books.” **(Adil)**
Applying to award-winning programs is difficult.	5	“if a person chooses to pursue his higher studies, he will find it extremely difficult to obtain a leave. It is so frustrating” **(Sadiq)**
independent training programmes are costly.	4	“I applied to McMillan institute, but the cost was very high…money is sometimes an obstacle to joining high quality training courses.” **(Ali)**

Table 8: themes emerging from data with regards to TPD obstacles.

5.5.1.1 Under-resourced schools

Many participants complained about the fact that their schools were under-resourced in terms of technologies, equipment, labs, and teaching aids. As a result, teachers felt that they could not do their job properly and this, in their opinion, severely affected their sense of professionalism. Unavailability of equipment and resources were a source of concern for **Adnan** as can be seen in Table 8.

Upon my field visits to some participants, I found out that some schools do have some facilities like a room of resources which is fully equipped with computers and teaching aids. However, the majority of schools tend to have one room which is not enough to accommodate all staff. Talking about the shortage of facilities at his school, **Ibrahim** explained:

> we don't have labs, but we do have a room of learning resources; but it is shared by all the teachers; and it is not enough. It does not serve even 10% of our needs.

I also found out that few schools do have some labs for language practice. However, most of those labs were in big schools which tend to be over-populated with students. Sometimes the number of students exceed the capacity of the lab. Some of those labs were either under-resourced or lacked proper maintenance and this reduced their value, as observed by participants. **Misfir**, for instance, has never used the language lab at his school because it was "not fully equipped" and that most of the computers were "out of order."

In addition, some participants complained about the lack of important teaching aids such as headphones, posters, flashcards, and teachers' manuals. Such tools are not normally provided to teachers; and therefore, they have to supply these things themselves otherwise they won't be able to function well. **Hatim** for instance, explained that he has not received any device form the educational office for more than 9 years. This was also confirmed by **Sameer** who stated angrily:

> imagine! the ministry does not give you any learning aid. It only gives you the book and says: here you are.

Lack of teaching aids had serious implications on **Hassan**'s lessons. He explained to me how he sometimes feels helpless because he cannot teach students properly due to lack of essential equipment. New textbooks, as he pointed out, depend heavily on listening; however, lack of listening equipment at his school was a challenge:

> 80% of the textbook now depends on listening… but I don't have listening equipment. They were not provided to me … So, what can I do?

5.5.1.2 Workloads

Participants noted the impact of workload on their practice. This factor impacted negatively on performance; and affected their engagement with TPD as can be seen in Table 8. Many responses imply that teachers are overloaded with classes at schools. **Arif**, for instance, teaches up to five classes per day. This is "an incredible workload," as he pointed out; and which puts too much pressure on the teacher, confuses him, and limits his innovation. Commenting on the effect of this factor on his practice, **Hatim** said "the day I have four classes means I will not give my best." **Barakat** also spoke about "the physical effort and the psychological stress" that often accompany his "22 classes."

Additionally, participants' days at schools are inundated with extra routine tasks. **Hatim** complains of "supervising students during the two breaks and the prayer time," "the morning program," and "the extra classes" given to him when one of his colleagues is absent. Most of **Majdi**'s free time at school is devoted to "correcting and marking students' work… and managing students' portfolios". **Basim** has to work as "the media coordinator and the health supervisor" inside his school. These are just a few examples to summarise what teachers have to do alongside teaching. Participants feel that those tasks exhausted them, affected their performance and put their professionalism at stake. They normally take too much time and effort to accomplish. Teachers, according to **Mona, "**have to fight in order to do all of these things properly, honestly, and on time; whereas there is no time to do them." Teachers, in her opinion, are not given enough free time to learn and to exchange expertise at schools. Furthermore, working under such conditions, according to **Misfir**, "limits the teacher's excellence" and often drives him into laziness and conventionalism. He explained to me how stress, fatigue and burn out, sometimes force him to "do a very traditional class and then go to rest."

I was also surprised to find out that some teachers work in more than one school. **Hayat** is one of the female teachers who teaches at three adjacent schools at the same day. This reality impacted negatively on her performance and motivation. She explained that she does not find enough time for her students nor for her development.

I was also informed by **Adnan** that heavy workloads sometimes prevent them from attending official in-service TPD events because they are mostly conducted during the normal school day. To attend them, teachers have to leave their classrooms. However, head teachers sometimes prevent their attendance because they think that accomplishing their school tasks should be prioritised.

5.5.1.3 Marginalisation

I have noticed that marginalisation has been one of the main demotivating and demoralising factors. Participants' reports indicate that they experience a high level of institutional marginalisation in many aspects of their practice (see Table 8). Some participants described their relationship with their institutional authority as being problematic. Many participants referred to themselves as being mere implementers whose roles are limited to material delivery. In describing the relationship between MoE and teachers, **Hatim** articulated:

> I don't feel like a partner; I am just a recipient; I don't feel that [MoE] is interested or keen to communicate with us or take our opinions seriously.

Some participants revealed that they have neither voice nor contribution in many issues related to their practice including curriculum development, training provisions and even choice of teaching methodologies. A few participants, for instance, talked with a great sense of dissatisfaction about the repeated change of their textbooks which happened without reference to their opinions:

> every two or three years we have a new syllabus and our opinions have never been obtained about it. Of course, I want to be informed. Ok, now you have changed the series: why did you do that? We don't know (**Majdi**).

Some participants also reported that their views have never been solicited with regards to their training needs. Training events "fall like rain from above," as claimed by **Sameer.** This was also reiterated by **Basim** who explained that he has never been consulted about

his training needs since joining service. Educational officials, as he pointed out "determine the programmes and say to us: come and get it." As a result, most of those training events were disappointing to participants and did not match their actual needs.

Participants also talked about some occasions where officials interfered with the way they teach inside their classrooms. They explained to me that they sometimes receive letters from the educational authority asking them to carry out lessons according to specific teaching methodologies. This often resulted in mediocre lessons because not all teachers were able do that due to lack of proper training. In addition, some teaching methodologies cannot be applied by teachers as explained by participants. Such methodologies according to **Mahmood** "disregard students' overall levels, standards in English and the reality of the school environment itself." Such incidents, as stressed by some participants, interfered with their agency and affected their sense of empowerment. Educational officials "just want the teacher to carry out their orders. They don't want him to be creative on his own way" as explained by **Hani.**

5.5.1.4 Lack of incentives

Some participants seemed to attach too much importance to incentives as can be seen in **Misfir**'s quote (see Table 8). Lack of incentives was apparently a major demotivating factor as observed by many of teachers. **Waleed**, for instance, believed that "the failure to link professional development with attractive incentives for teachers" was one of the most insidious demotivating factors. Although some teachers were so broad in their use of the word incentives, the majority used it here to refer specifically to financial rewards.

Talking about institutional training events, **Sadiq** explained to me how teachers in the past used to receive "financial incentives for attendance;" and how that factor was reflected positively on the number of attendees at those events. Sometimes he used to receive about "2000 riyals or more" for attending a training programme organised outside Al-Qunfuthah. But nowadays, as he continued, those rewards are non-existent. This issue, as he argued, affected even the number of people attending training events. "There is a big difference between attendance six years ago and now" as he noted.

Lack of financial incentives had restricted teachers' engagement with self-directed development as well. **Majdi** confessed clearly to me that this issue had minimised his engagement with TPD:

> to be honest and clear with you, I have some interest in [self]-development but not that much…and if you want the reasons, I would say that there are no encouraging incentives

The same was reported by **Ibrahim** who justified his position saying that "there is nothing to encourage you to personally develop yourself." He remarked that "whether you worked hard or not, nothing will be given to you." And therefore, like some other participants, instead of taking the initiative, he is sometimes content with his institution's provisions.

Upon discussing this issue with participants, some of them referred to their monthly pay. Some participants were totally dissatisfied with what they get and blamed MoE for being underpaid. Although many participants referred to it briefly, **Sameer** was willing to elaborate on that issue; and which according to his opinion, was closely linked to incentives. "Money is the basis of everything," as he explained, and therefore, he wants MoE to give EFL teachers some of what he termed as "stolen financial rights." Some teachers, as he continued, are not receiving their full monthly payments for reasons that are totally unjustifiable to teachers. "Do not expect excellence from them," he said to me arguing that teachers will not do their best if MoE do not pay attention to this "secret failure." He told me about some examples of teachers who were not performing well inside classrooms in retaliation for their reduced payments.

5.5.1.5 Lack of teacher appreciation and recognition

It was clear from teachers' reports that lack of appreciation, recognition and respect were some of the main factors that played a role in their orientation towards TPD and their job satisfaction. Some participants spoke of how sometimes their efforts and achievements were not recognised by their institutions. Educational officials, according to **Sayed** "do not differentiate between those who want development and those who do not." Therefore, some participants feel that there is no real value placed on what they do. Good performing teachers and bad performing teachers, as explained by participants, receive the same consideration and attention from MoE; and therefore, there is no point in stressing oneself with the extra burden of TPD activities. **Barakat**'s words (see Table 8) summarise part of this argument.

Furthermore, teachers who pursue development in a self-directed manner feel that they have been betrayed by MoE for not appreciating their initiatives. Some of the participants

stressed that teachers who willingly engage with this form of development do not receive any consideration or support from MoE. For instance, **Fayz**, who strongly believes in the value of self-driven TPD, said with a great sense of dissatisfaction “we never received a certificate on a [self-initiated] development programme.”

Yasser, among others, also emphasised that other symbolic gestures of recognition and appreciation are non-existent. Simple notes of “thank you” from officials are almost unheard of, as he pointed out to me. He explained laughingly to me that “our problem is that gratitude is non-existent”.

5.5.1.6 Current textbooks

According to some participants, current textbooks are difficult, rich and conflict with students’ actual level in English. Therefore, they feel that they could not teach them properly to their student no matter what teaching strategies they use; and this in effect demotivated them and impacted negatively on their performance. This idea was carefully captured by many participants including **Mahmood** as can be seen in Table 8.

The teacher, according to **Hatim,** also “needs extra time and extra effort in order to do all the tasks”, and this is not always possible in the class given the length and richness of the lessons. Sometimes teachers find themselves just wandering about desperately in an attempt to present as much material as possible from the lesson without paying attention to students’ attainment. “[The teacher] does not focus on students’ achievement nor on their learning as on completing his duties and ending the textbook” as made clear by **Hatim**. Participants explained that they are constantly under pressure to finish the textbook within the designated time otherwise they will be held responsible.

5.5.1.7 Lack of social support

Many participants talked about the disparaging social culture towards teachers and schools; and how that issue impacted negatively on their morale and productivity. **Mahmood** for instance, is one of the teachers who touched on the insidious impact of this demotivating factor on teachers’ practice (see Table 8).

Participants believe that families are a determining factor in students’ achievement and orientation towards English and therefore their involvement in the educational process is

essential for teachers' success. However, parents, according to participants, are not doing well in supporting their children's learning. **Ali** described the relationship between homes and schools as being "very weak;" and sometimes destructive as well because "the teacher builds and the house destroys." **Ibrahim** who was so emotional about this issue, talked about parents' carelessness and indifference towards their children's education saying that "most of them do not know what their children study at school." This neglect has a devastating effect on his performance because "it normally discourages [him]from being creative"

Furthermore, some parents also tent to send negative messages about English to their children which often result in students' alienation, lack of interest and low achievement. Addressing this issue, **Mansour**, explained to me how on some occasions he approaches some parents to talk about their children's progress and how he normally receives negative replies from them:

> it surprises me when I meet a parent and say to him: your child is so and so, and he says to me: I have barely succeeded in English myself. English is difficult.

Such messages, according to his opinion, created a sense of carelessness towards the subject and a lack of interest among students which in turn fuelled a kind of discouragement and disappointment among their teachers. In further explaining the impact of these forces on his practice, he said "I see them very disappointing… [the teacher] becomes indifferent. You know; I am serious but unfortunately, the house is not."

5.5.1.8 Students' low achievement

Students' low achievement in English seems to be another demotivating factor. Some participants were mostly dissatisfied with their students' performance in English and felt the impact of that factor on their practice. Students' interaction, interest and desire were central to teacher motivation and effectiveness as was evident in **Basim**'s words (see Table 8). Teachers, according to **Hatim**, work hard but receive no considerable interaction from their students because "there is a big slice of students whom you don't feel in them any improvement or desire in learning for various reasons." This was also reflected in **Ibrahim**'s words who spoke of his students' low awareness and lack of motivation:

> [students] say: 'why do we study this language? We will never benefit from it and we don't want it.' You will hardly come across a student who is fully aware.

I noticed that such negative experiences had impacted negatively on some teachers' morale, motivation and engagement with development. It also instilled in some participants a deep believe that whatever efforts they make, will often go unrewarded by their students. As a result, some participants believed that the minimum level of skills was normally sufficient for them to carry out their tasks properly:

> sometimes the reality and the frustration the teacher faces make him stop improving; because he tells himself that I will work and work and work and then nothing. I will blow in a popped balloon…the student shows no improvement…the teacher feels that whether he develops or not are the same **(Mahmood).**

5.5.1.9 Lack of training facilities.

Many participants have the desire to apply to English language institutes and/or specialised training centres so that they can improve their linguistic competences and pedagogical practices. However, the fact that such facilities are not available in their area frustrates them and restricts the process of their development. **Adil**, who recently moved to the area, provided a typical response that carefully shows how participants feel about this issue (see Table 8). **Essa** is also one of the participants who obviously felt the implications of those factors on his practice and who would like to change that reality:

> we don't have institutes in those villages to practice the language and to exchange ideas and plans. We would like to have development facilities so that we can catch up with others in the process of development. The teacher has a limited space here.

If teachers want to enrol in quality training courses, they have to travel to nearby cities. However, this issue is "a little bit difficult," as pointed out by **Hatim**; and therefore, not so many teachers can afford that. Distance, commitments and expenses were some of the challenges teachers have to think about.

Furthermore, teachers working in outlying areas were mostly dependent on the internet for development purposes. However, the internet, as explained by some participants and as experienced by myself, was very week and sometimes non-existent. The network coverage where **Adil** lives and teaches is almost always "2G" and this is "very slow" for browsing. Therefore, "you have to go to remote places where you can find good network" as he pointed out.

5.5.1.10 Applying to award-winning programmes is difficult

A few teachers talked about some high-quality award-wining programmes that are available in their context, although in a very limited manner. Emphasis was on postgraduate studies, Khebrat, and Fulbright. Joining one of these opportunities is "not impossible, but not easy too" as explained by **Ibrahim** who talked extensively about this issue. What added to his dissatisfaction is that such programs are not open to all teachers; rather it is "confined to a certain group of teachers." It was clear from participants' talks that supervisors and teachers with high qualifications are the ones who normally benefit from these opportunities. Furthermore, the number of teachers allocated to each programme is very limited. Talking about his issue **Ibrahim** said, "just one teacher is normally chosen [in Khebrat and Fulbright] and therefore it is hard to obtain it especially if applicants have higher qualifications." The idea of travel and being away from the family was another difficulty mentioned by some participants.

To join a postgraduate course, teachers have to fulfil the ministry's requirements which are "sometimes impossible to realise.," as explained by **Ibrahim**. He noted that if the teacher's grade in his undergraduate study was less that "good" then he may not have a chance no matter how excellent he was in his service. Applying to Saudi universities is often governed by distance as he explained. teachers are not allowed to apply to a university that is more than 150 km away from where they work.

Despite these difficulties, some teachers managed to join postgraduate studies at local universities while working hoping that the MoE would give them a leave of absence so that they would be able to finish their studies. However, this did not happen; and the participants I interviewed managed to complete their studies without receiving any help from the MoE which refused to cooperate with them. This was clearly expressed by **Adil** who went through this process and who tried hard to get a leave of absence or to have his

classes reduced so that he can complete his studies. He had to finish his 20 classes at his school before commuting to his university in the afternoon where he used to stay till late at night. This was also the case with **Sadiq** who talked extensively about some of the hardships that faced him at that time. He also explained to me how some of his outstanding colleagues quit the programmes because they could not cope:

> about ten teachers from our group alone withdrew from the course because of this matter. They were accepted, and their levels were very high, but they quit because they were not given a leave from work.

5.5.1.11 Independent training programmes are costly

Some participants sought training courses elsewhere because institutional provisions did not cater for their basic needs, especially their language. Such development programmes are not normally offered in Al-Qunfuthah. Therefore, teachers have to access them online and/or travel to nearby cities in order to enrol in them. However, not all teacher can afford to pay for those programmes due to the high cost. This can be seen in **Ali** experience when he applied for an intensive English Language course at McMillan (see Table 8). The course was highly beneficial to him; however, he could not continue due to financial challenges.

This experience was also echoed by some other teachers who have the desire to enrol in language institutes but could not realise their dreams for financial reasons. Therefore, many participants were satisfied by what was being offered to them by their institutions although it did not target their needs.

5.5.2 Motivators

Participants expressed their interest in TPD and willingness to practice it. Therefore, they were asked about that factors that motivated them and enhanced their engagement. A wide range of factors have been reported by participants as can be seen in Table (9) below:

Theme	No. of teachers	Example quote
intrinsic motivation	16	"I believe that the first encouraging factor is the intrinsic one: yourself; If you want to develop yourself, then be quite sure that you will achieve." **(Fayz)**
Head teacher support and encouragement	14	"he provided to me all what I need in terms of technologies and teaching aids. Everything I ask for, it is always provided…[He] is very cooperative" **(Arif).**
moral obligation	13	"The responsibility towards my students and towards educating them is what drives me to participate in TPD." **(Sameer)**
Students' level in English	10	"It is the student who controls us. If the student is advanced, then you definitely have to develop yourself." (**Misfir)**
Fear of language loss	8	Regardless of being a teacher, you are still a learner of English; you need to constantly develop yourself so that you maintain your language **(Sadiq)**
Current textbooks	7	"the syllabi are a little bit difficult now… they are a bit rich and need an effort from the student and the teacher; the teacher has to prepare himself "(**Hatim)**

Table 9: themes emerging from data with regards to TPD drivers.

5.5.2.1 Intrinsic motivation

Some participants were obviously intrinsically motivated. **Fayz** (see Table 9), among others, believes that self-motivation and desire are the starting point for TPD. To confirm this, **Basim** emphasised that he does not see any other obstacle more inhibiting to TPD than lack of motivation. And according to his opinion: "If self-motivation is lacking, then everything else will be lacking; and if it exists, then the person will develop no matter what."

Ibrahim, who from time to time engages with some forms of self-development, explained to me that he does so "just out of love for self-development," although he knows clearly well that institutional incentives and support are lacking. **Hassan** is also intrinsically motivated because he loves to use new technologies and teaching methods in his teaching. Engagement with TPD is a priority for him because it helps him achieve his goals. Some other participants engage with TPD opportunities to ward off the boredom that might accompany their daily practices as is the case with **Majdi** who justified his interest in development saying that: "when I keep on at the same level and don't change, I will get bored."

Part of participants' intrinsic motivation is linked to the desire to keep up with change. Participants' reports indicated that they were fully aware that the nature of their daily

practices is changeable, and this requires continuous improvement. **Misfir**'s engagement with TPD, for instance, was triggered by his internal desire to keep up with the changing nature of his profession:

> an advanced student is sitting in front of me and changeable syllabi are ahead of me. Many variables are in front of me. I have to change like them.

Others are intrinsically motivated because they think TPD will help them establish their future aims. This has been emphasised by many participants including **Ibrahim**, who stated: "I am keen to improve my level because I have future goals which I would like to achieve through development."

5.5.2.2 Head teacher support and encouragement

Head teachers' emotional and financial support drove some participants towards improving their practice. This issue was highlighted by many participants; and **Arif**'s quote is just one example (see Table 9). Teachers provided many examples that show how their head teachers encouraged and sustained school cultures that are supportive of CPD. The school leader's "moral motivation and verbal encouragement," for instance, boosted **Fayz**'s morale and changed his attitude towards development. At **Ibrahim**'s school the head teachers' "encouragement" and "kind words" were among the main motivating factors that enhanced teachers' development. To show the effect of this kind of support on his practice, **Ibrahim** said: "when he encourages me, I pay more effort." **Ali**'s head teacher always honours distinguished students and hardworking teachers. Students normally receive "financial rewards" while teachers receive "certificates" in recognition of their work. "It means a lot to me when I get a certificate in front of my colleagues," **Ali** said to show the effect of this on his motivation. **Yassir's** head teacher was supportive in a different manner. He started "a committee" for teacher development at the school called "development of education" which is headed by **Yassir** himself; and which aimed at enhancing ongoing learning among school staff.

Furthermore, some head teachers worked very hard to increase their schools' readiness as is the case at **Fayz**'s school. This matter helped teachers work effectively towards achieving their potential. The head teacher at **Basim**'s school was another unique example. The school's "budget is open," as he pointed out, so that teachers can get whatever they want in terms of technologies and teaching aids. In addition, the most

distinguished teacher at the school normally receives “a hotel-stay in Makkah next to the Holly mosque for two or three days payed by the school” at the end of the year.

5.5.2.3 Moral obligation

Some participants engage with TPD opportunities because they see it as a moral obligation towards their students. Their ongoing improvement is then driven by a sense of responsibility and a moral commitment to serve the needs and interests of those whom they are entrusted with. Evidence of this is clearly visible in **Sameer**’s quote (see Table 9). He noted that “If I find a deficiency in myself, I see it like something moral, a reprimand of conscience.” He also explained that education is built on students and therefore, it’s the teachers’ responsibility to meet his students’ demands. He spoke openly about how he sometimes feels “ashamed” when he finds a “deficiency” in his performance. This is one of the main drivers that always inspires him, and which according to his opinion, should be upheld as one of the major forces that should push every teacher to “develop himself professionally.”

Ali’s report also provides more evidence on the role of morals and ethics in motivating teachers:

> We have to be faithful to the student; and development is for the student. It is true that I develop myself, but the issue is not merely personal…it is a responsibility.

Teachers spoke of how they were normally overcome with a sense of self-satisfaction when they feel that they have given student their utmost. Their development and learning pay off when they see their students as grown up professionals. **Yassir** among others, stated that: “the person who works hard, will feel self-satisfaction,” to justify why he engages with TPD opportunities regardless of the many demotivating factors around him. The teacher, as he continued, feels this sense of satisfaction when his students “graduate” and became valuable members in their communities.

Teachers’ morality is sometimes pushed by their religious beliefs. This was clear in **Mahmood**’s words when I asked him about what drives him to update his knowledge and improve his practice. His reply was: “sincerity and then sincerity and then remembrance of the supreme watcher [God].” **Essa,** who teaches in a remote area where institutional training is almost non-existent, is also religiously motivated to purse learning in a self-

driven manner despite the scarcity of resources. He feels that has to do so because it is "an obligation in front of Allah."

5.5.2.4 Students' level of English

Misfir's quote (see Table 9) shows clearly that the student's level is an important factor in determining teachers' effectiveness. Having higher-level performing students in English is another motivating factor that often pushes teachers towards improving their linguistic competence and teaching practices. Some participants pointed out that some of their students have attained good grasp of English as a result of accompanying their families to English speaking countries; and their presence in the classroom was a driving force for improvement:

> I have about seven students who have studied in the US and in Britain. Their level is sometimes close to the native speaker. Compared to me, they are sometimes better. They lived the language. So, I have to keep pace with them (**Barakat**).

Having such students in class seemed to have a double effect on teachers' practice. It was a source of embarrassment and a catalyst for development at the same time. **Yassir**, for instance, described to me the amount of embarrassment he used to feel whenever he was corrected by one of his fluent students. However, that experience was also motivational for him because it compelled him to invest more in his language so that he can keep up with his students and ward off future embarrassment.

5.5.2.5 Fear of language loss

Some participants engage with TPD opportunities because they want to protect their language as can be seen in **Sadiq**'s words (Table 9). Their reports imply that the nature of English language itself was a major driving force towards development being a foreign language in a non-supportive environment. Participants are also fully aware that English is a fast-growing language and that "everyday something new emerges in [it] that requires continuous professional development." **(Waleed).** Engagement with TPD gives them a chance to review their language and catch up with new trends in it.

A few participants reported that their language is currently limited to the syllabus and contained within the walls of their classrooms, and thus, some of them feel that this issue

is devastating to their linguistic capacity. Therefore, TPD events provide them with a chance to maintain their language. **Yassir**, for instance, is one of the participants who is fully aware of the negative impact of this reality on his practice and therefore always tries to enrol in training events so that he can update his language:

> I am confined to a syllabus of A B C, etc.…what about my [linguistic] background? What will happen to it? I don't use it. But when I enrol in training programmes where all participants speak English, I have a chance to chat…we revise our background.

5.5.2.6 Textbooks

Responses like **Hatim**'s (see Table 9) gave me an impression that the new textbooks were also among the main forces that seem to influence teachers' engagement with TPD. Although reported as being among the main hindrances for teacher effectiveness, current textbooks were also reported by some teachers as a driving force for development. This was clearly stated by **Ali** who said: "the curriculum is one of the reasons for our development now." Many other participants talked about how difficult and rich those textbooks are and how teachers need to spend more time on them in order to deliver them properly.

In addition to their difficulty and richness, textbooks also "require new ways of teaching other than those used in the past" as put by **Mansour**. They always drive him to teach in ways he has never experienced before; and this requires more learning, so he can deliver his material properly. Therefore, the teacher, as he stressed, "always needs to read, search, and develop." Speaking about his personal experience, **Ali** said "in fact, you would find me spend two to three hours on this issue; searching before going to the students." Time spent on preparation, as he explained, is essential for him; otherwise he will not be able to deliver textbooks properly.

5.6 Suggestions for improvement

This theme presents teachers' suggestions and recommendations with regards to how they think TPD could be improved in KSA (see Table 10).

Theme	No. of teachers	Example quote
Improving institutional provisions	25	"I recommend that training events be improved in terms of content and performance in a good and helpful manner" **(Jameelah)**
Rethinking the relationship between the MoE and teachers	13	"With regards to the relationship between MoE and teachers in general, I hope that it (MoE) will be close to us; And as we said teachers should be involved as partners in the educational process" **(Barakat)**
Less workloads	12	"[Teachers] should not be overworked so that they will be given enough room and time to search and look for ways to develop professionally" **(Jameelah)**
Textbooks should be revised	9	"I wish current textbooks would be revised; and reduced a little bit" **(Basim)**
Giving incentives to teachers	9	"there should be incentives. If incentives are there, then teachers will develop and find new ideas" **(Ibrahim)**
Raising teachers' awareness	4	"there should be large awareness campaigns; I mean to raise [teachers'] awareness; there is absolutely nothing" **(Majdi)**

Table 10: themes emerging from data with regards to suggestions for improvement.

5.6.1 Improving institutional provisions

Jameelah's words (see Table 10) reflects the opinions of the majority who want MoE to improve institutional training in terms of context, methods, content and mode of delivery. **Jameelah**, among others, for instance, would like MoE to "make sure that training courses are diverse and not limited to curricula and textbooks." The number of institutional provisions, according to **Majdi**, should be "intensified" instead of having two or three programmes per year. Participants want to be consulted on their training needs before the introduction of any training event for more effectiveness. "If the teacher's voice is present, then you will find the appropriate training courses," as pointed out by **Misfir**. One of the main concerns of teachers, as reported elsewhere in this section, is their linguistic competence. **Adil** among others, stressed this saying that providers should give the teacher "programmes in terms of developing his linguistic abilities," because some teachers, as he argued, "forgot most of their language."

Furthermore, methodology training events must pay equal attention to the practical side as stressed by participants. This could be done through practical workshops and/or model lessons as recommended by **Barakat.** In addition, participants feel that they are quite

different from other teachers because they are dealing with a second language that has no social function in the community; and therefore, they should receive different training:

> The EFL teacher must receive development programs different from other teachers because it is an acquired language and he needs to master it so that he can teach it to students correctly and efficiently (**Hayat**).

For more effectiveness, some participants think that institutional programs should be delivered by "training specialists other than local supervisors" (**Barakat)**. However, those who stressed this point further explained that they would like international experts to conduct training especially qualified personnel from English speaking countries. This issue, according to **Adil** among others, is expected to improve their linguistic abilities, convey new expertise to them and change their attitude to training.

5.6.2 Rethinking the relationship between the MoE and teachers

The relationship between MoE and teachers emerged as a key issue of consideration for some participants. To enhance teacher excellence, empowerment and innovation, some basic conditions must be in place as explained by participants. The first of these is involving teachers as real partners instead of being mere implementers of top-down educational packages as can be seen in **Barakat's** quote (see Table 10). Doing so, as he explained, will make teachers feel integrated and will also encourage a sense of belonging among them. Many participants feel that it is high time for MoE to change its approach to teachers. **Hani,** for example, hopes that educational officials would "renounce excessive power, arrogance, and domination," in dealing with teachers.

Hassan among others want MoE to listen to teachers' voices, opinions, and concerns**.** Participants want MoE to consult them and to draw on their experiences instead of seeking expertise from someone who is not part of the context. The following quote summarises **Arif'**s message to educational officials:

> You must hear the person who is in the field. You must hear the teacher because he is the biggest unit in the educational process; you should rely on him…because when you take from others and build on their theories without considering your reality, you will face big problems.

Other participants including **Ibrahim** hope that "the teacher could participate in the selection of the curriculum." Teachers' participation, as he observed, is a guarantee that future textbooks are carefully tailored to students needs and this would facilitate teachers' missions. Participants' also want MoE to build its training packages on their actual needs. Training provisions, according to **Yassir**, will not achieve their aims until "the teacher becomes a partner in deciding the nature of those programs." In addition, participants want MoE to facilitate their mission by providing their basic needs in terms of labs, technologies, and teaching aids. This was reiterated by many teachers including **Basim** who articulated with a great sense of dissatisfaction and sadness "I hope that MoE will consider our needs." Ignoring teachers' needs, as explained by **Sameer**, is "the point that made English teaching very bad" in KSA. Marginalising teachers and ignoring their needs send negative massages to teachers that TPD is just a marginal issue and does not deserve their attention as pointed out by **Fayez**.

5.6.3 Less workload

Some participants claimed that they are currently working under stress; and this stress negatively interferes with their productivity, effectiveness and job satisfaction. Therefore, they want MoE to reduce their workload if it is interested in improving the quality of their teaching. However, participants emphasised that their demands should not be misunderstood as a sign that teachers don't want to work hard. Rather, they want to make sure that they are doing their best to help their students achieve their potential. **Jameelah'**s excerpt (see Table 10) is just one example that reflects the opinions of many others.

Participants think that teaching fewer classes per week is expected to raise their morale and enhance their efficiency. **Misfir**, among others, emphasised that "the number of teacher classes should be reduced to the reasonable level," so that he can manage his time properly and avoid conventionalism in his classroom performance. Some participants also want MoE to rethink its policies with regards to students' numbers in classrooms. The smallest class at **Barakat'**s school has 35 students; and this issue, as he claimed, "significantly affects the level of the teacher in the class".

In addition, lack of teaching aids, amount of paperwork, and students' behaviour are other examples of the stressors participants have to deal with at their workplace. Participants

think that it is time for MoE to work hard toward establishing healthier school environments for them; and to focus on the issues that really matter to teachers.

5.6.4 Textbooks should be revised

Current textbooks are a source of concern and disappointment among teachers because they feel that they cannot teach them properly. Therefore, they have to be revised and tailored to students' actual level as recommended by some participants. This was **Basim**'s opinion (see Table 10) which is reflected by many others. **Mahmood**, for instance, thinks that textbooks should be "reproduced in a good manner," so that they look more attractive to students and more practical to teachers. He maintained that he does have skills and wants to use them creatively; however, current textbooks stand as a barrier in his way:

> How can I teach my students? Now, I want to teach them the English language skills and there lies ahead of me what frustrates me.

Some participants also recommended that textbook should be stabilised. Continuous change of textbooks, according to teachers' perspectives, confused them and restricted their excellence. "We want the syllabi to be stabilised and we want to continue using them" as put by **Misfir.** The longer the textbook stays, the more comfortable and confident the teacher will feel, as he argued. Stabilising textbooks, according to his opinion, will give teachers' the chance to build on their former experiences.

5.6.5 Giving incentives to teachers

Ibrahim (see Table 10), representing the opinion of many others, clearly pointed out that MoE should give teachers some incentives if it wants them to engage with TPD either formally or informally. Contrary to their specification of financial incentives earlier in this chapter, participants were more general this time in their use of the term. **Ibrahim** was echoed by **Hassan** who thought that the least active teachers need to be motivated through enticing incentives. "The teacher who does not have any desire in learning, needs an incentive from MoE to start working and to get encouraged" as he maintained. However, incentives, according to his perspective, do not always have be financial. Teachers could be motivated through "kind words and simple praise from educational officials and even fellow teachers inside the school." Such things, as he claimed, "would certainly make a big difference." This was also the opinion of other teachers who

explained that simple recognition and acknowledgement of their efforts would be a motivating incentive for them. **Hatim**, for example, would like to receive any kind of incentive from his institution "even if it is something moral that has nothing to do with money."

5.6.6 Raising teachers' awareness

Raising teachers' awareness, educating them, and encouraging them to self-develop themselves was highly stressed by some participants. Four participants think that EFL teachers need more awareness about the meaning, importance and the resources of self-driven forms of TPD (see Table 10). **Sadiq** among others, pointed out that "the message should be taken to the teacher that you should not remain dependent on the educational office's programmes." Instead of being entirely dependent on institutional provisions, the teacher, as he stressed, has to look for other potential sources of development especially that knowledge can be easily accessed nowadays. However, teachers, as he observed "need someone to take their hands" towards achieving their potential.

Surprisingly, I found out that some participants did not know what self-driven TPD mean. Nor did they know the main sources from which such development could be obtained. **Misfir** is one of them:

> Look, you have talked to me about many things which were not clear to me before this meeting…therefore, I believe that the first thing is that the teacher should be made acquainted with the meaning of self-development and the potential sources of this kind of development.

Sadiq, among others, blamed MoE for this situation saying that one of the possible reasons for teachers' lack of awareness is the absence of a "clear-cut curriculum" for teacher development that could guide teachers and educate them on such important issues. **Majdi** who agreed with him on this point, also added that teachers are not sufficiently encouraged by their institutions to change their practices.

The four participants also talked about the importance of building teachers' capacity as self-learners instead of being dependent. This, according to **Sadiq,** will help change teachers' classroom behaviours because TPD will be based on their own choice and what

works for them. Therefore, what is needed from MoE is to invest in self-development programmes as he confirmed:

> It is important to stir up self-development among teachers…I mean to give the teacher programmes on self-development…I mean to change the mindset completely.

5.7 General perspectives

This theme captures participants' general views regarding the issue of TPD (see Table 11).

Theme	No. of teachers	Example quote
TPD is important	25	"You won't find anyone who denies the important of TPD to English teachers. It is important because it is a tool to improve the performance of the teacher." **(Hani)**
TPD is the responsibility of the teacher	19	"[TPD] is the teacher's responsibility; We have to agree on this…the teacher has to take the initiative himself." **(Arif)**
Preservice education	8	"the university did not do its duty as it should in the development of the teacher" **(Hayat)**

Table 11: themes emerging from data regarding general perspectives.

5.7.1 TPD is important

All participants emphasised the importance of TPD to their practice as can be seen in Table 11. They unanimously agreed that TPD is an essential component of their practice. Participants like **Mahmood** gave TPD priority because they think it is "a fundamental pillar" in education. **Fayz,** for instance, likened his need to development to his need for "food, water, and air" because it keeps him professionally alive. TPD, as he continued, "deals with the spirit and the mind; and these need to feed just like the body." It was also important because of the indirect effect of TPD on their students' performance as stated by some participants. However, the majority of participants held that it was their specialisation as EFL teachers that made it imperative for them to prioritise TPD. "English is a language; if not used, then it will be forgotten," as stated clearly by **Yassir**.

It has to be mentioned though that self-directed forms of learning have been given special importance by participants. They stressed the value of this form of development over institutional training because it is responsive to their needs, problems and contexts. It was also praised for its ability to build teachers' confidence. Many participants talked about its importance and value to their practice including **Mona** who stated:

> I found that self-learning is a good way to improve teacher development. It helps me develop the confidence I need to face the challenging problems and obstacles in my teaching career.

5.7.2 TPD is the responsibility of the teacher

The majority of participants agreed that it is the teacher himself who should take the responsibility of ensuring that his skills, knowledge, and abilities are up to date. **Arif'**s quote (see Table 11) is just one example that is representative of many others. Even those who think TPD should be a joint responsibility between the teacher and his institution explained clearly that teachers are not excused from pursuing development if their institutions failed to cater for their needs:

> we should not throw the load on others…If the Ministry does not provide training to me or if the supervisor has other tasks to do, does this give me the right to sleep? **(Yassir)**

Teachers' justification for this centred on four main arguments. First, they believe that information can be easily accessed nowadays and therefor any teacher "can dispose of everything around him" and develop himself easily without any institutional support (**Fayz**). Second, participants feel that the MoE is not doing well in terms of developing its teachers; therefore, the teacher should take the initiative himself instead of idly waiting for others to develop him. Typical of others, **Hassan** explained this saying: "you may not get what you need from the MoE; and even if you managed to get it, it is not as good as you expect." The third argument implicit in teachers accounts states that development is part of the act of teaching and therefore it is natural for the teacher to keep on learning until retirement. The final argument, as explained by **Adnan,** emphasised that the teacher is "the only person who knows his weaknesses well" and therefore he is the only one who can diagnose those weaknesses accurately and look for suitable ways to treat them. However, this responsibility has to coincide with institutional support as stressed by participants.

5.7.3 Preservice education

While talking about their development, some participants referred to their preservice education with a sense of dissatisfaction (see Table 11). Participants talked about a gap between the content of their university preparation programmes and the actual act of teaching. Some participants, for instance, criticised their courses for their traditional teaching approaches and for being linguistically weak. Others explained that their programs were not educationally oriented and therefore failed to prepare them pedagogically for their jobs. **Hayat**, for instance, lamented that her preparation programme was entirely "traditional and one-sided." Her role was just limited to "listening and taking notes for tests." Some other participates talked about the failure of some of those programmes to improve their linguistic competence as prospective EFL teachers. Reflecting on his first year in service, **Adil** exclaimed about how weak his language was back then before working hard on himself upon joining service:

> I told myself that I am a teacher of English and now I can't speak for a minute or two, that's a shame, how can I teach students?

Although his programme was "academically good," **Misfir** was so critical of his university programme because it failed to pedagogically prepare him for his job. Unfortunately, **Misfir**'s statement was echoed by many participants. I think the reason is due to the fact that part of the participants were graduates of colleges of arts which were not educationally oriented. After graduation, some participants, like **Ibrahim** and **Arif** joined educational colleges to be trained for their jobs. However, some participants like **Misfir**, preferred to join service directly without educational qualifications and without having the chance to experience a practicum.

5.8 Summary

This chapter presented the main findings that emerged from the study's participants. Using thematic analysis, the study identified six main themes. Some of them were based on my own questions and aims, while others emerged inductively from data. The first theme outlines participants understandings of the concept of TPD. The second theme

described participants' current TPD practices which included both institutional provisions and self-directed initiatives. The third theme reported participants' opinions regarding their institutional support. The fourth theme summarised factors affecting teachers' engagement with TPD opportunities either positively or negatively. This is followed by teachers' recommendation on how they think TPD could be enhanced in KSA. Towards the end of the chapter, I reported some of the emerging themes including importance of TPD, responsibility of learning, and preservice education. In the following chapter, I discuss the findings in light of the existing literature, contextual information, and my own experience as an EFL teacher.

Chapter Six: Discussion

6.1 Introduction

A number of issues emerged from this study which shed light on how TPD is being conceived by the participants, the sources of their current development, how they evaluate institutional provisions, the factors affecting their engagement with TPD, and their suggestions to enhance TPD in their immediate context.

Based on my own experience and as reflected in my participants' accounts, all findings reported in Chapter Five seem to have equal importance and all deserve to be discussed carefully. Therefore, all main themes are discussed below in light of the existing literature, contextual background, and my own experience as a teacher in the same context. My discussion also takes into consideration the main questions and aims of the study stated in Chapter One. Hence, the following sections first shed light on how teachers conceptualise TPD. Then, the chapter discusses the institutional provisions of TPD along with teachers' evaluations of these forms of learning. Next, it discusses teachers' engagement and attitude to self-directed TPD. After that, the discussion addresses the main factors that affect teachers' engagement with TPD. Finally, the chapter ends with a discussion of teachers' suggestions about how they think TPD could be enhanced in their context.

6.2 Conceptualising TPD

With regard to teachers' understanding of TPD, one of the major findings of this study is that many of the Saudi EFL teachers define TPD as an ongoing learning process. This, in fact, resonates with some of the current research reviewed in Chapter Three of this thesis with 'growth', 'development', and 'adaptation to change' emerging as key aspects of teachers' conceptualisation of TPD. Many teachers in the study experienced institutional TPD as functional, top-down and one-way. Interestingly, some also conceptualise TPD in this way. However, the majority of them define it as interactive, institution and self-initiated, essentially as a two-way street. Participants' reports emphasised that both institutional training and teachers' own initiatives have to go hand in hand if the teachers want to improve their pedagogical practices and their linguistic competence.

Teachers' perceptions in my study imply that they see both training and development as a continuum; a finding that has been noted in previous research (Raza, 2010). This specification also implies that teachers distinguish between both training and development processes and clearly understand that both represent distinct phenomena, as outlined in section (3.4.4). However, my findings also clearly show that teachers are well aware that TPD is a complementary process that have to include both institutional and individual elements for a healthy development. My data showed that although participants engage with self-driven development extensively, they still look for institutional development as a way to connect them to their profession and to the educational policy in general. Therefore, my study adds strength to the argument that dependence on individual attempts alone in the form of self-development is not enough in itself to prepare teachers as the MoE employees in the first place (see Day, 1999a; Mann, 2005).

Adaptation to change and ongoing update of knowledge and refinement of skills were themes that run throughout teachers' accounts. These concepts have been integral to participants' conceptualisation and current practices as well, as was noted in some previous studies (see Friedman & Phillips, 2004, Raza, 2010). This specification implies that teachers in this study are fully aware of the changing nature of their profession and that they have to keep on learning no matter what experience they gained. Although this issue was manifest in many aspects, it was highly emphasised with regards to the syllabus and technology. This might be consistent with literature which confirms that the ability to keep up with the changing nature of the teaching profession is supported when teachers engage with TPD on an ongoing basis over an extended period of time (Patton et al., 2015). This conceptualisation is also closely related to Timperley's (2011a) notion of "adaptive expertise" which "has within it deeply embedded notions of ongoing learning and improvement" (p.163). This might imply that Saudi EFL teachers, as the ones in my study, are highly adaptive experts who are flexible in their responses to the demands and challenges of their profession. Indeed, the ideas of ongoing learning, adaptation and change have been running throughout teachers accounts and at the heart of the justification of their engagement with TPD opportunities. Instead of being traditional in dealing with their context-specific problems, teachers' reactions and reports based on this study suggest that new problems and complex situations were used as a platform for ongoing exploration and learning. Realising the fact that the routine of their institutional provisions did not increase their ability to function well as language teachers, participants

engaged in new learning experiences to prepare themselves for the eventualities of their profession and to solve their novel problems.

An important issue worthy of discussion here is the link some participants in my study established between their learning and their students' achievement. Centrality of the student to their conceptualisation marks an outstanding shift in thought and one which is congruent with Timperley's (2011a) perspective on the type of TPD that has to be effective on students' outcomes. Interestingly, within their conceptualisation, the study's participants moved the student from being a by-product of their learning to be the reason for their engagement. Meaningful TPD as asserted by some participants is the one that is reflected on their classroom performance and consequently on their students' achievement. This was also apparent in other responses where teachers preferred to engage in TPD activities that are expected to improve their classroom performance and therefore their students' achievement as well. The connection established between participants' development and their students' progress might imply that developing professionally is not just a technical matter; rather, for teachers, it is a moral commitment, which resonates with previous research that came to similar conclusions (Day, 1999a; Day & Sachs, 2004; Johnston,2003; Kelchtermans, 2004).

Timperley (2011b) emphasised that the main focus of TPD policies and approaches should be on building the capacity of teachers to meet educational standards regarding their students' outcomes and practices. This emphasis, in my opinion, is important as it agrees with one of the main arguments developed by the study's participants in their understanding of TPD. The majority of the participants agreed that the professional himself should be the main beneficiary of TPD and that other generative components of this process should follow next. By doing so, participants believe that TPD will be oriented towards meeting the needs of the teacher instead of meeting the needs of the system. Within their reports, participants expressed their dislike and disagreement with how organisational TPD is approached and administered to them. They explained that institutional emphasis has been on the generative components of TPD precluding more important elements of their development. They saw this approach as inherently wrong as it side-lines the main channel through which the student will be developed. This finding resonates with some of Friedman, & Phillips' (2004) findings which support this element. It also agrees with Evan's (2014) conceptualisation that TPD is "relating solely to the professional" and that other beneficiaries should not been considered integral to either defining or conceptualising this process (p.188). Although participants agreed that the

betterment of the students' achievement was among the main drivers towards development, it was clearly acknowledged that it can only be done by building the capacity of the teacher in the first place.

Language proficiency has been integral to my participants' conceptualisation of and current engagement with TPD opportunities. Language has been a major issue that almost appeared an all themes. Although this sense was implicit in many accounts, it was clearly voiced by some participants in this study. My findings showed that a top priority for the participants was learning about the language they teach which explains why one of their main concerns was their linguistic proficiency that they felt under constant pressure to maintain. This concern is driven by a deep feeling among some participants that their linguistic abilities are restricted and need more attention. This appears to confirm previous contextual literature which stressed the lack of proficiency among Saudi EFL teachers as was discussed in Chapter Two (see Al-Harbi, 2006; Al-Johani, 2009; Al-Seghayer, 2011). This conceptualisation was also justified by emphasising the distinctive nature of their profession as language teachers. Participants' claims about the distinctiveness of language teachers confirms previous research asserting the different nature of language teaching (Borg, 2006) and the need for language teachers to possess certain qualities that other teachers might not possess (Wichadee, 2011). Therefore, a careful understanding of the distinctive nature of language teachers is important to the field (Borg, 2006).

In addition, the linguistic component of the participants' conceptualisation brings to the discussion an important element of TPD: content knowledge. The role of content knowledge in teacher learning is well acknowledged in literature (Patton, et al., 2015; Richards, 2011). This kind of knowledge is specific to the subject itself rather than the process of teaching (Richards, 2011). Each subject has its specific knowledge that is not shared with other subjects; and in language teaching it comprises two main foci: disciplinary academic knowledge of English and content pedagogical knowledge specific to teaching English (ibid). According to Day (1999a) one of the main aims of TPD is to maintain and increase teachers' professional knowledge; the knowledge that enables them to effectively perform their duties and roles. Teachers with appropriate content knowledge are more likely to make informed decisions about teaching and learning, and more able to find solutions to their problems (Richards, 2011). On the other hand, teachers who lack sufficient content knowledge are more likely to be dependent on textbooks and less likely to improvise in teaching when a teaching situation demands it (ibid).

As was made clear in literature and as demonstrated in this study, there seems to be no single programme that can cater for the needs of all teachers and satisfy their diverse preferences (Friedman, & Phillips, 2004; Wan, 2011). All learning opportunities have the potential of building teachers' capacity and updating their knowledge if well planned and based on teachers' actual needs. This was highly reflected in my participants' accounts. Interestingly, and apart from formal training events, the study's participants in their conceptualisation of TPD, did not refer to specific activities. They were mainly focused on the outcomes of those learning experiences. Emphasis was on the content and type of expected effect rather than on the type of activity itself. As such, TPD as perceived by some participants, is not about a particular activity, but rather about a wide range of activities which meet their needs, contexts, students' needs, and their developmental stages (Day & Sachs, 2004). This is concurrent with literature which confirms that TPD represent a wide range of activities and learning opportunities appropriate to teachers' needs and agendas regardless of their type (Day, 1999a; Day & Sachs, 2004). In addition, it seems that effective TPD as envisaged by participants' conceptualisation and as reflected in their current experiences is practical in nature and provides hands-on experiences that are essential for their daily practices (see Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Therefore, it is advisable for institutions, as was made clear by participants themselves, to engage in dialogue with their staff in order to clearly set developmental goals that are achievable and to choose training programmes and learning opportunities that are suitable and contextually relevant to teachers.

6.3 Institutional TPD provisions

Institutional TPD still represent a major source of development for Saudi EFL teachers as reflected in my study. Although the MoE used a combination of different learning opportunities to develop its teachers (as was clear in teachers' reports and as discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis), data showed that the training model was the most dominant form of TPD in our context. However, the extent to which institutional training programmes achieved their outcomes and aims was rather questionable by the study's participants. In total, participants' criticism of their institutional provisions reflects the long-standing concerns reported in literature about the value and effectiveness of this form of development and its impact on teachers' classroom practices (Hayes & Chang, 2012) (see section 3.4.4.1).

Self-reports on the effect of those programmes on teachers' personal development and on the improvement of their teaching practices confirmed previous claims that these learning opportunities lacked coherence, didactic in nature, and mainly focused on pedagogical knowledge with total disregard of teachers' persistent needs (Albedaiwi, 2014; Alharbi, 2011; Al-Hazmi, 2003; Assalahi, 2016). The majority of the study's participants dismissed institutional training events as being top-down, traditional, impractical, and irrelevant to their contextual needs as language teachers in a non-supportive environment. Therefore, their comments agree with widely reported similar findings about institutional training (see Borg, 2015).

What was interesting about teachers' evaluation of their institutional provisions is that teachers were not against this sort of development; rather they saw it as an important source of their TPD. The value of in-service training lies in its ability to connect teachers to their employers' agendas and to raise their awareness of educational innovations as explained by some teachers in my study. However, their criticism was against the content and the way it was administered to them. Their reports show that some of them have attended some fulfilling training programmes. When teachers, for instance, were subjected to a training programme that was content-focused and designed for EFL teachers, they expressed their satisfaction. This programme increased their knowledge of the content they teach and subsequently increased their confidence as language teachers. This might resonate with literature which emphasises that the content of learning or the substance of what is being learned is more important than the form or structure of learning activities (Ingvarson et al., 2005) as was made clear in the participants' conceptualisation above. On the other hand, pedagogical content knowledge was also an area of concern among the study's participants although this area receives some attention from the MoE's training provisions as was evident from the findings. However, the problem was evidently in the one-size-fits-all approach to training adopted by the MoE which does not take into account teachers' developmental stages and/or specialisation.

Overall evaluation of institutional training indicates that it failed to increase teachers' efficacy as believed by participants themselves. This can be judged by the following criteria. First, it did not participate in enlarging their content knowledge base of the subject they teach. Second, it did not expand their ability to meet the learning needs of their students. Third, it did not increase their confidence in teaching their subject. The extent to which a TPD activity influence's teachers' knowledge and practice is strengthened by the extent to which the programme is content-focused, context-specific,

and provides opportunities for active participation and learning as reported by teachers in this study and as was also evident in literature (see Ingvarson et al., 2005).

Adopting Borg's (2015) words, the dominant approach to institutional TPD, as experienced by the study's participants, was "externally-driven, 'teacher as consumer' modes of teacher learning" wherein teachers' roles are limited to reproduction and implementation (p. 5). Teachers explained clearly that the majority of the training events did not bring positive changes to their practices; nor were teachers able to put in practice in their classrooms what they had learned in the training sessions. This brings to the discussion the technocratic nature of TPD content (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004) whereby technical knowledge and skills are emphasised while personal attributes and contextual needs are deemed irrelevant (Friedman, & Phillips, 2004). Participants are lectured new teaching techniques that they are simply expected to replicate in their respective classrooms (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004). Most of those teaching techniques were developed in different contexts and require more investment and effort than traditional training. However, participants received little or no support in transferring new experiences into their classrooms. It was apparent that little was done in the traditional training events to help teachers bridge the gap between theory and practice as voiced by the study's participants.

It was also apparent from data that educational officials were not interested nor supportive of personal development among participants. They were manly interest in efficient material delivery as explained by many participants. This seems problematic as expressed by some participants because the focus was on the organisational aspect with what seems to be a total disregard of the personal one. Much of the institutional provisions are devoted to classroom techniques, teaching methods, and material; while these are important, they came at the expense of other important aspects such as the teacher himself as the main agent of change and the sociocultural context wherein the act of teaching takes place.

Data showed that the majority of the MoE training provisions concentrate on teaching methodologies as experienced by the study's participants; some of which are specific to English teaching while the majority are not. This concentration on methodology courses might reflect conventional teacher learning frameworks where methodology is being seen as the main bridge between content and learners. This creates and sustains a transmission view of teaching and learning as has been noted by my participants themselves (see Freeman & Johnson, 1998). It seems that amidst its rush to professionalise its teachers,

the MoE overlooked its teachers' basic needs and concentrated more on implementation and effective material delivery. To correct this view, Freeman & Johnson (1998) argue that teachers have to be thought of as language learners instead of being thought of as mere conduits to students' progress. Correcting this view might also imply a recognition of teachers as professionals who are learning and who have their learning needs that have to be catered for.

However, data showed that Saudi EFL teachers, as the ones in my study, valued other forms of institutional support especially supervision, model lessons and the teacher as a trainer for their job-embeddedness in their contexts and for the hands-on experiences they offer teachers so that they can function effectively. Supervision was distinguished by some participants as an important institutional form of development for the expert advice it presents which is normally used for alignment purposes. Although it provided teachers with a sense of direction, the main aim is still to make sure efficient implementation of the curricula as I experienced this myself as a teacher in the same context. In addition, in contrast to the ongoing nature of the participants' alternative vision of TPD, supervision is "fragmented and unconnected" (Griffin, 1997, cited in Diaz-Maggioli, 2004, p. 22). Furthermore, supervision is also another one-size-fits-all institutional provision that often fails to acknowledge individual needs and learning styles. Besides, supervisory practices tend to be evaluative, designed to achieve predetermined goals, and emphasises evaluation over growth (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004). Therefore, although it was seen as a mentoring opportunity for some participants, this approach to teacher development is still implicitly another means of insuring teachers' conformity and compliance. In this way, supervision could be seen as another form of "policing PD" used to insure accountability and performativity as noted in Assalahi's (2016) study.

The "teacher as a trainer" represented a shift of rhetoric from top-down development towards a new approach in which the teacher is in control of his/her development. Teachers who participated in this new form hailed it as a breakthrough in their institutional development. Teachers-as-trainers, according to Hayes & Chang (2012) tend to have "greater face validity" than outside experts such as supervisors or university professors (p. 116). Although the study did not explore the effect of this approach on trainees' practices nor did teachers give enough details on how their colleagues accepted to be trained by their peers; the study managed to show the effect of this approach on teachers' motivation, morale, and empowerment as legitimate knowledge generators and as competent professionals.

In sum, participants criticism of institutional training provisions does not mean that this form of development is not important; on the contrary, they attached too much importance to it and still see it as a main source of development if built on careful understanding of their needs and concerns. This implies to me that the participants of this study are well aware that they are working under the umbrella of an institution and therefore feel obliged to adhere it its guidelines in terms of teaching. Hence, they see training as a way to connect them to the guidelines of their employers' policy and agenda.

6.4 Self-Directed TPD

My findings showed that the most effective TPD in terms of impact were mostly self-initiated and directed by teachers' themselves beyond any institutional requirement. Contrary to some previous studies which noted that self-directed TPD was not highly recognised by teachers (see Al-Lamki, 2009; Friedman & Phillips, 2004), participants of this study attached too much importance to it; and in some cases, it was the main venue of development that caters for their context specific needs. Participants, in fact, showed a high preference for this form of learning over their institutional provisions of TPD. The reason for this could be that teacher learning in a self-directed manner is participant-driven, constructivist in nature, and context-specific making it response to their immediate needs (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995).

As opposed to setting passively through institutional training events, most of teachers' selected self-directed TPD experiences provided occasions for hands-on learning opportunities that built both their content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. While institutional training is normally designed to transmit knowledge and skills to learners, self-directed TPD as practised by the study's participants changed their roles from passive recipients to active learners constructing their knowledge through reflection, collaboration, and networking. It engaged teachers actively in concrete tasks related to their classroom practice including teaching, assessment, and observation (Lieberman, 1995; Timperley, 2011a; Villegas-Reimers, 2003).

The study identified a thriving practitioner workplace learning culture among participants. Teachers' reports showed a wide variety of self-directed forms of activities and learning opportunities which they engaged with in order to improve their practices. Some of them were inherently collaborative and collegial in nature; and others were individualistic. In addition, some of them were intentional while others were incidental

and unplanned. This kind of learning, as was evident from participants reports, is less structured (Eraut,2004) and involves learning from experience and other people either in site or offsite.

Learning from practice was the most mentioned form of learning among the study's participants. It was valued for its immediate relevance to their contexts. When describing the main source of their growth, all participants referred to experiences stemming from their actual practice of teaching in their working contexts. This reflects the more individual and private and even unaided learning from daily classroom routines which helped teachers survive and become efficient in their classroom tasks. It produced a kind of knowledge that is "created in the context of application" (Day, 1999a, p. 175), and therefore immediately applicable to teachers' contexts and problems. Therefore, the most powerful source of learning comes from the classroom itself through self-examination, observer-examination, reflection, or analysis of critical incidents (see Desimone,2009). This confirms one of Sandholtz's (2002) claims that teaching itself is one of the main experiences that profoundly influences teachers' practices as it provokes teachers to re-examine their approaches and teaching practices.

Part of teacher's learning came from reflection which is closely linked to their workplace learning. Participants managed to sustain a reflective approach to their practice and therefore, were able to make visible some aspects of their daily practices. Reflection, as practiced by the study's participants, created opportunities for ongoing learning, evaluation, and correction. This agrees with literature which emphasised that good teachers are reflective (Day, 1999a; Richards, 1998; Wallace, 1991). Engagement with reflection, according to Day (1999a) is a kind of inquiry that helps teachers understand themselves and improve their practices. In fact, it enabled some of the participants to be guided by informed decisions instead of mere intuition (see Richards, 1998).

Participants' engagement with development showed a movement towards collaboration and collegiality to combat isolation and de-professionalisation. My findings showed that participants are engaged in a systematic and sustained learning processes in a community of learners in which they collaborate voluntarily and collegially with one another for the prime purpose of improving their practice. This collaboration was among teachers in the same school, across schools, and virtual. Collaborative teacher development, according to Johnston (2009b) is gaining recognition as an important "wellspring" of TPD. It also increases teacher agency and control on their learning because it supports a view of

practitioners as legitimate knowledge producers (Johnston, 2009a). Learning within this conception is being viewed as a collective process and results from co-participation in social practices through lived experiences (Fuller, 2007). Knowledge generated from such communities is said to be both sensitive to teachers' immediate contexts and relevant to their daily concerns and problems (Lieberman, 1995). In fact, professional learning communities were significant to my participants' development because they took into account teachers' immediate contexts (their schools), their actual needs, and their empowerment since they were given the chance to be active agents in their own development (see Kelchtermans, 2004).

The internet provided the study's participants with another informal and flexible platform for ongoing development. It extended their learning beyond their institution allowing teachers to network informally with virtual learning communities worldwide. This potential learning tool transcends time and context limitations allowing teacher to interact with various practitioners across the globe (see Raza, 2010). It was, in fact, a very important networking tool for the majority of participants because it managed to bring them together with other professionals to share ideas and address mutual problems. This move reflects agreement in literature on the positive role of communication and networking on teachers' self-confidence, motivation, engagement and practice (Garet et al., 2001). However, based on my experience and as was also reflected in some participants' accounts, some remote areas within Al-Qunfuthah do not have proper access to the internet which might contribute to teachers' isolation especially at small schools which tend to have one English teacher.

However, it has to be mentioned that apart from the few instances wherein the study's participants described their engagement with self-directed TPD to improve their linguistic competence, most of the participants' engagement with self-directed TPD was implementation oriented wherein participants sought expert advice on the best available means to deliver their curricula. This is not surprising in our context given the rigid policy restrictions and the tight curriculum framework within which teachers operate. Therefore, unless teachers are given more freedom and autonomy with regards to their teaching materials, teacher collaboration and networking will remain geared towards implementation rather than innovation. It might also be the case where some teachers participate in community cultures and collaborative learning while continuing to use previous teaching practices (Day, 1999a). This brings to the discussion Kennedy's (2005) classification of TPD and that although some learning opportunities have the features of

transformation, might serve transmissive agendas if set in educational policies that do not support transformation.

6.5 Factors affecting teachers' engagement with TPD opportunities

Literature (see section 3.5) clearly indicates that TPD is a complex undertaking that is subject to many factors that either support or inhibit learning. Indeed, this was supported by participants' reports which emphasised that their motivation and engagement is contingent upon a multitude of factors that affected how they interact with and go about their learning. Therefore, teachers' reports confirm claims made in literature that TPD should be held against a backdrop of complexity given the many factors that affect teachers' engagement with it (Opfer and Pedder, 2011a). This section discusses the major motivating and demotivating factors that have been nominated by participants as having impact on their interaction with TPD in the Saudi context.

6.5.1 De-motivating factors

Teachers' accounts indicate that they are faced with a number of factors that affect their engagement with TPD, shake their confidence, detract from their effectiveness, and lower their motivation. My findings showed that participants are overworked at under-resourced schools, operating as curricula implementers, teaching difficult textbooks to underachieving and unmotivated students. In addition, participants seemed to be alienated from their educational system, which put a great amount of pressure on their professional practice and the construction of their identity as language teachers.

A key demotivating factor is the under-resourced and impoverished context within which Saudi EFL teachers conduct their daily practices coupled with the unavailability of some of the basic teaching aids necessary to their teaching. It was evident from data that the conditions within which the study's participants' conduct their practices do not support learning and innovation. Although, MoE has increased the number of its training provisions and updated its curricula, reform in KSA failed to give parallel attention to school conditions leaving many teachers feeling helpless, deskilled, demotivated and demoralised. Data showed how under-resourced schools reduced participants' sense of self-efficacy. This issue is not surprising given the central importance of workplace conditions to the quality of teachers' work (Day, 1999a; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Euraut, 2004; Timperley, 2011a). Supportive school contexts are central to the success of

TPD initiatives and programmes to the extent that they can be described as a critical ingredient to the effectiveness of TPD (Hayes and Chang, 2012).

Intensification of participants' work and their increasing workload were some of the main demotivators. According to literature, such factors are among the main causes of low morale, self-efficacy, and self-confidence among teachers (Day, 1999a; Hasan; 2015; Alshahrani, 2010). According to Day (1999a) working in such conditions is likely to make teachers feel less self-confident and increases their likeliness to prefer routine rather than innovation and experimentation. Although there was a strong sense of collaboration and collegiality among the study's participants, tendency to exert more effort in teaching and learning were restricted at some schools by the increasing demands put on its teachers. However, workload, it appears, did not eliminate teachers' engagement with TPD; rather, it restricted their engagement and also prompted some teachers to resort to routine practice as a means to combat their exhaustion.

Furthermore, performativity agendas and the increased monitoring of teachers' work to efficiently implement external agendas have serious consequences on teachers' practices including the participants of my study (see Day & Gu, 2007; Evans, 2008 & 2011). First, such conditions increase teachers' tendency to comply uncritically with those agendas making teaching a technical activity wherein teachers' roles are limited to efficient delivery and implementation. They also challenge teachers' identities forcing them to adopt "assigned identities" towards which they feel uncomfortable (Johnston, 2003). They also affect teacher' abilities to cater for the individual needs of their students. In addition, they pose a serious threat to teachers' "sense of agency and resilience" (Day & Gu, 2007, p.425). Lastly, they challenge teachers' abilities and capacities to maintain their motivation and commitment. All these issues were clearly evident in the participants' reports as can be seen in section (5.5.1).

Another demotivating factor which is closely related to the above-mentioned one was marginalisation. The increasing marginalisation of participants was seen as a real threat to their effectiveness and professionalism as language teachers. Most of my participants' comments about this issue were negative, suggesting considerable frustration and demoralisation and ultimately loss of motivation and empowerment. Participants' agency and autonomy were diminished by the top-down and exclusionary policy pursued by their educational authority.

Lack of appreciation, recognition, and respect were other major de-motivators to participants. This is not surprising given the importance of these elements in building a sound professional identity (Forde et al., 2006). To feel fulfilled as professionals, teachers need to feel valued and that what they do is of importance to others. Forde et al., (2006) indicates that teachers have "esteem needs" and "self-actualization needs" (p. 91). First, teachers need to feel valued by their institutions as real professionals. Then, they need opportunities to achieve their potential. Based on my participants' reports, it seems that both elements are lacking or at least restricted. The MoE did not play its role accordingly to help teachers achieve these needs. A successful organisation, according to Forde et al. (2006), is the one where professionals feel valued and respected and where they feel that they have been provided with enough chances to develop and grow professionally. Although participants continued to grow professionally despite these demoralising factors, it was important to emphasise the effect of these elements on teachers' morale, motivation, job satisfaction, and efficacy on the long run.

Participants attached too much importance to incentives in their motivation to pursue TPD activities. Lack of incentives was an important demotivating factor as observed by many participants. Although some participants were so broad in their use of the word incentives, the majority of them were so specific and used the term to refer to material rewards which, according to their opinions, are non-existent. It was evident from the study's findings that lack of financial incentives were among the main obstacles that impinged on teachers' professional lives. The financial aspect is one of the main contextual factors that have the ability to militate against teachers' willingness to engage TPD and adopt innovative techniques to their classrooms (Hayes, 2004). Therefore, it is important for the MoE to reconsider its policies with regards to financial incentives. However, although participants emphasised that lack of incentives was a major demotivating factor, it was not clear to me that it stopped them from pursuing TPD opportunities in a self-directed manner. Therefore, I think their participation is impacted by other important elements such as marginalisation and lack of support.

It has also to be mentioned that teachers are not working in total isolation from their social milieu. Indeed, their work is "embedded in a set of social relationships" (Hayes & Chang, 2012). A key point of interest is the effect played by some social forces outside schools on my participant' sense of professionalism and efficacy. For example, lack of parental involvement and social cooperation in the educational process were some of the dispiriting factors that have been stressed by some participants and which seem to have a

considerable effect on teachers' motivation. Based on my personal experience, parental involvement in the education of their children is very limited in our context. Teachers normally bear the brunt of their teaching alone. Therefore, I think these social relationships and the forces they exert on the educational context have to be put under consideration in future plans.

Another major demotivating and de-professionalising factor was the managerial context within which Saudi EFL teachers operate (see Assalahi, 2016). It was quite evident that the study's participants have lost their autonomy and agency with regards to how to conduct their teaching. However, this is not surprising to me, given the dominance of this approach internationally (Forde et al, 2006). Therefore, it could be argued that Saudi EFL teachers are undergoing a process of institutional de-professionalisation wherein teachers are being used as conduits for educational curricula as I have discussed elsewhere within this chapter. This process might be linked to standardisation, accountability, and performance management processes educational systems are undergoing. While these processes might have some credibility from an institutional perspective, their impact on teachers' practices have proved to be far less encouraging than their intended outcomes (Forde et al., 2006). For instance, these processes have disempowered teachers in terms of the decisions they can take in their classrooms, resulted in poor standardised training provisions, created troubled identities among teachers, and encouraged the loss of their autonomy and agency as evidenced by the participants' accounts.

Despite the above, it seems fair to say that some of study's participants did not passively accept the culture of compliance encouraged by the MoE, as noted in another study (see Assalahi, 2016), nor did they surrender to the stagnation and de-professionalisation encouraged by the educational policy and the rigid curriculum framework. On the contrary, their sense of professionalism, in addition to several motivating factors enhanced their engagement with TPD in a self-directed manner (see section 5.5.2) in a way that they viewed their TPD as a life-long learning process that could not be interrupted by this process of institutional de-professionalisation.

6.5.2 Motivating factors

Despite the abundance of the demotivators mentioned above, my findings showed that participants are enthusiastic learners who are key players in their development and learning. This is due to a number of facilitating and motivating factors as made clear by

my participants. These motivators helped sustain teachers' engagement with TPD in a self-directed manner.

An important driver towards development among the study's participants was their intrinsic motivation. Although participants emphasised in more than one place that institutional support and encouragement is either lacking or insufficient, most of them managed to engage with TPD opportunities in a self-directed manner. This clearly shows that Saudi EFL teachers have a very strong sense of professionalism and that teaching represents a major part of their substantive selves (see Day, 1999a). It was interesting to see how teachers connected the will to learn and develop to their self-motivation and self-efficacy (see Broad & Evans, 2006). According to participants' perspectives, self-motivation is one of the most powerful drivers for engagement with TPD. If the teacher is not intrinsically motivated, then his engagement will remain limited. Participants' demonstrated to have a very strong "sense of vocation" (Day & Gu, 2007). This was clearly evident in their attitude to learning which is underpinned by their intrinsic motivation and ethical commitment to serve their students with the best of their knowledge and skills. Good teaching is principally based on "intellectual curiosity and emotional investment" (Day & Gu, 2007, p. 428). Both concepts are demonstrated by participants' love to experiment with new technologies and learning methodologies, and their moral purposes and ethical commitment.

This driver also shows that the study's participants developed a sense of themselves as professional educators who are responsible for the well-being of themselves and their students rather than being mere technicists. This realisation brings to the discussion the concept of professional identity and its importance to TPD (Day & Gu, 2007; Forde et al., 2006). An important mediating factor in teachers' commitment to learning is their positive sense of professional identity (Day & Gu, 2007; Sachs 2001). Despite the demotivating atmosphere of their context, my participants' reports and engagement with TPD opportunities showed clearly that they managed to forge for themselves a positive professional identity wherein they see themselves as adaptive experts who are committed to change and ongoing development. This managed in turn to increase their capacities for TPD and enhance their attitude to learning. However, this positive sense of identity was also partly influenced by participants' personal recognition that the managerialist identity imposed on them by their institutions was a de-professionalising mechanism.

Part of my participants' motivation and commitment to TPD was also promoted by what Day and Gu (2007) call "an ethic of care" for the maintenance and well-being of their students (p.427). In addition to their professional accountability to their institutions, moral accountability provided my participants with a major motivation for their TPD. Although some participants might not have explicitly mentioned it, it was clearly noticeable throughout their accounts and in their persistent quest towards improvement despite the many demotivating and de-professionalising factors. It is this observation which brings us more directly to the claim raised in literature that teaching is inherently moral and that the good professional is the one who possesses moral values and attitudes that enables him to evaluate and cater for the needs of his clients (Carr, 2000; Day, 1999a; Johnston, 2003). It was clear from participants' reports that their ethical and emotional connections to their students was a positive motivating force towards effectiveness. This issue confirms Day's (1999a) statement that teachers' moral purposes and emotional connections to their students impact and energise whatever they do in their teaching. Therefore, commitment to learning and change, as reflected in participants' reports, goes beyond passive transmission of knowledge because teachers have "responsibilities and answerabilities" to many stakeholders including their students whom they feel morally committed to serve (Day, 1999a, p.16).

Some of the participants' reports emphasised the important role of school leadership in promoting effective learning among teachers. Head teachers' support, which is focused upon encouragement, creating and supporting a learning climate within schools, and providing necessary learning aids, helped to sustain teachers' commitment to learning and to raise their motivation. Teachers' focus on their headteachers' roles in facilitating their self-development and effectiveness inside their schools is consistent with literature that emphasises the centrality of school leaders in the creation and sustaining of learning environments and school cultures that are conducive to TPD and wherein everyone is committed to learning (Timperley, 2011a).

It was evident from data that head teachers' support managed to provide some of the participants' essential needs to function effectively. This managed, to some extent, to increase the capacity of some schools for development. It seems that head teachers' facilitative leadership (Day, 1999a) managed to create positive school cultures wherein teachers' dispositions towards and capacity for learning is increased (see Hargreaves, 1994). Creation of such cultures, according to Day (1999a) is at the heart of head teachers' responsibilities who have to play a pivotal role in enabling TPD. These positive school

cultures had a profound effect on participants' commitment and engagement with learning as was evident in the data. Some of its feature were highly visible in participants' TPD practices especially communication, collaboration, collegiality and mutual respect (see Forde et al., 2006). However, it has to be mentioned that head teachers normally pay from their own pockets to increase the capacity of their school. Thus, big schools do not normally receive the same amount of financial support from head teachers as other small schools given the large number of their teaching staff as I experienced this myself.

The linguistic aspect resurfaced again as a strong motivating factor. Participants have a deep feeling that their linguistic ability is one of the most important assets that have to be well maintained if they are to function well. It is this self-awareness that keeps them constantly looking for ways to improve this important asset. In addition, acknowledgement of their English language weakness suggests that their initial preparation needs to be reconsidered. In fact, many teachers pointed clearly to the fact that their universities did not linguistically prepare them well as language teachers. This finding is not new as it has been highlighted in many previous studies (see Chapter Tow). However, what was quite unique about this study is that teachers openly spoke about the insidious effect of this factor on their practice rather than being elicited by researchers. I think openly admitting this reality might be attributed to the nature of their job which is being complicated by the ongoing series of reforms our educational context is experiencing at the moment making teachers' practices more complex. Although this self-awareness among participants worked as a strong motivator towards ongoing learning, I think it needs to be taken seriously by our educational authority in its future plans.

6.6. Participants' recommendations to enhance TPD in KSA

The suggestions and recommendations made by the study's participants to enhance TPD in the Saudi context broadly focused on their institutions and their roles in facilitating TPD in their respective contexts. This is not surprising to me given that all EFL teachers in KSA are government employees who operate within a rigid policy framework.

One key issue that emerged from this study is that that institutional training is not eschewed all together from participants' conceptualisation and engagement, and still represents a major source of development for most of them. Therefore, the first recommendation was directed to institutional training and the need for the MoE to improve its provisions. Participants presented a number of suggestions from their

experiential practices to improve institutional training in their context. First, to be effective, institutional provisions have to be aligned with teachers' basic needs. This issue, according to Patton et al. (2015), could be realised by involving teachers actively in vital decisions about what they will learn and how they will learn it. This is expected to increase teachers' ownership of their TPD and subsequently enhance their commitment to change as stressed by some participants.

Second, the standardised nature of the institutional training as provided by MoE assumes that all teachers are the same and should perform at that same level regardless of their contextual and developmental needs. However, the study's participants' reports indicate that teachers go through different developmental stages in their career each of which has its own problems and challenges. Therefore, participants need provisions that cater for their diverse needs and developmental stages (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004). This suggestion is in agreement with previous research which stresses the matching of TPD provisions to teachers' career stages as well as their contextual and personal needs (see Broad & Evans, 2006; Day & Sachs, 2004).

Third, participants in my study believe they are different from other subject teachers; and therefore, require a different training focus. What sets them apart from other teachers is their language competence in English which requires due attention form educational officials. It was evident from their reports that their engagement with self-directed TPD did not fulfil their linguistic needs and therefore they still look at their institutions for this form of development. This requirement confirms Richards and Farrell's (2005) argument that although many things can be learned through self-directed learning, subject-matter-knowledge and curriculum understanding still need institutional involvement through meaningful and focused training. It has to be mentioned that this linguistic need is even more pressing in Al-Qunfuthah wherein chances of real linguistic development are not widely available. Indeed, such opportunities are mainly found in major cities, such as Jeddah or Riyadh, or can be accessed online, which might not be an affordable option to some teachers as was clearly expressed in the findings. Therefore, participants want the MoE to take steps towards helping them fulfil their linguistic needs through institutional training. This could also be done by inviting trainers form English speaking countries as suggested by some participants. This is expected to both impart international expertise to their contexts and to improve their linguistic competence. This way is expected to extend the benefit to all teachers as opposed to Khebrat (see section 2.7.2.6) wherein the benefit is limited to the elite.

Fourth, participants believe that training should be delivered by specialists other that their local supervisors. In addition, trainers have first to model the behaviours or methodologies teachers are expected to implement in their respective classrooms. If not modelled, then there is likelihood that teachers might fail to transfer what they learned into their classrooms; or see a mismatch between content of training and what they are asked to produce in their classrooms (see Hayes & Chang, 2012). Just as confirmed by the study's participants, educators have to move from theorisation to modelling new practices for effective implementation. This might not be realised if trainers continue to deliver their training packages in lecture-based training.

The relationship between teachers' and the MoE has been problematic as shown in my findings. Therefore, one of the main suggestions is to rethink the relationship between teachers and the MoE. Major part of rethinking the relationship between policy makers and EFL teachers in the KSA is by recognising them as real partners in the educational process. This could be realised by first, reconsidering the managerialist policy framework with which Saudi EFL teachers conduct their daily practices (see section 6.5.1). Then by recognising them as legitimate knowledge generators. This imply encouraging, sustaining, and recognising their self-driven TPD initiatives. My findings suggest that the majority of participants learned best through experience, collaboration, discussion, participation, and networking wherein teachers are active participants and legitimate knowledge constructors. It is well established in literature that these learning structures stimulate and nurture professional growth and development (Richards & Farrell, 2005; Vescio et al., 2008). Therefore, it seems important that TPD initiatives and policies emphasise and facilitate these learning forms.

In addition, some participants want the MoE to facilitate their mission so that they can work effectively towards the realisation of their targeted goals as set by the educational policy. This could be done by improving the workplace conditions where they conduct their daily practices. If the MoE is serious in raising the level of its teachers, then this could happen by understanding how these conditions affect teachers' effectiveness and satisfaction (Day, 1999a; Opfer and Pedder, 2011a). Above, I referred to the adaptive expertise of Saudi EFL teachers within this chapter which has been an important enabling mechanism towards ongoing development. However, helping teachers achieve their potential and increase their adaptive expertise require supporting structures. This brings to the discussion important dimensions in effective TPD including the context of learning

(Darling-Hammond et al., 2009) and the organisational adaptive capacity (Timperley, 2011b), as emphasised in previous research. Some of the potential problems facing Saudi teachers, according to my study, is the impoverished nature of their schools, their increased workloads, and the rigid demands of the curriculum which restrict their learning, effectiveness and consequently their morale and motivation.

One of the main suggestions made by some participants was raising teachers' awareness about the nature, sources and value of self-directed TPD. It was evident to me that some participants lacked awareness of some aspects of their self-initiated TPD especially their informal learning processes although they have been highly implicated in it. I think this is not surprising given the fact that some kinds of workplace learning experiences (especially incidental and unplanned forms of learning) are sometimes largely "invisible" and may at times be "taken for granted or not recognized as learning" (Eraut,2004, p.249). In addition, the resultant learning is often regarded as part of the practitioners' abilities rather than something that has been gained form the learning experience (ibid).

6.7 Summary

In this chapter I discussed the findings of my study in light of the existing literature and the contextual background wherein the study was undertaken, bearing in mind my personal experience as a Saudi EFL teacher involved in the same context as my participants. As all main themes were given equal importance in terms of their relevance to the issues raised by the study, they were all carefully discussed in this chapter. The above discussion first explained how participants conceptualise and understand TPD. Following this, I discussed participants' current practices and how they currently update their knowledge and skills along with their evaluation of the institutional provisions of TPD. Then, I discussed the main motivating and demotivating factors showing that TPD is a complex process that is subject to a multiplicity of factors that either facilitate or inhibit teacher learning. Finally, I highlighted key suggestions made by participants for improving TPD in their immediate context. The following chapter provides the conclusion of my study.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7.1 Chapter overview

This final chapter summarises the main findings and provides answers to the study's questions along with key implications for policy and practice. It also highlights the study's significance, limitations and concludes with personal reflections on my research journey.

7.2 Summary of the main findings

This study investigated Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences with regards to their TPD. The main aim was to draw a panoramic view of how Saudi EFL teachers develop professionally to meet the challenging demands of their profession. The study contributes significantly to our understanding with regards to the state of TPD of language teachers at our public schools in the KSA, by bringing to the surface hidden aspects of TPD at our educational system that has hitherto remained unexplored. These include the prevalent professionalism discourse and the power it exerts on teachers' engagement and attitude to development, the power relations between EFL teachers and the educational authority, and teachers' own initiatives at professionalising themselves together with the main sources of their professional knowledge. This might pave the way towards a better understanding of TPD and teacher professionalism at our public schools.

In addition, the study managed to provide explicit answers to the research questions posed in Chapter One. First, the study provided an overview of how Saudi EFL teachers understand TPD. Data showed that teachers in my study conceptualise TPD as a two-way street that can be institutionally provided and/or self-directed, and wherein training and development are seen as a continuum. TPD is a learning process that is both interactive and ongoing wherein teachers are engaged in concrete tasks relevant to the everyday reality of their classroom practices. Generally speaking, teachers' understanding of this concept reflects an expanded view of TPD (see Lieberman, 1995) wherein the scope of TPD is very broad and ranges from the institutional to the personal, from the formal to the informal, and from the planned to the incidental. In addition, my participants' conceptualisation and engagement placed more emphasis on the content and expected outcome rather than on the structure of the learning activity itself as was noticed in some previous research (see Wan, 2011).

The study then showed that Saudi EFL teachers, as the ones in my study, are committed professionals who are well aware of a variety of TPD resources and opportunities; some of them are institutionalised while the majority are self-directed by teachers themselves beyond any institutional requirement. The study also shed some light on a thriving workplace learning context wherein teachers are implicated in many forms of learning including experiences stemming from the everyday reality of their classrooms.

In terms of evaluating institutional provisions, the study showed that the majority of the study's participants are highly dissatisfied with their institutional training. Findings showed that participants are not against training per se; rather they viewed it as highly important as both a development and an alignment mechanism. However, their criticism was mainly directed to the content of training along with the way it was perceived as being administered to them. Some of my participants' accounts highlighted the technocratic approach to TPD adopted by our MoE whereby technical knowledge and skills are emphasised while personal attributes and contextual needs are deemed irrelevant and therefore neglected. This approach to TPD had implications on both what it means to be a professional and the perceived role of teachers within schools as reflected in some of my participants' accounts. Findings showed that institutional provisions of training are tied up in a managerialist professionalism perspective that squeezes out teachers' agency and autonomy; and which values compliance, conformity, externally imposed TPD, and accountability (Day & Sachs, 2004).

In addition, the study managed to shed light on teachers' attitudes to and engagement with self-directed TPD. Data showed that many participants had high preferences for this type of learning over institutional training provided by their institutions for its embeddedness in their working context. Participants attached too much importance to this form of learning; and it was in fact the main venue of development for the majority of the study's participants. Networking, collaboration and collegiality are some of the main features of this form of learning as reflected in teachers' current practices. However, an important observation about teachers' engagement with this type of learning was that most of their learning instances were still geared towards curricula implementation due to policy implications and rigid curricula constraints.

Furthermore, the study confirmed previous research that TPD is far from being a simple and straightforward process of translating and applying theory to practice (Assalahi,

2016; Johnson, 2009b; Opfer and Pedder, 2011a). Data showed that TPD is a complex process that is subject to a multiplicity of enabling and inhibiting factors. My findings showed a range of motivating and demotivating factors that interacted with participants' engagement with their TPD and impacted their attitude to learning. An important demotivating factor was the managerialist educational policy wherein development is geared towards standardisation, compliance, and implementation. On the other hand, a major driver towards development was teachers' intrinsic motivation and their ethical commitment; in addition to the facilitative school leadership that managed to create positive school cultures that were supportive of teacher learning.

7.3 Contribution to knowledge

Reflecting on the findings presented in Chapter 5 and discussed in the previous chapter, the current study identifies some of the characteristics, processes, and the nature of effective language TPD, as conceptualised by EFL teachers, educational officials need to understand and, in all likelihood, enhance in the Saudi context. It also provided an analysis of the policy context and the dominant professionalism discourse wherein Saudi EFL teachers operate. Therefore, the study was valuable in contributing to the context wherein it has been undertaken; and can also be of significant importance to other contexts wherein English is taught as a foreign language by non-native language teachers. I claimed in my introduction that the study's focus has received little research in our context, making it, to the best of my knowledge, the first of its kind to adopt a broader perspective to approach TPD amongst EFL teachers in our public education system. The educational contribution of my study lies in providing an overview of the current status of language teachers' development through teachers' own perspectives. While previous studies conducted in our context were mostly limited in their scope as the focus was mainly on the institutional dimension with what seems consistent disregard to teachers' own initiatives at development, the intersection between policy and TPD, and the prevailing professional discourse within which teachers operate, this study managed to examine TPD from a broader perspective taking all the previous aspects into consideration.

In terms of the methodological contribution, the study used a combination of interpretive methods which proved to be valuable in providing deep and rich contextual information that might have not otherwise been uncovered. In addition to using interviews as I outlined in Chapter Four, two other innovative research methods were employed in this research: semi-structured reflective essays and WhatsApp. First, reflective essays yielded

valuable data that participants might not have voiced during their interviews given the transient nature of research interviewing. This was partly due to the fact that writing these essays took an extended period of time which gave my participants enough time to reflect and capture their thoughts well. What was innovative was the semi-structured nature of my reflective essays. For instance, upon receiving each essay, I read it, commented on it, and then sent it back to the participants who used my comments and questions to further elaborate on their ideas and thoughts. In some instances, participants reactions to my comments triggered new questions in my mind which I included in my essays and resent to the participants for more elaboration and/or clarification. This proved to be highly useful as it gave me and gave my participants extended time to reflect on our thoughts and engage in constructive and highly intellectual discussions. In addition, involving social media in research was also beneficial as it kept me connected to some of my participants throughout this research journey. Using WhatsApp, I was able to maintain an ongoing link between me and some of my participants throughout my research and which was used for discussion, inquiry, and validation purposes. Despite the many advantages of interviewing (see section 4.4.1), I don't think using interviews alone would have given me this depth of data. In addition, using these two methods, I successfully managed to include female voices who might not have engaged through other means especially in Al-Qunfuthah wherein tradition and tribalism is still very rooted in the society.

7.4 Implications of the study

The study has a number of implications for policy and practice as I discuss below:

7.4.1 Implications for policy

Since they are directly responsible for the well-being of EFL teachers and for planning and designing training programme for them, policymakers and TPD providers in local training centres in KSA should take into consideration the following recommendations:

First, it was apparent from teachers' definitions and their experiences that they do not share the same understanding of TPD with their institutions. This lack of a shared understanding, according to Evans (2002), is one of the problems that threatens the construct validity of the concept of TPD. A possible consequence is "difficulties in establishing the parameters of the field … and difficulties in identifying the teacher development process" (ibid, p.128). Therefore, I do believe that it is essential for TPD providers and facilitators to understand how teachers conceptualise and understand the

process of TPD. It is extremely difficult to see how educational officials will accurately identify TPD requirements if they are unaware of how teachers themselves understand it (see Evans, 2002). Therefore, it is important to communicate, coordinate, and negotiate with teachers before implementing institutional TPD initiatives for maximum benefit. Furthermore, it is important to recognise the significance of teachers' beliefs and attitudes in planning and initiating educational reform. It is therefore extremely important for educational officials to take seriously into consideration these elements in future plans. Failure to do so might lead to a status quo in terms of the conflict and discrepancy between the vision proposed by educational reform and teachers' actual practices as was noticed in our educational research.

In addition, the analysis of the context of TPD presented in Chapter Two revealed that the MoE adopted new policies for professionalising its teachers as was highly reflected in Tatweer, the biggest educational reform project introduced into our educational system. However, based on my experience and as was partly reflected in this study, it seems that the MoE failed to translate these policies into practice. For instance, one of Tatweers' basic aims is to build professional learning communities within and across schools in order to enable EFL teachers exchange experiences and to continually improve their practices. Unfortunately, such learning communities are neither supported nor recognised as valuable sources of knowledge by current educational officials although part of teachers' learning comes from participation in learning communities either at the school level or virtual as has become evident in my study. Therefore, it is important to understand that the directives and policies necessary for making relevant improvements are there, however, the problems seem to be their implementation. On the other hand, the Khebrat programme (see section 2.7.2.6) was highly beneficial as expressed by teachers who participated in this programme. However, given the size of the MoE and the massive number of its teachers, Khebrat is still very limited and might be called elitist. For instance, only one teacher is normally chosen from QED as explained by participants. However, there are other forms of TPD that are perceived as more beneficial and less expensive as reflected in my study. My findings showed that in terms of effect, workplace learning, cooperation, networking, and CoPs are all potential sources of learning that are affordable, contextual and immediately relevant to teachers' daily practices. Based on my findings, I would advise the MoE to increase the capacity of its schools, enhance and recognise this form of learning, and reward teachers for their engagement in it.

Furthermore, the intersection of TPD and the educational policies surfaced as one of the major issues in this study. Teacher learning does not take place in a vacuum, rather it is influenced and shaped by corresponding educational policies. Participants' curtailed autonomy and agency and their continuous marginalisation were evident in many educational practices, including but not limited to, curricula development, pedagogic choice, assessment methods, and training provisions. These issues reflect a managerialist/sponsored professionalism discourse as outlined in section (3.4.1). It was evident from my data that this discourse was engineered by the government policies which are perceived to marginalise and de-professionalise rather that promote a notion of teachers as expert professionals. This discourse seemed to devalue teachers' roles and promote a culture wherein managerialism, conformity, passivity, and effective delivery are highly valued. Therefore, planning for TPD in our context may wish to shift its emphasis to encouraging teacher autonomy and agency with regards to some important elements of their profession. This is not to say that teachers want their accountability to their systems to be eliminated. Rather, educational policies may need to provide teachers with chances to exercise high degrees of control over the direction of some aspects of their profession. This could be achieved by involving teachers as valued partners in the process of decision making, acknowledging and rewarding their contributions and development initiatives, and by providing access to critical means of support. Without provisions for such structures, the tendency of TPD to remain geared towards implementation might be reinforced and continue.

It is also highly simplistic to view schools as mere neutral settings where educational practices take place as reflected in our educational authority's approach. Quite to the contrary, schools are the sociocultural contexts wherein teachers work and learn; and which do exert powerful influences on their engagement with learning. It was clear from some participants' accounts that it was a common place notion of institutional TPD provisions that teachers will transfer their training-based new practices into their classrooms for effective implementation. However, this was not the case as was clearly reflected in my study's findings. Teachers' efforts were partly hampered by the impoverished nature of their schools. Therefore, as the actual environments for teachers' practices and the contexts of some aspects of their learning experiences, schools' capacities must be enhanced and provided with sufficient resources in order to support and facilitate teachers' missions. Attempts at changing teachers without changing the educational context and increasing the schools' capacity has previously shown to rarely produce the desired change (see Timperley, 2011a).

Although current reforms at changing schools and learning practices are more sophisticated than ever before, efforts at developing teachers in our context are still dominated by a process-product approach to TPD which, according to my participants' accounts, failed to prepare them for the challenging demands of their profession. This is due to the complex nature of TPD itself. My study showed that TPD is far from being simplistic by uncovering a complex web of factors which impacted teacher' engagement, experiences and attitudes with regards to their development. Therefore, developing an understanding of these systems and how they interact with teachers' learning is important for effective TPD (Opfer & Pedder, 2011a). This would imply the need for a new conceptualisation of TPD from a process-product approach towards an acknowledgement of the complex and the situated nature of teacher learning. This understanding might help TPD facilitators and providers to design and recognise TPD in a way that guarantees teachers' engagement and subsequently effectiveness.

My data also showed that the study's participants have a good sense of themselves as responsible professionals who are willing to continually develop themselves to be better prepared for their profession despite the abundance of the demotivating factors and the passive identity the MoE imposes on them through its de-professionalising practices. Indeed, my findings showed that the study's participants developed a conception of themselves as adaptive experts who see development as part and parcel of their professional responsibilities and who engage with it continually in their pursuit towards improving their students' achievement. This attitude reflects a more democratic approach to teacher professionalism as opposed to the MoE's instrumental and managerial approaches to teacher effectiveness and professionalism. Therefore, it is important to support this teacher identity by providing logistical and moral support in accordance with and through more consistent implementation of the existing policy structures.

7.4.2 Implications for TPD practices

Language proficiency has been integral to participants conceptualisation of TPD and at the centre of their current engagement as well. This is essential to them as language teachers practicing in a non-supportive learning environment; a characteristic that sets them apart from other subjects' teachers according to their perspectives. This linguistic focus supports numerous claims made in literature about the role of content knowledge in teacher learning (Richards, 2011) and the distinctiveness of foreign language teacher (Borg, 2006). Therefore, it seems advisable that future MoE TPD plans should focus on

this important element especially that the linguistic competence was a major concern for the study's participants and which has been previously noted in some contextual studies as highlighted in Chapter Two. In addition, further in-depth investigation is required on why Saudi universities failed to increase EFL teachers' linguistic competence prior to joining the service despite the presence of well-qualified teaching staff and the generous governmental budget spending.

In addition, researchers in the field of language teaching have noted the need for a movement from short, one-shot, one-size-fits-all training events and workshops towards a more situated, sustained, and job-embedded forms of TPD that acknowledge teachers' unique contexts and the complexities of their daily realities (Crandall & Christison, 2016). My study's findings suggest that TPD is more effective when it engages teachers as active learners in concrete tasks immediately relevant to their contextual needs and done collectively in an environment that supports lifelong learning where human, social and decisional capital are all intertwined (see Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012). Therefore, future plans should put more value on the learning opportunities that support these learning structures especially reflection, peer observation, coaching, mentoring, study groups, mutual discussions, action research, networking, and cooperation, which is also supported by literature (Desimone, 2009). Such learning instances are important because they give teachers a chance to make the leap from theory to practice (Lieberman, 1995).

Furthermore, part of participants' learning in my study was socially negotiated. Participants spoke of the degrees to which their knowledge and skills were enhanced as a result of participation, communication, and collaboration. By active engagement in a community of learners sharing and discussing mutual concerns, teachers were able to build their understanding, develop their confidence and self-efficacy, and improve their practices. Such learning communities are important to teachers' practices because they involve teachers in collective work on authentic situations emerging from the "dailiness" of their practice (Lieberman, 1995). Therefore, it seems important to enhance this kind of learning in our future plans, support current communities, and increase schools' capacity for these learning structures.

7.5 Limitations of the study

My study was valuable in providing a holistic picture of how Saudi EFL teachers develop professionally in order to meet the challenges and the demands of their profession. However, the study is not without its limitations, some of which are acknowledged below:

First, I pointed out in the methodology chapter that I was not able to conduct voice interviews with female teachers for various cultural and tribal reasons. Therefore, I used reflective essays as an alternative data collection instrument. Using this method provided me with a valuable opportunity to seek their perceptions as explained above. However, only four female teachers were cooperative and volunteered in this research. I think this might be attributed to the nature of the task which might seem demanding to some teachers. Therefore, using another research method, such as questionnaires, or working with a female research partner might have yielded more insights into female teachers' development in our context.

Second, the scope of the study's investigation was rather limited because the focus was mainly on practicing EFL teachers. The study did not involve other important stakeholders especially educational officials and policy makers who are at the top of the hierarchy of our educational system. Involving them would have been useful in providing insights from another important perspective. Therefore, future research investigating TPD in our context should take this into perspective and involve all concerned stakeholders including policymakers.

Third, my investigation took place in QED. Apart from Al-Qunfuthah itself, which is a small city, most of the surrounding areas were small and rural. Therefore, I think conducting this inquiry in an urban area would have provided more insights into Saudi EFL teachers' development given the abundance of TPD opportunities available in these areas.

7.6 Personal reflection

Undertaking this study has been rewarding to me both personally and professionally. At the personal level, the study managed to expand my knowledge about TPD and how teachers develop professionally in order to prepare themselves for the challenges and demands of their profession. It also provided me with some insights into the complexity of TPD in our context along with deeper understanding about how it feels to be a language teacher in a non-supportive educational environment. In addition, the study also managed to deepen my understanding of the stated dilemma as to why institutionalised TPD in our context is still a failing project.

Undertaking this experience was also valuable to me in that it enabled me to step back from my own context for a while and to look at it critically through the lens of educational research. This was significant as it provided me with new and unique insights that helped reshape and broaden my understanding about the nature of my profession. I have always been an insider in the Saudi educational system since I started my teaching career. However, this experience, to some extent helped me assume the role of a researcher and this enabled me to investigate hidden aspects that have hitherto remined relatively unexplored.

An important aspect of my experience was expanding my knowledge of the social sciences research and about the research culture in general. During the course of this research journey, I learned a wide range of things about educational research. Most importantly, I learned how to do a well-organised interpretive research. I have always looked with doubt at interpretive studies seeing them as less credible than quantitative research. This was partly because of my own ignorance and lack of knowledge, on the one hand, and the dominance of the positivist paradigm in our educational system, on the other. However, conducting this study managed to overturn my previous convictions and convinced me of the value of this type of research especially in dealing with complex human phenomena.

In concluding this thesis, I definitely feel fulfilled that I have achieved some of my initial aims for which I started this research journey. Most importantly of which was to critically explore the nature and reality of TPD through teachers' own voices. Hopefully, this will draw the attention of our educational authority to the reality of teachers' development and the nature of their professionalism in our context.

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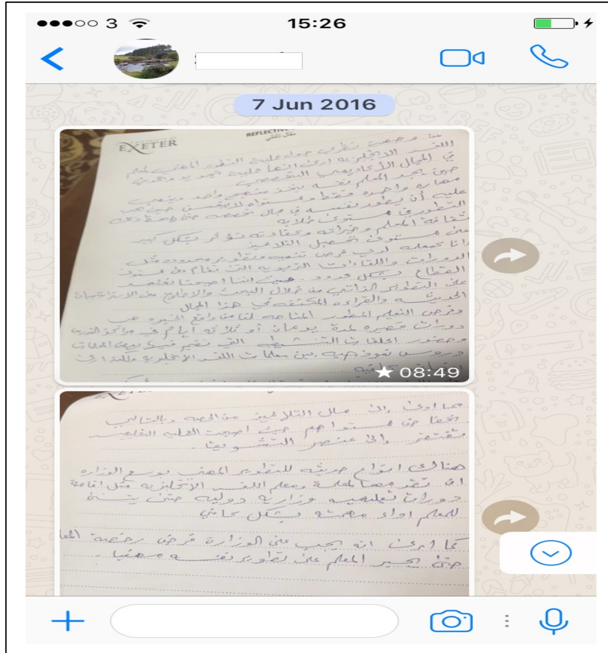
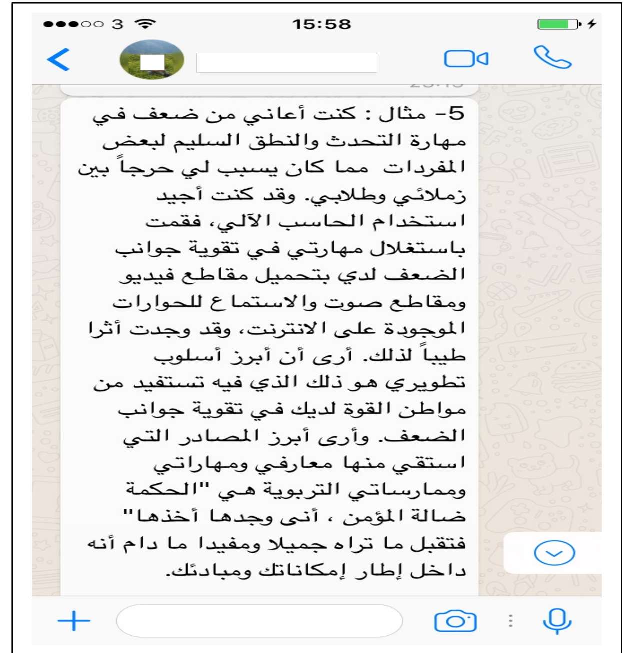
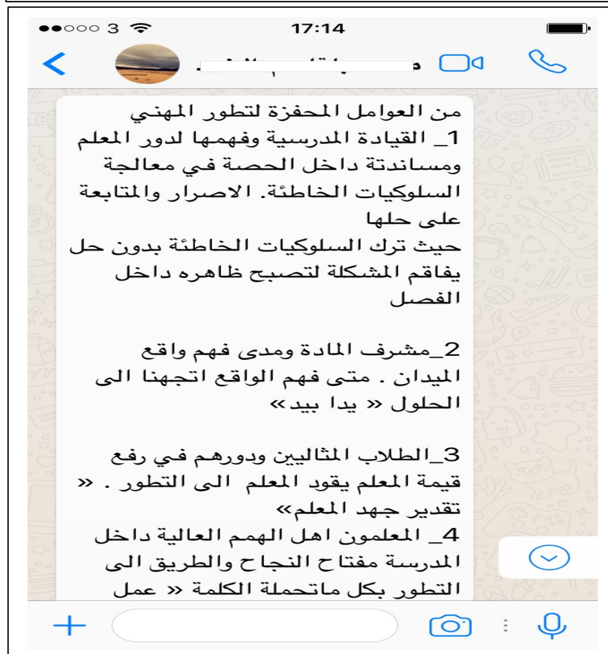
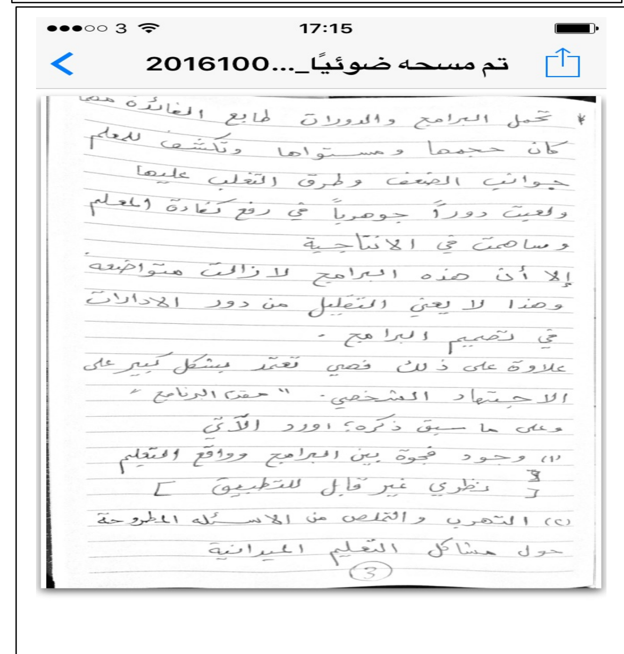
Appendices

Appendix (1): Sample WhatsApp correspondence









Appendix (2): Interview guide

Do you think teachers need to improve their practices? (why? / Why not?)
(Perceptions about TPD)

- importance
- definition
- benefits
- characteristics of good TPD

How do you develop professionally to meet the challenges and the demands of your profession?

- Where do you seek professional help?
- Learning about new practices and methods.

Could you speak about your past experiences with regards to your institutional support?

- Learning opportunities.
- Evaluation.
- Attitude.
- Purpose.

To what extent do feel that you have a voice in decisions with regards to your TPD?

- Relationship with MoE.

To what extent are you ready to engage with self-directed forms of TPD?

- Learning opportunities.
- Attitude.
- Support.

What encourages/ discourages you from engagement with TPD opportunities?

- Hinderances.
- Drivers.

How do you think TPD can be enhanced in your context?

Appendix (3): Site clearance letter

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم
(٢٨٠)
إدارة التعليم بمحافظة القنفذة
التخطيط والتطوير
البحوث والدراسات

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وزارة التعليم
Ministry of Education

الرقم: ٣٦/٣٧٦٩٦٤٥٣
التاريخ: ٢٢/ ٠٤/ ١٤٣٧هـ
المرفقات : بدون
الموضوع : بشأن دراسة الباحث/ حمد إبراهيم أحمد الشيخي

تسهيل مهمة باحث

من : مدير التعليم

إلى : سعادة الملحق الثقافي بسفارة المملكة العربية السعودية في لندن وفقه الله

بشأن : الموافقة للطالب : حمد إبراهيم أحمد الشيخي لتطبيق أدوات البحث لدينا لتحقيق متطلبات الدراسة.

السلام عليكم و رحمة الله وبركاته...................... و بعد :

بناءً على الطلب المقدم من الطالب / حمد إبراهيم أحمد الشيخي (السجل المدني : ١٠٢٥٨٥٢٤٥٨)، من جامعة (إكستر) في بريطانيا، بشأن دراسته الميدانية لنيل درجة الدكتوراه، عليه :

نفيدكم بأنه لا مانع لدينا من حيث المبدأ تسهيل مهمته من تاريخ ١/٤/ ٢٠١٦ م الموافق ١٤٣٧/٦/٢٣هـ الى تاريخ ٢٠١٦/٦/٣٠ م الموافق ١٤٣٧/٩/٢٥هـ لمدة ثلاثة اشهر كما هو موضح في خطاب الجامعة المرفق على أن يتم تزويدنا لاحقاً بأدوات البحث و العينة المستهدفة.

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته ،،،

محمد إبراهيم الزاحمي

☒/ للتخطيط والتطوير.
☒/ للباحث /حمد إبراهيم أحمد الشيخي.
☒/ للاتصالات.

وزارة التربية والتعليم
التخطيط والتطوير
إدارة التربية والتعليم بمحافظة القنفذة

إدارة التربية والتعليم بمحافظة القنفذة –التخطيط والتطوير التربوي - فاكس ٠١٧٧٣٢٨٨٤٠ – ٠١٧٧٣٢٨٨٣١

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Appendix (4): Ethical clearance

Ref (for office use only)

D/15/16/32

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

When completing this form please remember that the purpose of the document is to clearly explain the ethical considerations of the research being undertaken. As a generic form it has been constructed to cover a wide-range of different projects so some sections may not seem relevant to you. Please include the information which addresses any ethical considerations for your particular project which will be needed by the SSIS Ethics Committee to approve your proposal.

Guidance on all aspects of the SSIS Ethics application process can be found on the SSIS intranet:
Staff: https://intranet.exeter.ac.uk/socialsciences/staff/research/researchenvironmentandpolicies/ethics/
Students:http://intranet.exeter.ac.uk/socialsciences/student/postgraduateresearch/ethicsapprovalforyourresearch/

All staff and students within SSIS should use this form to apply for ethical approval and then send it to one of the following email addresses:

ssis-ethics@exeter.ac.uk This email should be used by staff and students in Egenis, the Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies, Law, Politics, the Strategy & Security Institute, and Sociology, Philosophy, Anthropology.

ssis-gseethics@exeter.ac.uk This email should be used by staff and students in the Graduate School of Education.

Applicant details	
Name	**Hamad Ibrahim Alshaikhi**
Department	**TESOL**
UoE email address	**hiaa202@exeter.ac.uk**

Duration for which permission is required		
You should request approval for the entire period of your research activity. The start date should be at least one month from the date that you submit this form. Students should use the anticipated date of completion of their course as the end date of their work. Please note that retrospective ethical approval will never be given.		
Start date:01/04/2016	**End date:30/06/2016**	**Date submitted:03/02/2016**

Students only	
All students must discuss their research intentions with their supervisor/tutor prior to submitting an application for ethical approval. The discussion may be face to face or via email. Prior to submitting your application in its final form to the SSIS Ethics Committee it should be approved by your first and second supervisor / dissertation supervisor/tutor. You should submit evidence of their approval with your application, e.g. a copy of their email approval.	
Student number	**600054892**
Programme of study	**EDD TESOL**
Name of Supervisor(s)/tutors or Dissertation Tutor	**Dr. Gabriela Meier**
Have you attended any ethics training that is	No, but I have completed many ethics forms for my assignments in the pre thesis stage which provided me with enough experience of how to go

available to students?	through this process.

Certification for all submissions
I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given in this application and that I undertake in my research 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 ethics proposal form. **Hamad Ibrahim Alshaikhi** Double click this box to confirm certification ☒ *Submission of this ethics proposal form confirms your acceptance of the above.*

TITLE OF YOUR PROJECT

An Investigation into Saudi EFL teachers' Perceptions about their Professional Development

ETHICAL REVIEW BY AN EXTERNAL COMMITTEE

Not applicable

MENTAL CAPACITY ACT 2005

Not applicable

SYNOPSIS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Maximum of 750 words.

This research projects explores Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions and perspectives about their professional development in the Saudi context. The research project intends to gain more insight into Saudi EFL teachers' professional development by exploring teachers' perspectives, beliefs, and understandings of the concept of professional development. It also intends to explore how teachers develop professionally to meet the challenging demands of their profession, their attitudes towards teacher professional development, current forms and provisions of institutional professional development, and the extent to which they have a voice in educational reform with regards to their professional development. The research project aims to understand and draw a holist picture of Saudi EFL teachers' professional development and professionalism in the Saudi context which will hopefully inform our educational policies and lead to better practices of professional development in our context. It also intends to raise teachers' voice about their professional development within the Saudi Context.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH

Data will be collected in Saudi Arabia. I will make sure that my work fully conforms to the ethical requirements of Saudi Arabia. These requirements include obtaining a consent letter from the academic institution where my interviews will take place, consent forms from the participants and ethical clearance from the Ministry of Education. Approval have been obtained from the Ministry of Education to conduct my research in Saudi Arabia. In addition, all participants will be sent consent forms and information sheets in due time.

The following sections require an assessment of possible ethical consideration in your research project. If particular sections do not seem relevant to your project please indicate this and clarify why.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study's questions coupled with its intended goals entail a qualitative research method. Emphasis throughout the study will be on understanding the phenomenon under investigation through participants' points of view; therefore, the in-depth semi-structured interview will be the main data collection instrument. This choice is important to help me understand the lived experiences and the subjective meanings of my participants. A purposive sampling procedure will be undertaken to recruit the most suitable participants for the study.

All interviews will be conducted face to face with participants in locations of their own choice. However, participant will be asked if they prefer any other option such as by the phone, which I do anticipate to happen especially with female teachers and supervisors due to some religious and cultural reasons. During the course of interviewing, written and unwritten (digital recorded) records of the interviews will be kept by the researcher for processing. Interviews will last from 30 to 45 minutes and will be conducted in Arabic for better understanding. An interview guide will be used to maintain consistency, however, interviewees will be given ample time and space to develop their own ideas and to raise issues of importance to them. As my interviews will be conducted overseas, data will be stored in my own private laptop which is highly encrypted and password secured. In this way data will be kept safe and will not be shared.

Data will be processed and analysed fairly and lawfully by the researcher according to relevant academic measures without the intervention of any third party. All interviews will be fully transcribed and thematically analysed. A software would be used to help with the process. Main themes that may emerge from data will be categorized and analysed according to research questions. Different measures will be taken by the researcher to avoid biasing and influencing data. This will be done in accordance with academically recognized qualitative research measure usually pursued by researchers to achieve this end. All data obtained for this study will not be further processed in any manner incompatible with the study's main objectives.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants of this study are Saudi EFL teachers and supervisors (both male and female) in Al-Qunfuthah Educational Directorate in Saudi Arabia. Selection of teachers will cover the three main levels in public education in Saudi Arabia: primary, intermediate and secondary. The number of participants is expected to be around 15. However, a determining factor in the actual size of the sample is data saturation.

THE VOLUNTARY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION

All interviewees are current serving EFL teachers and supervisors. They will be first sent information sheets containing detailed explanation of the nature of my research and the role of their participation. Then they will be kindly asked to sign consent forms and they will be under no compulsion to participate in this study. Their Participation is totally voluntary, and they are under no obligation to take part. If they do choose to participate in this study, then they can withdraw at any stage without any further explanation. However, appropriate measures will be taken to guarantee that participants will not suffer any risk of harm, detriment, or unreasonable stress.

I will cooperate with local educational directorates and schools to recruit participants. However, as indicated above all participants will be sent consent forms and information sheet in due time before their participation to ensure voluntary participation and to make sure that all participants understand the nature of the research and the nature of their participation.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

None is anticipated at this time. However, if I do have participants with special needs, I will do my best to facilitate the process for them in terms of time, location and method of interviewing. I will also make sure that their participation does not cause them any harm or risk; or puts them under any kind of mental or physical stress.

THE INFORMED NATURE OF PARTICIPATION

All participants will be sent consent forms and participant information sheets to make sure that they fully understand the significance of their roles and to voluntarily consent to participate in the study.

ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBLE HARM

None is currently anticipated. Given the nature of this research which is mainly interested in exploring teachers' perceptions and perspectives about teacher professional development in Saudi Arabia, I don't expect any possible harm to me or to my prospective participants. However, all necessary precautions will be taken to eliminate the possibility of any potential harm to participants.

DATA PROTECTION AND STORAGE

The researcher will use a digital recorder and will take notes during interviews. All recorded and written data will be securely and confidentially stored, handled and disposed of by the researcher. They will be used for the purpose of this study and will not be further processed in any manner incompatible with this purpose.
Given that all interviews will be conducted in Saudi Arabia, data will be stored, transcribed and analysed in my own personal laptop which is highly encrypted and password protected. All audio-recordings will be downloaded to my laptop for security. My data will also be backed up on a memory stick which is also highly encrypted and password protected. I will do my best to keep the data as safe and as confidential as possible. This will be done in accordance with the University of Exeter protocols.
Upon return to the UK, I also expect to use my own laptop for data analysis as I don't have a private study space in the university. All recordings and written records will be disposed of accordingly as soon as the research project is over.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Participants will be fully informed about myself, my interests, my aims, my sponsor, my institution, my funder, and how and where my research will be published. Most of these issues will be presented to participants in the information sheets and during interviews when I present myself to participants.

USER ENGAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK

I do not have the intention to go back to every participant and let them review their work due to time constraints. However, upon their request, participants will be supplied with a copy of their interview transcript so that they can comment on and edit it as they see fit.

INFORMATION SHEET

The information sheet will be translated into Arabic. Then each participant will be sent a copy before taking part in this research project. This is important to give participants enough information about myself, the nature and the aims of the study, and the role of their participation. I will try my best to make all details as clear as possible to my prospective participants so that can make informed decisions before taking part in the study.

CONSENT FORM

A consent form will be sent to all participants to guarantee their voluntary participation in this research project. This form will be in accordance with the university's regulations and ethical protocols.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Staff and students should follow the procedure below.

Post Graduate Taught Students (Graduate School of Education): Please submit your completed application to your first supervisor. Please see the submission flowchart for further information on the process.

All other students should discuss their application with their supervisor(s) / dissertation tutor / tutor and gain their approval prior to submission. Students should submit evidence of approval with their application, e.g. a copy of the supervisors email approval.

All staff should submit their application to the appropriate email address below.

This application form and examples of your consent form, information sheet and translations of any documents which are not written in English should be submitted by email to the SSIS Ethics Secretary via one of the following email addresses:

ssis-ethics@exeter.ac.uk This email should be used by staff and students in Egenis, the Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies, Law, Politics, the Strategy & Security Institute, and Sociology, Philosophy, Anthropology.

ssis-gseethics@exeter.ac.uk This email should be used by staff and students in the Graduate School of Education.

Appendix (5): Information sheet and consent form

INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH

Title of Research Project

An Investigation into Saudi EFL teachers' Perceptions about their Professional Development

Details of Project

I am a former EFL teacher in the Ministry of Education and a current doctorate student of education (TESOL) at the University of Exeter. This research project is part of my doctoral studies at the university. It investigates Saudi EFL teacher's perceptions about their professional development within the Saudi context. It intends to gain more insight into Saudi EFL teachers' professional development by exploring teachers' perspectives, beliefs, attitudes, practices, and understandings regarding this phenomenon. The aim of this research project is to understand EFL teachers' professional development and professionalism. The research also intends to give teachers a chance to raise their voice about their professional development concerns. Results of this inquiry will hopefully inform our educational policies and lead to better practices of teacher professional development.

As one of the current Saudi EFL teachers, you are kindly invited to participate in this study. You will be interviewed for about 30-45 minutes and you will be asked about your opinion concerning his phenomenon. The interview will be conducted in Arabic, and you can choose to have an interview that is face-to-face or by telephone. You also have the right to choose the time and location of the interview. Your Participation is totally voluntary, and you are under no obligation to take part. If you do choose to participate in this study, you can withdraw at any stage without any further explanation. Your identity will be anonymized and all data collected will be kept confidential and used for the study's purposes only. Your participation in this study is highly appreciated. The data you will provide is invaluable as it is expected to help the researcher achieve his intended goals.

Contact Details

For further information about the research /interview data, please contact:

Name: *Hamad Ibrahim Alshaikhi.*
Postal address: Graduate School of Education, St Luke's Campus, Heavitree Road, Exeter, EX1 2LU
Telephone: 00 44 (0)7445727797 or 00966504508934.
Email: *hiaa202@exeter.ac.uk*

If you have concerns/questions about the research you would like to discuss with someone else at the University, please contact: **Dr Gabriela Meier. (G.S.Meier@exeter.ac.uk)**

Confidentiality

Interviews will be tape recorded by the researcher. However, interview tapes and transcripts will be held in confidence. They will not be used other than for the purposes described above and third parties will not be allowed access to them (except as may be required by the law). However, if you request it, you will be supplied with a copy of your interview transcript so that you can comment on and edit it as you see fit (please give your email below so that I am able to contact you at a later date). Your data will be held in accordance with the Data

Page 1 of 3 Revised: December 2014

Protection Act. However, appropriate measures will be taken by the researcher to guarantee that you do not suffer any risk of harm, detriment, or unreasonable stress.

Data Protection Notice

The information you provide will securely stored by the researcher. They will be used for research purposes and your personal data will be processed in accordance with current data protection legislation and the University's notification lodged at the Information Commissioner's Office. Your personal data will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties. The results of the research will be published in anonymised form. Once this research project is over, all data will be disposed off properly by the researcher.

Anonymity

All participants in this study have the right to anonymity and non-identifiability. All research data, in all media, are confidential and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third party. Interview data will be held and used on an anonymous basis, with no mention of your name or institution. All information you give will be treated as confidential and the researcher will make every effort to preserve your anonymity.

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH

Consent

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of this research project. I understand that this research project investigates Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions about their professional development and that being a participant in this research I will be interviewed by the researcher for about 30 – 45 minutes.

I also understand that:

- there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may withdraw at any stage;
- 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 or academic conference or seminar presentations;
- If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymized form;
- all information I give will be treated as confidential;
- the researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity.

.... (Signature of participant)	.... (Date)
……………………………………………… (Printed name of participant)	……………………………………………… (Email address of participant if they have requested to view a copy of the interview transcript.)
.... (Signature of researcher)	**Hamad Ibrahim Alshaikhi** (Printed name of researcher)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s).
Your contact details are kept separately from your interview data.

 Revised: December 2014

Appendix (6): Sample interview text with initial thoughts and coding

Importance of TPD: TPD Important. Motive: The curriculum is currently changing. Benefit: The teacher should keep up with the changes in the curriculum. Definition: TPD is comprehensive.	Adil: Okay no problem. Thank you very much for this kind introduction and regarding question number one I think that teacher professional development is the cornerstone in education in general and it is very important for the teacher; okay because, you know, the curriculum is currently changing every day and another, so any teacher should, you know, keep up with the changes in the curriculum, ok. So, regarding the definition, I think that the self-development of the teacher in terms of his language, in terms of the curriculum, in terms of the context, also the students, the environment that he is working in, also keeping up with the technology, and teaching aids - Everything regarding teaching. So, this is part of the definition. My definition of it. Me: Sorry for interrupting you. Is this phrase, I mean professional development, associated with something in particular in your mind?
Definition: The ministry's role in teacher development. The teacher's role in the development.	Adil: I think it is a mix between learning and training, it is a mixed process, first of all the Ministry of Education should take care of this kind, try to develop the teachers, try to let them be up with the dynamics of the changes. Okay and also the office centers like the one we have here; also, at the level of the directorate. So, it is very important; and it is also about effective teaching and continuous development from the teacher. So, in general, as I told you: in terms of the teacher, teaching aids, curriculum, technology, every part regarding teaching should be developed, should be dealt with. Me: What benefits do you expect to get when you engage with professional development activities? Do you expect to get something from them?
The importance of TPD. Affordances. Comparison between teachers who develop and those who don't develop. Consequences of not developing.	Adil: Of course, a lot, if you compare or if you have two teachers; one teacher is like, let's say lazy, okay. Just graduated and wants to have his salary and that's it. He stays at his level; and the other teacher is ambitious and wants to improve himself. You know after a period of time you find the other teacher is far away from the first, while the first one, you know, will be degraded. In terms of language he will lose most of his language; in terms of Technology he will be back; while dealing with students the class in general will be boring. But the other teacher, you know, will create a beautiful environment for his students. He will be innovative and creative and also, he will develop himself in terms of every aspect in relation to his job. Me: Okay what characteristics do you associate with effective forms of professional development from your perspective?
Areas keen to develop What TPD should concentrate on Effective TPD. The linguistic component of TPD.	Adil: I think that you know most of the current thing is in terms of language is trying to improve yourself in the four skills of language, improve yourself in the listening skills, reading skill, writing skill, and comprehension. So those are the most important thing. Some teachers try to develop themselves in other areas far away from the field. It's okay but it doesn't help, you know, it doesn't help if the teacher's linguistic ability is week. So, the most important thing is trying to focus on the things that you need basically in your area....
Areas keen to develop.	Me: Do you mean your linguistic abilities?

Linguistic abilities. Using technology. Knowing things not related to the field is a waste of time.	Adil: Yes, linguistic abilities. Add to that technology; to be aware of using technology as you know. And forget about the other things, you know, like paying attention to, like I mentioned, you know, being educated or knowing things which are not related to the field. It helps but it is just a waste of time.
	Me: I would like to go to another question which is: when do you feel that you have to develop yourself? Is there a particular time or a specific point that you feel when you reach it you have to develop myself?
Time for development: TPD is ongoing.	Adil: I think there is no limit for this process or there is no area you say that.... for me, from my own experience after I graduated… I can go on to answer question number five if you don't mind?
	Me: Yeah please go ahead?
	Adil: I will answer number five and then number two which is connected to the question you have just asked me.
	Me: Yeah okay I will go back to it.
	Adil: Question number two, first of all the formal ...you said the formal development?
Current practice:	Me: Question number two is about how do you develop professionally now to meet the challenges and the changes of the profession? Either formally or informally?
Formally TPD SD TPD	Adil: Formally I engage in Al-Baha University I studied there, and I had a master's in applied linguistics which is focused on the educational field and on dealing with curriculum, students, and the environment in general. So, this is formally. I had, you know, MA in applied linguistics; and to tell the truth it helped me a lot after I finished it...
	Me: So, you think this kind of development was very important for you to develop professionally in the field?
Obstacles:	Adil: Yeah, very important for me but it's not, you know, affordable for all teachers; so, we cannot apply it. So, a few numbers of teachers select it. So, we can't think of it as a solution because there is a question which I think is number six in your questions, so it can't be a solution because it is limited to a few numbers of teachers. This is for formally. Informally….and also this is the second part of question number two and question five. Informally, you know, I had my own experience and it may take time to answer it if you don't have any problem?
	Me: No, no, please go ahead.
Informal development: Role of friends Learning from others' experiences. Self-critique Weakness of preservice education. Language weakness. Reading books. Internal motives.	Adil: Well after I graduated from Umm Alqura University - because I studied there my BA. That next year I had a chance to sit with one of my friends and I tried to speak with him. Actually, I couldn't keep up with him at that time, you know, I have just talked for a minute or something .... Then the man continued talking and I couldn't keep up with him. Actually, when the meeting ended, I told him: please help me. Because I know that now my level is, you know, is not up to... You know, I told myself that I am a teacher of English and now I can't speak for a minute or two, that's a shame, how can I teach students? Well he told me that you have to focus. You have to try to develop yourself in the four skills which, you know, I will recommend. He advised me to buy a book which called Oxford pictures dictionary, you know it?
	Me: Yeah, I know it.

Role of reading in TPD. Watching channels. Self-development Impact of TPD: Cooperation.	Adil: It relates pictures to words. He told me to study it thoroughly. I spent a year at least on it, to memorize it. After I have spent a year on it, really after that I jumped into dealing with speaking and listening. He told me: you can take cassettes – audiobook; listen to it; whatever he says and try to speak after him. Record your own voice in another device like this one. I have done this also for like three months, then after that he told me okay .... he gave me a bunch of books about grammar also; which I spent like another year. Then after that he told me now you go to videos or any channels like CNN ... Now the time for practice. You watch and try to grasp, try to understand something. Actually, I have spent five years on this process… Me: This is all done while you are working? Adil: Yes, while I am working yeah. But took me a long time. But after that I have noticed a considerable leap in my level. There is a huge difference between before and after. So, this is my own experience. Generally speaking that linguistic development should work on all the four linguistic skills at the same time; simultaneously. I wanted to generalize it to my colleagues here. They have practiced it and benefited from it a lot

Appendix (7): Reflective essays guidelines

REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Title of Research Project

An Investigation into Saudi EFL teachers' Perceptions about their Professional Development

Details of Project

I am a former EFL teacher in the Ministry of Education and a current doctorate student of education (TESOL) at the University of Exeter. This research project is part of my doctoral studies at the university. It investigates Saudi EFL teacher's perceptions about their professional development within the Saudi context. It intends to gain more insight into Saudi EFL teachers' professional development by exploring teachers' perspectives, beliefs, attitudes, practices, and understandings regarding this phenomenon. The aim of this research project is to understand EFL teachers' professional development and professionalism. The research also intends to give teachers a chance to raise their voice about their professional development concerns. Results of this inquiry will hopefully inform our educational policies and lead to better practices of teacher professional development.

As one of the current Saudi EFL teachers, you are kindly invited to participate in this study by writing a short reflective essay providing enough details about your own views, opinions, practices, attitudes, beliefs, and experiences concerning this phenomenon. Using Arabic, you are kindly requested to write the essay in about three pages.

You can use the following to guide you:

1- How do you perceive teacher professional development in your context?
   (definition, opinions, views, attitudes, importance, effective TPD)
2- What professional development opportunities do you engage in at present: both formally and informally? (i.e. How do you develop professionally to meet the demands of your tasks?).
3- How do you evaluate (perceive) current forms and modes of delivery of the institutional PD made available to you? (This part is about your opinion of current TPD presented to you by the Ministry of Education).

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REFLECTIVE ESSAY

4- To what extent do you feel that you have a voice in the processes of decision making with regards to your PD?

5- To what extent are you ready to engage with self-directed and situated forms of TPD? (This question is about your own role in your development. The forms of self-driven TPD you practice either individually or collectively at school or outside school).

6- What factors according to your perspective facilitate / hinder effective TPD initiatives in your context?

7- What recommendations do you have for making TPD initiatives more effective?

Name of participant/ ……………………………..

Academic qualification/………………………….

Name of school/ …………………………………

Class or Level /…………………………………..

Number of years in service/…………………….

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Appendix (8): Sample reflective essay with initial coding

	My name is XXX. I am an English language teacher who works at XXX school. I am a new teacher, and this is my first year. Therefore, I hope I will be able to write reflectively on this task which seems quite interesting at first glance.
Defining TPD Importance of TPD/ definition Impact of students' achievement.	First, we have to agree that teacher professional development is important to every teacher including myself. In terms of understanding, I think teacher professional development is a very broad concept. But I would consider teacher professional development as an essential element in enhancing the teaching and learning process. Teacher professional development is a continuous learning process of improving and increasing capabilities of the teaching staff. While high quality teaching is vital for students' success, professional development is critical for growing and supporting great teachers. In fact, teacher professional development is important to me because it's part of students' success, and it payed off when I worked first time as a trainer at my institution.
Professional needs. Current practices of TPD Networking Self-learning Importance of TPD / Gains of TPD	As a fresher teacher, I think I need more experiences and need to know more about teaching skills that will help me survive as a teacher. I managed to get most of these from personal learning networks; mostly through self- learning. I found that self-learning is a good way to improve teacher professional development. It helps me develop the confidence I need to face challenging problems and obstacles in my teaching career.

Current practices of TPD Social networks Self-development Movies Linguistic development Professional needs Institutional support Evaluation of Institutional support Recommendation. Evaluation of institutional support. No practical courses. Obstacles/ Hinderances Effect of the teacher.	I use social networks to benefit from other teachers and share my knowledge. For me, the use of personal learning networks has the greatest impact on my professional development. You might ask why? An I would say it keeps me connected to the wider community of teachers around me. Add to that, in my spare time, I watch English movies which help improve my English, especially listening and speaking skills; and also expand my vocabulary. As you know and probably experienced this yourself, first-year teacher needs more support and more practical courses. This is the duty of the Ministry of Education that have to look after new teachers. Unfortunately, until now I have not been on any practical courses that help improve my job career. Most of the English courses that I have attended are not that much. Educational officials need to make them more frequent and work hard on them for better results. To be honest, it is hard to pass a judgment on them at this time. I can't judge them; or maybe I don’t know how to do so. As I explained above until now, I have not been on any practical courses. Maybe when I attend more courses, I will change my mind later on about their value. Teachers encounter many problems in their teaching career. In my personal experience, I think that teaching large numbers of students and many classes, overwhelming daily responsibilities, and too many tasks which teachers have to do each day in the school are some of challenges to continuing professional development. The effect those things make on my career and development is big. In

	short u have to fight to do all of these things properly, honestly, and on time whereas there is no time to do them.

Appendix (9): Sample table of data reduction process

Category/ Potential Theme	Summary of data / codes
Understanding/ Defining TPD	Developing the teacher technologically inside school. Linguistic development. Complex and interactive learning. Ethical development. Ongoing learning. Adapting to the latest developments. Ability to create attractive class environment.
Current practices and sources of TPD	Communication with native speakers. Watching TV and Movies. Learning from experienced teachers. Interaction with the supervisor. Institutional training programmes. Colleagues. The internet. Online communities.
Evaluation of institutional support	No focus on technology. Training centre is a place to mix with EFL colleagues. Training is not based on an actual perception of the teacher's needs. No practical courses. Content is not understood. Training is top down. One size fits all packages. Unplanned. Repetitive. Unqualified trainers.
Teacher voice in educational reform (Relationship between teachers and the MoE)	Teacher has no voice. Teachers are not consulted on training. Teacher is implementer. Marginalization. Centralisation of decision making.
Self-initiated/driven teacher professional development.	Communication with native speakers. Movies. Work as volunteer. Smart phones. Social networks. Online communities (WhatsApp). Classroom practice.
Factors that encourage TPD	Internal desire to keep up with the changing nature of the time. Ideal classroom environment. Responsibility towards students. Morals. Feeling of weakness of and/or deficiency in skills. Follow-up of supervisor.
Hindrances/Factors that suppress teachers and disappoint them)	Lack of language labs. Headteacher does not recognize importance of the language. Lack of family/parental support. Ignoring teachers' basic needs No teaching aids. Frustration. Content of training is abstract. The teacher is not trusted. Lack of communication in English among teachers. Difficulty of joining award-winning programmes. Lack of cooperation among some staff. Lack of financial support. No incentives. Students' low achievement in English.
Recommendations for good practice	Improving intuitional training provisions. Practical institutional training. Giving teachers their financial rights. Providing basic needs at schools. Paying more attention to English language. Teachers as partners. Developing supervisors.

Aspects the teachers are keen to develop	English language. Speaking skill. Communication skills.
The right place for TPD	Anywhere. Classroom the first step. Teachers' room.
Who is responsible for TPF?	The teacher himself. MoE should help. Joint responsibility.
Importance of TPD.	Improves teacher performance. Good for language improvement. Effective on students' achievement. Improves self-confidence.
Pre-service education	University preparation course was good.
School leadership	Supportive head teacher. Does not know importance of English. Need to spend more money on TPD.

Appendix (10): Summary of Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis model

1- The process of familiarization oneself with the data. During this initial phase of analysis researchers need to immerse themselves in their data to familiarize themselves with the depth and breadth of the content. This stage entails repeated reading in an active way searching for meanings and patterns. It also involves taking notes and marking initial ideas for coding. This process helps the researcher develop a comprehensive understanding of his data in their entirety.

2- Code generation. The researcher works systematically through his data in order to organize them into meaningful groups. This entails assigning labels to features of the data that are interesting to the researcher and of relevance to the research questions and focus. This is important to identify aspects of the data that might form the basis of repeated themes and patterns.

3- Searching for themes. Once all data have been coded and collated, the researcher starts searching for themes. In this phase the focus of analysis shifts to the broader level of themes rather than codes. Themes are coherent and meaningful patterns relevant to the research focus. Searching for themes is an active process that requires careful attention and deliberation. They are normally constructed by researchers rather than discovered. This process involves analysing and sorting out the various codes to see how they may combine to form broader themes. The researcher ends this stage with a number of possible candidate themes and sub-themes, and all the extracts of the coded data that are relevant to them.

4- Reviewing themes. This stage involves the refinement of the initial candidate themes. Researchers should sort out themes to see which themes don't have enough data to support them and therefore should be removed. Other themes may need to be broken down into separate themes or joined with other ones to form new themes. This stage involves two levels. Level one entails reviewing data at the level of coded data extracts to make sure that the extracts for the themes form a coherent pattern. Level two involves the examination of the validity of the

themes in relation to the full data set to see if candidate themes draw a true picture of the whole story.

5- Defining and naming the themes. This stage starts as soon as the researcher develops a convincing thematic map of the data. Themes presented for analysis should be refined and defined. This is essential to identify the essence of what each theme stands for and what aspect of the data it captures. The researcher should produce a detailed analysis of each theme and identifies the story each theme tells about the data. This requires careful consideration of how that story fits into the overall story the researcher is telling about his data in relation to the research focus.

6- Writing the report. This stage involves the final analysis and production of the research report. It entails weaving together analysis and data extracts in a coherent manner. The researcher should tell the story of the data in a persuasive manner in order to convince potential readers of the merit and validity of his analysis.