FACILITATING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: A STUDY OF TAIWANESE ENGLISH TEACHERS IN PRIVATE LANGUAGE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOLS

by

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ABSTRACT

This longitudinal research study looks into the attitudes and current practices of Taiwanese teachers in supplementary schools (buxibans) toward professional development. Using the method of triangulation, data from two case studies, survey questionnaire (2004 and 2008), and electronic discourse were gathered and analyzed. A five-point likert scale was used to measure the teachers' attitudes, Cronbach alpha to measure reliability, Chi-square to test the strength of the correlations between variables, and T-Tests to compare the responses from surveys 1 and 2. An online teacher professional development (oTPD) framework, that integrated the principles of cognitive apprenticeship and informal mentoring in online environments, was used to facilitate 1) the delivery of oTPD over a period of time, 2) the transfer and construction of teacher knowledge and skills that would have direct implications on teachers' practice and on students' learning, and 3) the social interaction and collaborative efforts of international teacher-experts (invited mentors) in the oTPD process. Despite some challenges faced during the implementation of new learning activities and/or learning materials adapted from their participation in the oTPD, the results show that teachers who took part in this study benefitted from oTPD through the construction of new knowledge and skills and a positive engagement in professional development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 7

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"…in Taiwan, English-language learning has become almost a mania, with the government, the schools, and the people themselves all clamoring for more English" (Her, 2002, para.1)

1.0 Introduction

The structure of Taiwan's education system puts great weight on examinations, triggering a test-oriented pedagogy that has shaped the core values of education, changing the way Taiwanese students view learning. This creates a fierce competition among students to perform well in these exams, thus, giving way to the buxiban or cram school frenzy. It is what makes the Taiwanese educational culture what it is today. Defined as short-term supplementary schools, buxibans are deeply embedded in the Taiwanese way of life, supplementing the educational needs of the Taiwanese people.

Another factor that increases the local people's reliance on private supplementary education is the impact of globalization on Taiwan. Realizing the role and importance of English language learning towards achieving economic competitiveness in this globalized economy, the Taiwan government has re-structured its educational system which integrates the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in elementary schools starting from the third grade (GIO, 2002). There are talks about a possible 'bilingualization' plan, which further mobilized the spread of EFL learning. As Her (2002, para. 5) states:

"…a large number of cram schools have sprung up to meet the need for foreign-language instruction. The schools vary widely in their approach and specializations. Some English-language schools are prep schools for children; others prepare students for the dreaded Test of English as a Foreign Language"

English Language buxibans take a big share in the short-term supplementary business industry, making EFL learning and teaching a profitable business venture. Like any other business, buxibans are faced with the changing demands of the economy and society. Schools exist in order to provide educational services to their students; this is one of the goals that schools need to fulfill, to earn a profit is another. In order to achieve the latter, schools need to recruit and retain their students. Quality of the programs being offered, the location, the price (tuition) and a pool of 'qualified' teaching staff are some of the major aspects that schools must take into consideration when marketing and selling their services. Needless to say, a teacher's role makes a very important contribution to the success of a school, both as a business and educational institution.

The hiring of foreign teachers or native English speakers (NES) has also shaped the landscape of the EFL environment in Taiwan. The employment demand for NES and local Taiwanese or non-native English teachers (NNESTs) is also on the rise and can be mostly attributed to the flourishing EFL industry. The difference between a NES and NNESTs does not only lie in the way they speak the English language or their physical appearance, but such distinctions allow school administrators in Taiwan to hire, train, and provide salaries based on

these factors. The lack of provisions from the Ministry of Education (MOE) concerning the hiring, training and development of English language teachers in the private sector creates a huge discrepancy in the standards and quality of teaching. Big chain schools have a mostly regulated teacher training policy, and in some cases they offer this training to outsiders or to teachers who work in other language schools with a fixed fee involved. For small buxiban entrepreneurs, however, teacher training lasts a week, which, in most cases, only involves class observations. Professional development for these teachers is limited to what the employing institution provides; other forms of teacher learning and development will likely depend on teachers' availability, financial ability, and own initiative to participate in any form of teacher learning outside the school environment where they work.

Ever since EFL was integrated in the primary education curriculum, there have been constant reports about the insufficiency of qualified English teachers, despite the efforts of MOE, particularly for schools in the rural areas (Teng, 2001). Some schools have opted to make arrangements with private language schools/buxibans that would allow their English teachers to act as substitute English teachers in primary schools. The lack of standards in adopting this temporary solution only creates major flaws in the system. Without the necessary provisions in the hiring, training, and development of English teachers in private language schools, how could the government ensure the quality of teaching and learning in

the classroom?

What EFL teachers in the private sector need is access to quality training, learning and development. These teachers would have to take initiative in pursuing professional development, but what are their attitudes and current practices toward it? With the recent developments in online technology, how can these enable access to online social networks of local and international teachers that could facilitate teacher-support and development? Is there a framework for online teacher professional development (oTPD) that could integrate the principles of traditional professional development in a blended learning environment? If so, how could it be implemented in real contexts that teachers and school administrators (in both private and public sectors) could easily adopt in their own local situation to assure quality of teaching and learning? This longitudinal research study was undertaken in the hope to provide answers to these questions.

To better understand the scope of this research, it is imperative to discuss first Taiwan's education system and the buxiban industry that help shape the mindset of the Taiwanese people. Research questions and significance of the study and its contributions to EFL learning and teaching are also included in this section.

1.1 Taiwan's Educational System

The educational system in Taiwan requires twenty-two years of formal study, which begins with one to two years of preschool education, followed by nine years of compulsory education which includes six years of primary school and another three years of junior high school (MOE1, 2010, see Figure 1.1). Following the compulsory education, students take national exams to receive three years in senior secondary education. After this, students spend four to seven years of college education. For those who wish to pursue graduate studies, they spend one to four years on a master's degree program, while a PhD program takes two to seven years to finish. The Ministry of Education (MOE) offers alternative routes for Taiwanese students to pursue education. For instance, instead of taking junior education in a regular junior high school, students can study in a five-year junior college. If they want to pursue a bachelor's degree, they continue their study under a two-year college program. The MOE also has a program for gifted students or those with special needs. Special and supplementary schools, mostly operated by the government, have a parallel program for elementary through senior high school and senior vocational school. However, despite the alternative routes to gaining higher education, progression to higher levels requires not only passing strict examinations but also earning high scores to be able to gain school placements at the best schools in the country. This system puts a huge stress on examinations, thus

creating a fierce competition among students to perform well in these exams.

Figure 1.1 Taiwan's Current Educational School System

THE CURRENT SCHOOL SYSTEM
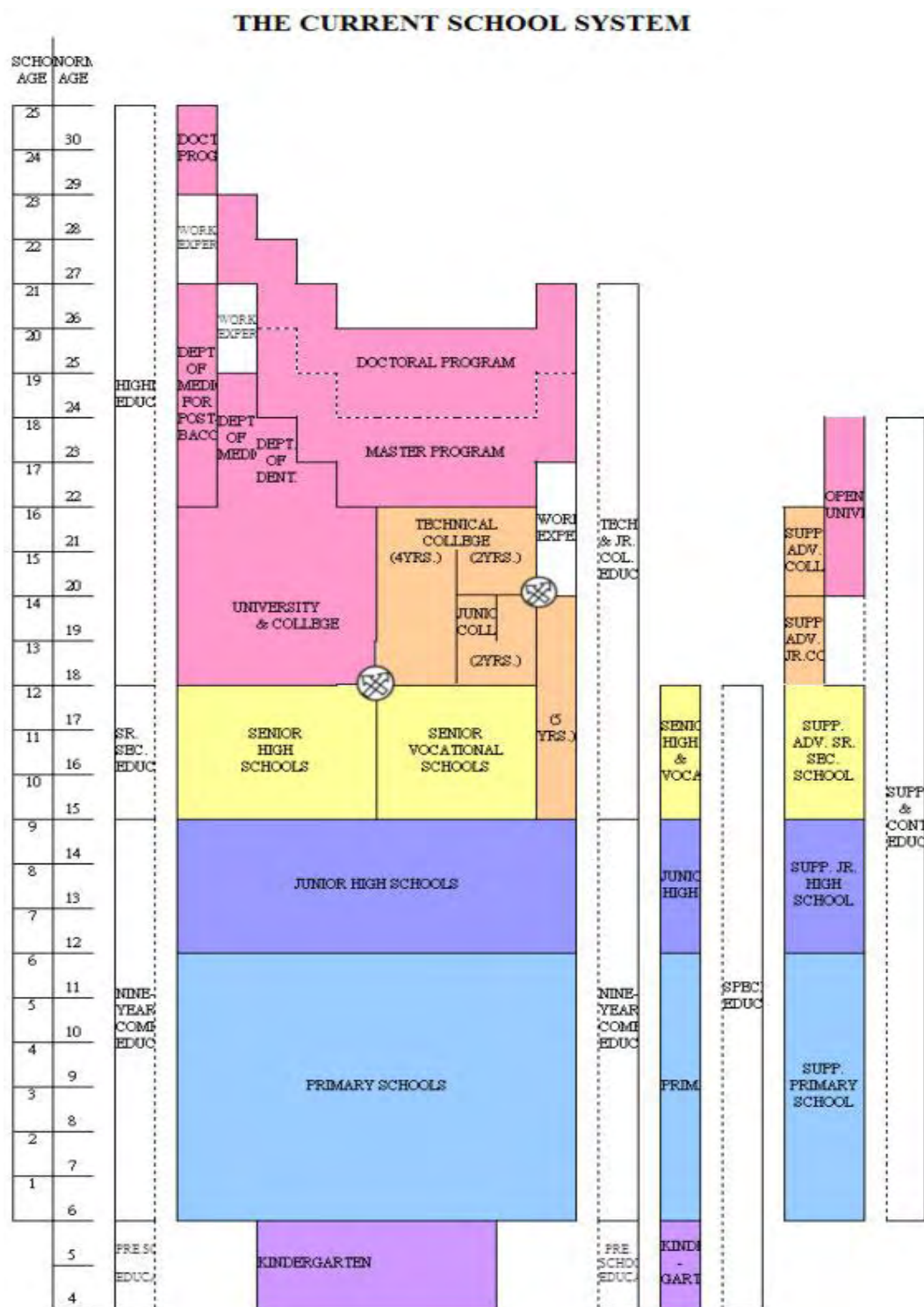
Confucian ideals have a great influence on the structure and development of Taiwan's educational system. Confucianism favors education and the intellectual approach, and advocates learning "through diligence, progression, perseverance, and discipline, while fun and games are frowned upon" (GIO, 2010, para. 16). Having a good educational background establishes prestige and academic achievements can bring good reputation not only to oneself but to one's entire family. Thus, it is a common sight to see parents taking an active role in their children's education, paying close attention to their grades and school performance. And to make sure that their children perform well in class, they send them to cram schools (after-school classes or supplementary school) otherwise known as buxiban.

1.2 Short-term Supplementary Schools

"The greatest irony of Taiwanese education reform is that its only benefactors have been cram schools – private tutorial firms known locally as buxiban that provide extra studies on top of students' official classroom regimen." (Lee, 2008, para. 1)

The MOE divides the supplementary and continuing education (補習及進修教育) into three categories: Supplementary compulsory education, supplementary advanced education, and short-term tutorial education. Below is a description of these categories provided by the MOE2 (2010, para. 3):

Citizens past school age who have not received nine years of compulsory education shall receive supplementary compulsory education. Citizens who have already received nine years of compulsory education may receive supplementary advanced education. Citizens seeking to acquire general knowledge and skills may receive short-term tutorial education.

The MOE also stipulates that short-term tutorial education (短期補習教育 or bǔxí) may be

"provided by schools, government organizations, foundations, or private parties. According to

Ng (1998) buxibans help "prepare children to take the competitive national examinations for

entry into the public universities (p. 37)". Literally, buxiban means make-up class or catch-up

class but Lin (2009) posits that these classes are often taken by students who perform well in

class but wish to either maintain or improve their grades for the better; Parents also have a

strong influence on the children's supplementary education. Buxibans exist to supplement

formal education, and because there is a huge demand for this kind of supplementary

education, they have become a lucrative and booming industry (Nadeau, 1990). Figure 1.2

shows the growth rate of buxibans in Taiwan in the last ten years; it grew from 5,846 in 2001

to 18,480 in June 2010 of which 5,343 buxibans belong to the foreign language category.

Figure 1.2: Growth Rate of Buxiban in Taiwan

Source: http://bsb.edu.tw/
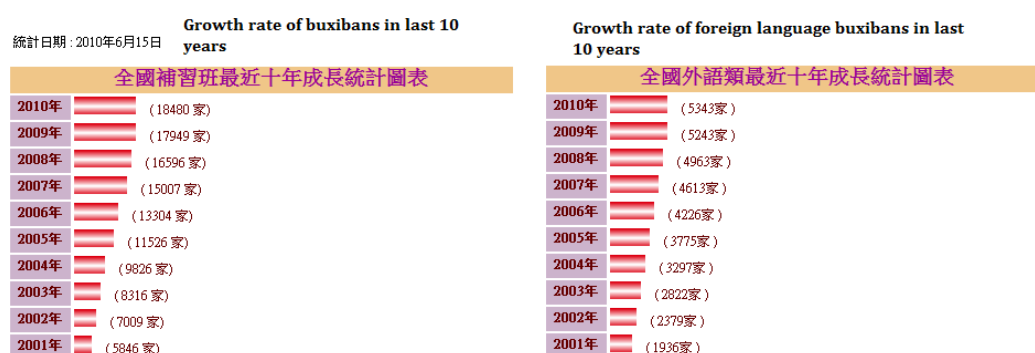
1.3 English Language Education

The tremendous interest in learning English is fueled by Taiwan's economic advancement and the government's role in pushing for an educational policy that prepares its citizens for globalization. In order to promote the internationalization of the ROC, the MOE has extended the teaching of foreign languages to the primary-school level. Starting September 2001, English was taught as a compulsory subject to primary school students in Grade 5 (GIO, 2002). Two years later, that policy was amended moving the onset of EFL instruction to the third grade, where students receive one hour of English education per week. This provision, according to Tsao (2008) was "intended to serve only as a minimum standard" thus there were reported cases where English was introduced at lower grade levels (p. 292). Taipei Times reports that "at least 17 of the nation's 25 cities and counties have begun English education for first graders because the high demands for students to learn English as early as possible have propelled local school authorities to begin their English education programs in grade one or even in kindergarten" (Chang, 2003, p. 2). These changes in the English-in-education policy were seen as a means to meet what the Taiwanese parents clamor for. China Post (January 12, 2006) published the results of a survey (n=2,059 parents around Taiwan) conducted by the King Car Education Foundation in December 2005, which showed that although English is being introduced and taught starting from Grade 3, survey results showed that at least 40 percent of elementary students started to learn English at pre-school

age. Lai (2008) states that during the early 1990s and onwards, "English learning has become

an essential criterion for parents' selection of kindergarten schools. (p. 236)" It is also

therefore not surprising to see an increasing number of parents who send their children to

cram schools to learn English at a very young age. The importance of English language

education as a viable asset in the Taiwanese children's future has triggered a strong demand

for English as a foreign language (EFL) learning, and along with this demand came the need

to supply English language teachers. Griffith (2008) argues that Taiwan remains an attractive

work destination for English teachers because of its lucrative financial incentives. She also

adds that "hundreds of private language institutes or bushibans continue to teach young

children, cram high school students for university entrance examinations and generally

service the seemingly insatiable demand for English conversation and English tuition (p.

406)". Huang (2009, para. 33) reports,

> "Despite the declining birth rate, children's English-language teaching still seems to be
> a promising business opportunity. Between 2006 and 2008, the number of cram schools
> teaching foreign languages in Taiwan grew by 30 percent, according to statistics from the
> Ministry of Education, with the market for English learning having an annual turnover of
> more than NT$20 billion (US$635 million) in 2008. Of that amount, two thirds of the
> revenue came from classes for children."

Although this kind of demand has unleashed favorable circumstances for job seekers,

particularly for native speakers of English or even for those people who are not native

speakers but are 'white' enough to pass on as native speakers. This, however, has led to

another form of criticism concerning the poor quality of teaching, which is a result of

employing English language teachers simply based on skin color and not on teacher

qualifications (Lin, 2009).

1.4 Problems with Taiwan's English Language Education

The quality of the English language education program adopted by the government is

also under fire. From the same survey mentioned above, the majority (60%) of the parents felt

that the overall performance given to Taiwan's English education efforts is far below

satisfactory level with a "failing grade" of 57.5 in a 100-point scale. This perception is backed

up by the report given by Lin (2009) that "despite the country's English-learning fever, it is

widely believed that the overall English proficiency of Taiwanese is below the general

standard within the Asian region." (p. 1). She adds that the test-oriented pedagogy, large class

size, and heavy concentration on teaching/explaining grammatical concepts in Chinese

provide little opportunity for authentic using the target language (see also Tsao, 2001). This

finding also resonates with what Freundl (2004) reported i.e., that the English learning

materials used in Taiwanese classrooms focused too much on written grammar and reading

and Taiwanese teachers use their native language (Chinese) in teaching, thus the students also

lose the chance to enhance their listening skills. Hwuang (2005) also pointed out that

Taiwanese teachers are "admired for their ability to explain grammar rules" (p. 2). She added

that cram schools have also benefitted from this approach as well, and as a consequence,

Taiwanese students are used to "being spoon-fed rules, some of which are obsolete, and at the same time their appetite for acquiring and using English as a natural, living language is spoiled (ibid)".

In his report to the British Council based on the classroom observations that he participated in, Gibbs's (2006, British Council) observed that the lessons carried out in Taiwanese classrooms were very much teacher directed and there was no room for group discussions. The teaching/learning materials used in the classroom were also a point of concern since many of these materials were written and published by local or in-house publishers that often contain lexical and syntax errors, and as one buxiban-teacher-blogger wrote, "there's a steady stream of new Chinglish-ridden materials coming from the main office (Toshuo.com, 2005, para. 5). Thus, the quality of materials varies considerably as schools, particularly the large chain schools have the freedom to write their own teaching curriculum and massively produce their own textbooks and learning materials.

1.5 Training and Professional Development of EFL Teachers

The hiring and training of English teachers in the cram school sector is not included in the MOE's Teacher Education Act (MOE3), which is limited to teachers at the senior high school level (and below) and kindergarten school teachers, to augment the supply of teachers, and to advance their professional expertise (GIO, 2010). However, since this teacher

education system allows all MOE approved colleges and universities to provide teacher training programs at all levels, these schools can offer English major-students and pre-service teachers the opportunity to enroll in an EFL teacher education course; the course credits can be applied to their teacher accreditation program.

The lack of provisions concerning the hiring and training of English language teachers in the private sector creates a huge discrepancy in the standards and quality of teaching. Pre-service Taiwanese teachers who wish to apply as English instructors in public elementary schools need to pass an English proficiency exam. After this, they would be required to attend 360 hours of training in English-language pedagogy and complete about 40 credits of education courses under a teacher-training program offered by any MOE accredited university. This is followed by a one-year practicum at an elementary school. A teacher's certificate is then issued upon completion of all the steps mentioned above (Teng, 2003). However, possession of this teaching certificate does not guarantee that a teaching placement would be available for them. Since many of these pre-service teachers are already working as English teachers in cram schools (Liao, 2007), they could still continue teaching in the private sector while they complete the teacher certification program. The process of hiring and training practices for local cram school teachers, on the other hand, is not as rigid and complicated.

Looking at some job advertisements posted on the Internet (518.com), employers

normally use the terms 美語老師 [English teacher], 兒童美語教師 [English teachers for young learners], 幼教美語老師 [early childhood English teacher], 國中、國小英文講師 [Junior high school, elementary English instructor], and 中籍兒童美語老師 [Chinese English teacher for young learners]. In most cases, no previous teaching experience is required; however there are some who require at least one year teaching experience. For teachers of young learners, they should have at least a degree (in English Language and Literature or related courses) from a 5-year junior college or university and one to two years teaching experience; for buxibans with high school students and adult students, applicants must have at least a bachelor's degree (in English Language and Literature or related courses) from a college or university and those who possess a Master's or PhD degree are also encouraged to apply. Some buxibans specify advanced language proficiency in English particularly in the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing; but scores in English language proficiency tests i.e. TOEFL, etc. are not normally required. Table 1.2 shows an example of a job description posted on the website of one of the biggest English cram schools in Taiwan.

Table 1.1: Sample Job Description

Sample Job Description
1.兒童美語教學 English for young learners
2.電話輔導測驗、作業批改 Telephone counseling or mock-up quiz/test, checking/correcting students' homework (from mainstream school)
3.親師聯絡相關事項 Contacting/communicating with parents regarding students' learning issues
4.與外籍教師搭配授課 Assist/co-teach with foreign teachers
5.教學活動規劃與執行(如成果展、劇團..) Planning and execution of teaching/learning activities i.e. school performances or shows
6.其他相關教務工作 other teaching related tasks

From the above description, it is clear that Taiwanese teachers in cram schools perform other jobs other than teaching in the classroom. They are also responsible for communicating with the parents, correcting homework, planning learning activities, etc. The kind of English homework given by buxibans/private language schools varies from memorizing English songs and nursery rhymes, listening to a cassette tape that goes with the textbooks, and notebooks for writing exercises such as constructing sentences. Some schools require their teachers to conduct brief telephone conversations with their students (Su, 1998).

The training and professional development of Taiwanese English teachers also varies from school to school. Before they begin classroom instruction, they undergo classroom observations where they observe other teachers, attend a brief teacher training course to learn practical teaching methods. The training for foreign teachers includes videotape instruction

and observation of senior teachers. Some schools claim to have on-the-job training every month. Newly hired teachers receive a five-day orientation, which includes showing the teachers the school facilities and environment, arranging for accommodations, etc. They usually start class as soon as the orientation is over. Local teachers, on the other hand are given a trial period which could last for weeks or even longer (Su, 1998). According to Lee (2008, para. 27) the moment they start their job they are "subject to tests, interviews, and student surveys. Their paychecks reflect evaluation criteria including admissions results and student retention and re-registration rates. They call each student three times a semester to maintain a good grasp of their (students') individual progress." Yet despite this constant job evaluation, on-the-job teacher training is rare. There are no provisions for teacher professional development. Large chain schools offer one-off workshops but these are paid courses that teachers will have to pay from their own pockets. Other similar teacher workshops are also offered by textbook publishers which invite well-known authors in English language teaching (ELT) to conduct these workshops; but such events, aside from the fact that they also come with a fee, are also used by these publishers to sell and promote their own published textbooks and other learning materials. Such workshops and teacher training courses are well publicized, and course labels such as 補教業英語教師 (Training for English teachers), 英語師資培訓 (English teacher training) are used in their promotional materials. The number of

teacher training courses offered by cram schools and textbook publishers has increased in the past couple of years, which according to a TESOL course provider in Taiwan, signifies that the ELT industry has generated a new market demand for teacher training and professional development programs (Chen, 2007), creating a new source for generating profit.

In a qualitative study on the English learning and teaching experiences of Taiwanese teachers in cram schools, Su (2009) found that the lack of qualifications of these teachers was a pressing issue that needed to be urgently addressed. She stated that these teachers prior to taking on their teaching job did not even possess the educational qualification that many buxiban and supplementary schools required, i.e. degree in English or English literature; Su (ibid) added that these teachers started teaching in cram schools as English teachers without any teacher training that would prepare them to become effective English teachers. They were hired simply because "they have better command of English than other people (p. 92)". As a former Taiwanese English teacher in a cram school, Su could easily relate to the challenges and difficulties that were brought about by her Taiwanese ethnicity, her Taiwanese appearance, and accent. Parents of her students questioned her language proficiency and teaching accreditation. Educational advancement is always a good thing, but not all English teachers in cram schools have the financial means to enroll in a graduate program. All of Su's interviewees expressed the constant need to attain good language proficiency, but just as

important is the need to gain knowledge and enhance their teaching skills that they could

apply in their own EFL classrooms. As one interviewee conveyed in her narrative,

> "…I knew that if I wanted to survive in this profession, I needed to have a clear picture about what English teaching was. I started to ask myself questions like: What role should I play in the classroom? What ability do I need to have as an English teacher? What methods can I use to enhance the classroom atmosphere? (Su, 2009, pp. 68-69)".

Taiwanese English teachers in supplementary schools are often marginalized. In a

research study conducted by Tsui & Fang (2007), they claim that English teachers who

possess Asian/Chinese physical attributes find it rather difficult in gaining employment

compared to those who are or who look like native speakers of English. Such form of ethnic

discrimination is widespread in Taiwan where people hold a strong misconception that only

those whose physical features and outward appearance pass as 'foreigners' can be considered

as 'true' native English speaker teachers (NESTs) (Ho & Lin, 2006 in Tsui & Fang, 2007, p.

83). In addition, the Taiwanese teachers' lack of proficiency in the English language is also

one of the reasons why they are discriminated in the workplace. Tiangco (2005) posits that

Taiwanese English teachers need to strive harder in improving their English proficiency. It is

that lack of nativeness either on proficiency and physical attributes that makes Taiwanese

English teachers vulnerable to peripheral treatment by school administrators and students'

parents (Yeh, 2001). Unfortunately, cram/supplementary school-owners take advantage of the

professed prejudicial attitudes many Taiwanese parents' have toward local English teachers,

which are clearly manifested in their hiring policies. The hourly and monthly salary of local English teachers is half of what native speakers or foreign-looking teachers receive; in addition, local teachers are also given administrative jobs such as contacting the parents and giving them daily/weekly updates on the students' learning (Yeh, 2002).

1.6 Research Questions

The dilemma for Taiwanese English teachers in buxiban and supplementary schools does not only involve getting the right teacher education but also the need to engage in continuous teacher learning and to get involved in professional development opportunities. Various studies on cram schools/private language schools have been carried out in recent years, but mostly are concerned with how beneficial cramming is to students, particularly to young learners, and how effective the teaching methodology is; research in these areas include teaching English to young learners (Chang, n.d.), an overview of the cram school industry in Taiwan (Yang, 1995), foreign/native speaker language teachers in cram schools (Chen, 2007; Wu, 2009), parental perceptions towards English learning in bilingual kindergartens (with after-school tutorial services also known in vernacular term as Ān qīn bān/安親班 (Shang, Ingebritson, & Zeng, 2007), language and identity of non-native language professionals in Taiwan (Su, 2008), and after-school programs (Lin, 2006). However, there are very few published research studies on professional development of Taiwanese EFL teachers; some

cover different areas such as reflective practice in pre-service teacher education program for high school teachers (Liou, 2001), a general description of online professional development for language teachers in Taiwan (Chiu and Kao (n.d.); but all these publications did not specifically address the needs of English teachers in the private sector.

To address this gap, this study examines how teacher professional development for Taiwanese EFL teachers in private language supplementary schools (for students of all ages) can be facilitated using online learning environments. In particular, how can online technology be used to enable these teachers to gain access to online social networks of local and international teachers that could facilitate teacher support, to enhance teaching skills and competencies, help teachers gain professional knowledge, and experience change in their teaching practice? However, prior to facilitating online teacher professional development for these teachers, it is imperative to first determine what their attitudes and current practices are toward professional development. A look at what goes on in an EFL classroom can also provide valuable information to the Taiwanese teachers' pedagogical style and approach in teaching EFL. The following are the research questions which guided this study:

1. What are the Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and practices toward professional development?
2. How and to what extent can Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Web 2.0 tools be integrated in the collaborative professional development activities for Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers' professional development?
3. What aspects are enhanced in Taiwanese EFL teachers' learning and professional

development as the principles of cognitive apprenticeship (modeling, coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection, and exploration) take place in online environments?

4. What is the role of ICT and Web 2.0 in helping Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers translate new knowledge into practice?

5. Have buxiban/supplementary school Taiwanese teachers' attitudes, behavior, and practices changed as a result of participating in online teacher professional development activities?

1.7 Significance of the Study

Investigations of the five research questions will make several contributions to the fields of EFL teaching, EFL teacher education, and computer-assisted language learning (CALL) in particular, to teacher professional development in online environments.

First, this study can provide new insights into the attitudes and practices toward professional development of Taiwanese English teachers working in private short-term language tutorial supplementary schools (for young and adult students), and their attitudes toward the importance of the employing institutions' ability to provide incentives, compensation package and benefits, and provide teacher training/development and how satisfied they are with them.

Second, given the fact that the opportunities and resources allocated for EFL teachers in this sector are very limited and inadequate, the online teacher professional development (oTPD) framework suggested in this study could provide school administrators and teachers alternative means in pursuing/delivering professional development. Emphasis is given to how

access to oTPD can be afforded simply by networking and participating in community of practice (CoP); despite the informal nature of oTPD involved, the structure and core features of the professional development activity were carefully planned and implemented. The forms of oTPD included a blend of asynchronous/synchronous discussion workshops, (pre/post) class observations, and blogging for reflection which lasted for several months. The Yahoo! Group, blogs, email, synchronous chat platforms served as the media tools for meaningful communication and discussions bridging the transfer and construction of knowledge.

Third, the steps undertaken by the teachers who participated in this study can also provide an in-depth look at the role of cognitive apprenticeship and informal mentoring in online learning environments. This study puts online teacher learning and development in a new perspective by examining the possibilities of what and how Taiwanese EFL teachers can learn from the invited experts and experienced teachers during online synchronous and asynchronous meetings and discussions. This study also sought to examine how collaborative activities afford teachers opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills, and sustain their drive to pursue continuous professional growth within a CoP and network of like-minded people.

Fourth, the in-depth investigation using class observations, transcript analysis of these recorded class observations and online discussions, text analysis of posted messages on the

online group network can also provide information regarding the documenting process and evaluation of the outcome of the Taiwanese EFL teachers' oTPD experience.

Fifth, this study provides a thorough discussion of the potential use of online technology to empower language teachers by simply 1) gaining access to the various free online professional development workshops such as those being offered by the TESOL Computer-Assisted Language Learning Interest Section's (CALL-IS) Electronic Village Online (EVO) sessions, and 2) joining social networks and other professional communities of practice (CoP), such as the Webheads, to engage in continuous teacher learning through e-mentoring, collaborative class projects, webinars, etc.

1.8 Chapter Descriptions

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the research study by first discussing the research context which includes a brief background of Taiwan's education system, the buxiban industry and culture that is now an intricate part of the Taiwanese way of life, the English language education in Taiwan which has seen by many as a necessity to gain competitiveness as the country adapts itself to globalization, and the problems with the training and professional development of EFL teachers. Research questions were also presented, and lastly,

discussion of the significance of the study and its contributions to EFL learning and teaching was also included in this section.

Chapter 2 covers the literature review of this study which includes a discussion of the relevant theories involved in teacher learning and professional development. In presenting the definitions of learning and development, I inevitably drew on Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning Domains (Bloom, 1956 in Mackay, 2007); and applying the concept in the context of teacher learning, Richards & Farrel's four conceptualizations of teacher learning (2005) were also discussed. Models of professional development were also examined using Sparks (1994) and Sparks & Loucks-Horsley (1989), features of effective professional development based Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon's (2001) research, Desimone's conceptual framework (2009), Guskey's Model of Teacher Change (2002), and cognitive apprenticeship (Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1989). In integrating ICT and Web 2.0 in Teacher Professional Development, I present a brief background of online technology using computer-mediated communications and web 2.0 tools. A discussion of the relevance of social networking and connectivity which also covered Wenger's (1998) theory of Community of Practice, Webheads in Action, and TESOL Electronic Village Online (EVO) sessions is also included. Lastly, I discuss the rationale for the approach and selection of teacher professional development models used for this study.

Chapter 3 provides a discussion of the research methodology undertaken for this study, which includes both qualitative and quantitative methods of gathering data. Using the method of triangulation, data were gathered from three sources: observation, survey questionnaire, and electronic discourse. There were two groups of Taiwanese EFL teachers whose contributions to this study were observed and analyzed: 1) the 'asynchronous' focus group on Taiwanese EFL teachers Yahoo! Group (YG) and 2) two case study subjects, Joy and Cindy, for both synchronous and asynchronous online TPD and classroom-based research. Electronic discourse or the communications that were done online came from both synchronous and asynchronous online meetings and discussions which included web conference meetings or webinars (also called web chats), blog entries, discussion lists, email correspondence, and social network messages. The planning of synchronous meetings (web conferences) is also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the survey questionnaire that I conducted. The questionnaire has four sections: 1) Background information, 2) Attitude towards the language used in the classroom, teaching methodology, teacher quality, and teachers' willingness to participate in teacher education and training program, 3) Classroom practices: this section looks into their teaching goals, their instructional methods used in teaching Reading/Writing and Listening/Speaking, class assessment and frequency of assessment, materials used in their

classroom, and their language of instruction, 4) Employment history: how important and how

satisfied are they with the school's ability to 1) communicate educational goals and strategies,

2) provide incentives, 3) offer compensation package and benefits, and 4) provide teacher

training? The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) program was utilized to

tabulate data and compute the statistical tests.

In Chapter 5, I present and discuss the qualitative data from the discussions that took

place in the Taiwanese teachers' Yahoo! Group, the data collected from the two case study

subjects, Joy and Cindy which included the transcripts from the live synchronous

chats/webmeetings, the transcripts from the pre and post class observations, and their blog

entries, and from the messages that were exchanged on Facebook social network to show how

teacher professional development (oTPD) took place in various online environments, and how

the ICT and Web 2.0 tools were used in translating new knowledge into practice, what

characteristics of cognitive apprenticeship and e-mentoring evolved and how they took place

in online environments.

Chapter 6 provides the analysis of the research findings; in particular I present how the

data gathered in this study provided answers to the research questions. A number of

recommendations are also made in relation to the application of cognitive apprenticeship and

e-mentoring in teacher professional development in online environments.

Finally, in Chapter 7, I present the main conclusions and implications of the study for oTPD providers, i.e. owners/administrators of a buxiban. I also discuss the proposed oTPD framework and what makes it effective. Strengths and weaknesses of the study and some suggestions for future research are also presented in this section.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the theoretical underpinnings of both traditional and online professional development. First, I discuss what teacher learning and professional development are and how they are viewed in this study. In defining what learning is, I look at Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning (2.1), followed by a discussion of the four conceptualizations of teacher learning. In Section 2.2 I examine the various models of professional development, cognitive apprenticeships and self-determination theory. The features of effective professional development as provided by leading scholars in the field, namely Garet, et al (2001), Desimone's Framework (2009), and Gutskey's (2002) model of Teacher change are discussed in Section 2.5. Next, I discuss online professional development (2.6) and the tools that can be used in its delivery i.e. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Web 2.0 tools such as blogs, computer-mediated communications (CMC), online groups, and social networks. Wenger's (1998) three criteria for a Community of Practice (CoP) are discussed in Section 2.7, where I also cover Webheads in Action (WiA) as a good example of a thriving online CoP. In Sections 2.8 and 2.9 I discuss cognitive apprenticeships and e-mentoring. In Section 2.10 I look at TESOL Electronic Village Online Sessions as an example of existing online professional development for language teachers. Finally, the rationale for the approach and selection of teacher professional development models is discussed in Section 2.11.

2.1 Teacher Learning and Teacher Professional Development

There are various interpretations of what teacher professional development and teacher learning are. For example, teacher professional development is normally associated with in-service courses or programs provided for teachers by an educational institution (Gusky, 2000), whereas, teacher learning is oftentimes related to what teachers do for their own personal development, with special importance given to reflection and networking (Ur, 1997). Looking at these distinctions in definitions, teacher professional development is something that is provided or managed by others, i.e. institutions, etc., which is similar to teacher training and education, whereas teacher learning falls into the same line of thought as teacher development, which, according to Edge & Richards (1998) is something that teachers can do on their own and for their own sake. In this study, teacher development, teacher learning and professional development are seen as connected elements that have a special relationship in the discussion of teachers' practices and experiences in bringing about teacher change.

2.1.1 Defining Learning

In his Taxonomy of Learning Domains (Bloom 1956 in Mackay, 2007), Bloom categorized learning in to three major domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Mackay (ibid) provides a straightforward definition of these learning categories (see Table

2.1):

Table 2.1: Mackay's Definition of Bloom's Learning Categories

Mackay's Definition of Bloom's Learning Categories
Cognitive domain- intellectual ability, i.e. knowledge or 'think'
Affective domain- feelings, emotions, behavior, i.e. attitude or 'feel'
Psychomotor domain- manual and physical skills, i.e. skills or 'do'

(Adapted from Mackay, 2007, p. 205)

Bloom believed in the advancement of higher forms of thinking instead of merely transferring facts. Thus, the six subcategories of cognitive domain are arranged from the simplest behavior to the most complex: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (in Uden & Beaumont, 2006). The affective domain has five subcategories that deal with interest and feelings, and is often exhibited by behaviors that manifest attitudes of awareness, interest, attention, concern, and responsibility (Barkley, 2009). The psychomotor domain is concerned with physical abilities particularly with the ability to learn skills; thus a person is able to perform, manipulate, and construct (Morrison, Ross, Kemp, & Kelman, 2009). Chapman (2006) provides a simplistic interpretation of Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning Domains that shows specific verbs associated with each of the categories (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Interpretation of Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning Domains

Cognitive	Affective	Psychomotor
knowledge	**attitude**	**skills**
1. Recall data	1. Receive (awareness)	1. Imitation (copy)
2. Understand	2. Respond (react)	2. Manipulation (follow instructions)
3. Apply (use)	3. Value (understand and act)	3. Develop Precision
4. Analyse (structure/elements)	4. Organise personal value system	4. Articulation (combine, integrate related skills)
5. Synthesize (create/build)	5. Internalize value system (adopt behaviour)	5. Naturalization (automate, become expert)
6. Evaluate (assess, judge in relational terms)		

Adapted from Chapman (2006)

DiGiulio (2004) suggests that Bloom's taxonomy allows teachers to examine the level of difficulty of the tasks they assign to students. Thus, it can also be used as an assessment tool to aid teacher's instruction and evaluation (Cohen & Cowen, 2007). Another way of looking at learning is to see the effect of previous experiences on behavioral change (Jehu, 1975, p.3). To measure whether learning has actually taken place, the learner would have to see and analyze how much change has occurred in comparison to previous ways of doing things.

Another basic tenet of learning is that people learn when they interact with their environment. This is congruent to the definition of learning given by Gaskins & Gaskins (1997) based on cognitive and metacognitive theories; they see learning as a 'process through

which an individual's mental representations of concepts change as a result of interacting with

the environment (p. 132). Two important notions can be gathered from their definition: 1) the

idea that there is change in attitude/behavior and 2) learning as an outcome of social

interaction. Attitude is defined here as people's inclination to think (cognitive), feel (affective)

and do (behavioral intentions) towards a given object/person/situation (Oskamp & Schultz,

2005). Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick (2006, p.22) assert learning takes shape when one of the

following occurs:

- Attitudes are changed.
- Knowledge is increased.
- Skill is improved.

They add that changes in any of these three must first come about prior to seeing change in

behavior. The learning process ends with what they call as an 'elaborate or usable

understanding' that is created by the learner but at the same time it is also influenced by other

people's input which makes it (learning) socially mediated, as well (Gaskins & Gaskins

(1997). This is in line with Vygostky's (1978) Zone of proximal development theory, where

the construction of knowledge (hence the terms constructivist/constructivism) occurs through

social interaction, and the role of the teacher or a more experienced peer is to guide and

provide scaffolding to the learner or less experienced colleague (Aubert & Soler, 2008). In

teacher learning and development, the supportive context is built upon the relationship of the

mentor/coach/expert/more experienced peer and the less experienced teacher working

collaboratively in creating an environment conducive to learning. The role of the

mentor/coach/expert/more experienced peer is crucial as he/she provides the link between the

less experienced teacher and the new knowledge or skills to be learned. Knowledge is

constructed as they socially interact with each other (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989).

2.1.2 Four Conceptualizations of Teacher Learning

Richards & Farrel (2005) provide four conceptualizations of teacher learning where it is

viewed as 1) an opportunity to develop teaching skills, 2) the use of cognitive activities that

focus on exploring teaching beliefs via self-monitoring and journal writing that will have an

impact on their classroom practice, 3) a construct of new knowledge that fits into teacher's

personal framework, and 4) a chance to reflect on teaching practice and experiences (ibid, pp.

6-7). These concepts are based on the assumption that teacher learning is primarily

self-regulated. In this mindset, teacher learning involves the 1) acquisition of skills, which

through constant practice, can enhance teachers' competence in applying those skills, and 2)

construction of knowledge which then gives rise to meaning (Schön, 1983). Application of

skills in their teaching context is likely to be influenced by their behavior and attitude. The

more positive their attitude towards an activity, the more they are likely to adopt it in their

classroom. Shulman (1987) provides a general taxonomy of a knowledge base for teaching

since he was primarily interested in "the professionalization of teaching—the elevation of teaching to a more respected, more responsible, more rewarding and better rewarded occupation" (p. 3). The seven categories in this framework that teachers need to build and master over time in order to be rendered as competent and professional are listed in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Shulman's Knowledge Base for Teaching

Shulman's Knowledge Base for Teaching
1. knowledge of content (subject matter),
2. general pedagogical knowledge (classroom management and organization),
3. curriculum knowledge (learning materials, syllabus design and requirements),
4. pedagogical content knowledge (knowing how to organize and present/adapt contents and instructional approaches that best suit students),
5. knowledge of learners (students characteristics and learning needs),
6. knowledge of educational contexts (learning environment- from classroom to communities and their culture), and
7. knowledge of educational ends, purposes, values, and the philosophical and historical issues (how learning is viewed and valued by students, school, parents, and society).

(Shulman, 1987)

In second language teacher education, Day and Conklin (1992 in Day, 1993) came up with four types of knowledge; the first three are identical with that of Shulman's (ibid) namely content knowledge, pedagogic knowledge, and pedagogic content knowledge, while the last category, support knowledge, refers to the teachers' understanding of related disciplines that could support language instruction. Day (ibid) provides examples of the four domains and the various strands that fall within each category (Table 2.3):

Table 2.3: Four Domains of Teacher Knowledge

Table 2.3: Four Domains of Teacher Knowledge	
1. **Content knowledge**	knowledge of the subject matter (what ESL/EFL teachers teach); e.g. English language (as represented by courses in syntax, semantics, phonology and pragmatics) and literary and cultural aspects of the English language
2. **Pedagogic knowledge**	knowledge of generic teaching strategies, beliefs and practices, regardless of the focus of the subject matter (how we teach); e.g. classroom management, motivation, decision making
3. **Pedagogic content knowledge**	the specialized knowledge of how to represent content knowledge in diverse ways that students can understand; the knowledge of how students come to understand the subject matter, what difficulties they are likely to encounter when learning it, what misconceptions interfere with learning, and how to overcome these problems (i.e. how we teach ESL/EFL in general or how we teach ESL/EFL reading or writing in particular); e.g. teaching ESL/EFL skills (reading, writing), teaching English grammar, TESOL materials evaluation and development, EFL/ESL testing, TESOL program and curriculum evaluation and development, TESOL methods
4. **Support knowledge**	the knowledge of the various disciplines that inform our approach to the teaching and learning of English; e.g., psycholinguistics, linguistics, second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, research methods

Adopted from Day and Conklin (1992 in Day, 1993, pp. 3-4)

Based on the given example Day provided in the last category, support knowledge does not seem to be an entirely new category since it involves the knowing of ESL/EFL related disciplines and how they influence the way language is taught and learned. This could also fall under the pedagogic content knowledge category. Richards (1998) also came up with his own domains of knowledge for second language teacher education based on what he believed constitutes the primary needs of language teachers (p.15):

1. theories of teaching,
2. teaching skills,

3. communication skills (general and language improvement),
4. subject matter knowledge,
5. pedagogical reasoning & decision making, and
6. contextual knowledge

It is the addition of communication skills or the improvement of teachers' language proficiency and the ability to communicate effectively using the target language, which Day failed to include in his list. Language proficiency is an important element in the knowledge of the subject matter (English), and the extent of how much of this knowledge EFL teachers possess and how well they use it in and/or outside the classroom is a manifestation of their linguistic ability or lack thereof (Medges, 1999). Liu (1999) acknowledged the fact that language improvement or enhancement courses are necessary and should be included in pre-service teachers' courses to address NNS language needs. Almost a decade had past, and the need to enhance English language proficiency is still constantly being raised in research studies such as those conducted by Igawa (2008), Kusomoto (2008), etc. English language improvement, in addition to honing teaching skills, is a major consideration for non-native English teachers' professional development.

In the following section, I will look into the various models of professional development, and the role institutions/schools play in the process as course and/or professional development program providers. The different modes of teacher professional development, discussed below, provide teachers choices on various ways to develop and attain personal and professional

growth.

2.2 Models of Professional Development

Professional development can include 'formal or informal learning experiences throughout one's career' (Fullan, 1991, pp. 326). Marsick & Watkins (1990) state that formal learning is 'institutionally-sponsored, classroom-based, and highly-structured', while informal learning is a 'category which includes incidental learning, may occur in institutions, but is not typically classroom-based... and control of learning rests primarily in the hands of the learner' (p. 12). Traditional forms of professional development may include annual local, national, or international conferences, workshops, college course (Little, 1993), while the most recent forms of professional development activities include joining communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), co-teaching, mentoring, coaching, reflecting on class lessons (Schifter & Fosnot, 1993), self-directed learning, and action research (Guskey, 2000). According to Guskey (2002), many professional development programs are classified as 'one-shot' phenomena because teachers have only one chance to learn something new, and most often than not, what they learn has little to do with what goes on in their own classrooms. Based on the research conducted by Barth (1991) and Fullan (1993), the most successful professional development activities are those that work toward making changes in the way teachers teach

and how students learn. Guskey's (2000) definition of professional development encapsulates what effective professional development experiences must be; he defines it as "those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students" (p. 16). Sparks (1994), Sparks & Loucks-Horsley (1989) and Guskey (ibid) list major models (see Table 2.4) that are useful for accomplishing the goals of professional development; these models will be discussed in the following section.

Table 2.4: Models of Professional Development

Major Models of Professional Development
1. Training
2. Observation, Evaluation, and Feedback Assessment
3. Involvement in an improvement process
4. Inquiry/Collaborative Action research
5. Individually guided or self-directed
6. Mentoring or developmental coaching

2.2.1 Training

The word training has the same connotations as the term professional development and a presenter normally leads and conducts it, and shares ideas and information (Guskey, 2000); the teachers under training should be able to transfer the skills and knowledge learned during the training. According to Joyce & Showers (1988 in Barkley & Bianco, 2005, pp. 7-8), the training process starts with 1) transfer of knowledge (theories, new practices, or academic

content) through reading, lectures, and discussion; 2) modeling or demonstration of skills; 3) practice refers to the application of the skills learned; 4) observation and 5) feedback are usually done with/by a coach or peers. This sort of training, however, reflects traditional top-down teacher training strategies; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995) suggest that "traditional notions of in-service training or dissemination need to be replaced by opportunities for 'knowledge sharing' based in real situations." They add that teachers should be provided with opportunities to "share what they know, discuss what they want to learn, and connect new concepts and strategies to their own unique contexts" (pp. 597–604).

2.2.2 Observation, Evaluation, and Feedback Assessment

High-stakes observations or observations conducted by outside agencies and/or school management can bring negative reactions from teachers (Muijs & Reynolds, 2005). However, both the observer and the teacher being observed can highly benefit from peer observations if done appropriately and if free from management-inspection related stress. Peer observation, according to Richards & Farrells (2005), refers to "a teacher or other observer watching and monitoring a language lesson or a part of a lesson in order to gain an understanding of some aspect of teaching, learning, or classroom interaction" (p. 85). The information gathered from such observations can be invaluable, providing teachers with the opportunity to reflect on

their teaching, evaluate and assess their teaching strengths or weaknesses. They can also provide opportunities for peer discussions concerning class related-matters based on their observations (Baily, Curtis, & Nunan, 2001). Doolittle (1994) argues that 'assessing the productivity, efficiency and effectiveness of teachers is a formidable task' and suggests the use of portfolio as a 'means of authentic assessment in evaluating the effectiveness of a teacher for licensure and/or employment decisions' and 'to provide feedback to teachers so that they may improve their teaching and level of professionalism' (para. 1).

2.2.3 Involvement in an Improvement Process

Involvement in a development improvement process engages teachers in curriculum development, program design, or participating in school improvement process to solve general or specific problems. It creates research and development capacity for school improvement and it gives teachers the chance to work together in a collaborative learning context (Hopkins, 2003). Teachers are directly involved in curriculum change and planning thus giving them the opportunity to hone their skills in writing/designing a curriculum; their participation make them active partners in the improvement of school and practice (Connelly & Ben-Peretz, 1980). However, Little (1984) argues that the size of the school and the complexity and comprehensiveness of the curriculum can make the direct involvement

counterproductive. Another distinctive flaw that Guskey (2000) observed was that such model

of professional development is limited to a small group of teachers, usually who are already

members of the teaching staff in a particular institution.

2.2.4 Inquiry/Collaborative Action research

Inquiry/Collaborative Action research is a form of self-reflective systematic inquiry by

teachers on their own teaching practice; the goal is to seek answers to classroom-based

problems and issues, and allows the improvement of practice (Bennett, 1994). When action

research is conducted in a collaborative mode among teachers, it promotes the development of

learning communities since teachers work together on classroom-based projects; they do not

only learn from others but from one another. This supportive environment encourages

teachers to share their knowledge, paving a way for teachers to teach other teachers, which

ultimately contributes to sustained teacher learning. According to Oja and Smulyan (1989)

teachers who "participate in action research projects become more flexible in their thinking,

more receptive to new ideas, and more able to solve problems as they arise" (p. 15).

2.2.5 Individually Guided or Self-directed

Individually guided or self-directed teachers usually are goal-oriented and are focused

towards the successful achievement of that goal. Richards and Farrells (2005) provide a list of

processes that are central to self-directed learning (see Table 2.5):

Table 2.5: Self-directed Learning Process

1.	Self-inquiry	Asking questions about one's own teaching practices and seeking information needed to answer these questions
2.	Self-appraisal	Assessing one's teaching and development on the basis of evidence from oneself and others and the ability to critically reflect and a desire to analyze oneself to determine one's strength and weaknesses.
3.	Experience	Personal experience becomes the basis and stimulus for learning
4.	Personal construction	Meaning is personally constructed by the learner
5.	Contextualized learning	Learning takes place in a particular context and social setting and is socially constructed
6.	Planning and managing	Learning is dependent on the ability to set short- and long-term goals and to select strategies for their achievement

Adapted from Richards & Farrels, 2005, p. 14

Although self-directed learning is often given the same meaning as independent inquiry

it "does not necessarily imply solitary learning" (Candy, 1991, p. 367). Villegas-Reimers

(2003) argues that objective feedback is needed for self-directed learning to be effective as a

model of TPD (p. 95). In other words, the roles of administrators, supervisors, mentors, and

professional development providers are not diminished since they have the opportunity to

facilitate, guide and support the development.

2.2.6 Mentoring or Developmental Coaching

Mentoring according to Jeruchim and Shapiro (1992) is "... a close, intense, mutually

beneficial relationship between someone who is older, wiser, more experienced, and more

powerful with someone younger or less experienced (p. 23)". The same principle can be seen

in an educational setting where the mentoring relationship is also viewed as a personal

guidance by seasoned veterans (experts) to beginning (novice) teachers in school (Maynard &

Furlong, 1995). How such relationships are formed can make a difference in distinguishing

between formal and informal types of mentorships.

According to Chao, Walz, & Gardner (1992) formal mentorships are "programs that are

managed and sanctioned by the organization" (p. 620). Since formal mentorships reflect a

strong involvement from the management, high costs and resources are employed to ensure

that they are "planned, structured, and coordinated" (Hansford, Ehrich, & Tennent, 2004, p. 6).

The matching of mentors to mentees is a top-down process initiated by the top management

where they screen potential mentors using various selection criteria such as job performance

and/or job type (Eby & Lockwood, 2005). The screening must be done with absolute care;

failure to identify the same interests, ideals, or expectations of both parties could result to

frustration and poor dynamics (Reiman, Head, Thies-Sprinthall, 1992). To avoid such pitfalls,

Osgood (2001) and Greyling & Rhodes (2006) recommend that pro-active mentor training

must be integrated.

Informal mentorships, on the other hand, are "not managed, structured, nor formally

recognized by the organization (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, ibid)." The relationship between the

mentor and mentee is formed as a result of chance or circumstance. And in most cases, mentoring support is distributed and could originate from people, places, or events not necessarily connected to a workplace (Paré & Le Maistre, 2006) p. 134). This distributed network will likely depend on one's ability to develop and expand his/her contacts, which according to Mattei (2001) makes informal mentoring rather "exclusive" (p. 44); Scouting for potential mentors and establishing a mentor-mentee relationship with them may be difficult for people who may not be socially inclined or those with limited network of friends or colleagues. Mattei (ibid) suggests that in such case, what is needed is "some catalyst to spark the relationship between the mentor and the person being mentored (p. 44)"

Barrett-Hayes (1999) provides two key mentoring roles (p. 135): 1) nurtures creativity in others and self and 2) uses mentoring occasions, where practical, to generate synergistic co-mentoring opportunities. Co-mentoring or peer coaching focuses on non-hierarchical relationships where mentoring is both 'reciprocal and mutual' (Bona, Rinehart, & Volbrecht, 1995, p. 119). In other words, there is a shift in roles where both mentor and mentee now share similar status while mutually engaged in teaching and learning from one another. In Clark's (2004) qualitative study on mentoring relationship with herself as protégé, she found that her co-mentoring experience was enhanced due to the "interpersonal dynamics of the relationship" between her and her mentors and in the process allowed the shifting of roles,

gaining equal status in providing support and guidance (para. 58)". She presented a grid that

shows the differences and similarities of the types of mentoring (Table 2.6).

Table 2.6: Characteristics of Mentoring Relationships

Characteristic	Formal mentoring	Informal mentoring	Co-mentoring
Design structure	Pre-determined length of time in the relationship	Often relationships last for an extended period of time	Often relationships last for an extended period of time
Allocation of protégé to the mentor	Allocated by the management of the organization	Usually spontaneously formed	Based on each other's complementary knowledge and skills
Selection process	Little or no involvement of staff in the selection of mentor to protégé	Voluntary, often based on mutual professional identity and respect	Friendship of peers
Monitoring procedures	Monitored in terms of expectations and goal attainment	No formal monitoring	No formal monitoring
Communication	One-way communication from mentor to protégé	Communication takes place in an informal manner	Dialogue occurs
Status of each person in the relationship	Inequality of status	Still a hierarchical status but communication less formal	Equal status
Type of relationship	Non-reciprocal	Reciprocal benefit	Reciprocal benefit
Mentor connection with protégé	Sometimes lack of connection occurs	More personal connection of protégé to mentor through coaching, counseling and role modeling strategies	Individuals act as partners complementing each other's knowledge and skills
Commitment to the mentoring program	May not always be committed to each other or to the program	Self selection based on personal and professional qualities	Mutual benefit gained from the relationship

(Adapted from Clarks, 2004, para.18)

Mullen & Lick (1999) regard mentoring as a 'synergized learning process' where mentors do

not only serve as "experts" who provide information to the mentee and a sense of potential to

both students and peers (p. 135), they can also serve as a friend, colleague, guide, advisor, supporter, and a teacher (Jonson, 2008). It is in this light that mentors should be knowledgeable and capable of supporting the mentee's cognitive development process by providing open communication, problem solving strategies, and conflict resolution (Robinson, 1993). This is what makes mentoring synonymous to developmental coaching, which Clutterbuck & Megginson (2005) define as "relationship-facilitated, on-the-job learning, with the most basic goal of promoting an individual's ability to do the work associated with that individual's current or future roles (p. 27)." Thus, mentoring in this sense is more about learning rather than teaching; a process which enables the mentee to learn, develop, and be able to perform what was learned (Whitmore, 1995). Below is a combined list of characteristics of mentor input based on the above descriptions (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7: Characteristics of Mentor Input

Characteristics of Mentor Input
1. coaching, counseling, and networking
2. nurturing creativity in others and self,
3. generating synergistic co-mentoring opportunities
4. providing support and guidance
5. providing information/professional knowledge
6. modeling sense of potential, inspire teachers
7. serving as a friend, colleague, guide, advisor, supporter, and a teacher
8. providing open communication, problem solving strategies, and conflict resolution
9. promoting work-related skills
10. ability to communicate effectively

2.3 Cognitive Apprenticeship

Magliaro, Lockee, & Burton (2005) argue that instructional approaches are considered to be more appropriate when learners are just beginning to form an understanding about a particular topic. Collins (1991) on the other hand posits that instructional approaches are appropriate for developing student capacity through 'cognitive apprenticeship'. This allows teachers to impart subject matter knowledge but also attitudes, thought processes, problem solving techniques, etc. The concept of cognitive apprenticeship developed by Collins, Brown, & Newman (1989) includes six instructional methods: modeling, coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection, and exploration (Table 2.8)

Table 2.8: Collins, Brown, & Newman (1989) Six Instructional Methods

Six Instructional Methods	
1. Modeling	learners observe an expert carrying out task and explaining how it is done
2. Coaching	offers learners help by giving hints, scaffolding, feedback, etc.
3. Scaffolding	provides temporary support by giving suggestions or direct help
4. Articulation	gets the learner to express or speak out their knowledge, reasoning, or ways of solving the task-related
5. Reflection	allows learners to compare problem-solving strategies with those of an expert
6. Exploration	learners tackles the task on their own

(Collins, Brown & Newman, 1989, pp. 481-482)

Brown, Collins, & Duguid (1989) argue that it is essential that the real learning context of the apprentice is taken into consideration during the process to ensure effectiveness. They posit, "Situations might be said to co-produce knowledge through activity. Learning and cognition, it is now possible to argue, are fundamentally situated" (p. 32).

2.4 Self-Determination Theory

In-service teachers frequently take part in professional development to gain certifications and because it is required by their school administrators. For some teachers, however, participating in professional development programs is a career decision to stimulate job growth (Fullan, 1993), to increase professional competence, gain job satisfaction (Huberman, 1985), and to enhance students' learning (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). Engaging in classroom-based action research and being a reflective teacher requires a conscious and intentional initiative on the part of the teacher, and therefore displays an intrinsically-motivated behavior. According to Deci & Ryan (2004), the proponents of Self-Determination Theory of motivational development (SDT), intrinsic motivation emanates from the self; it is self-determined and therefore, autonomous. It is also about having the 'ability to make choices regarding one's actions' (Wehmeyer, 1992, p. 305). This theory describes the development of intrinsic motivation in terms of the environmental support one gets for the individual needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy (or self-determination). Empirical studies conducted by Roth, Assor, Kanat-Maymon, and Kaplan (2007) examined teachers' experience of autonomous motivation for teaching and how it correlates with teachers' sense of personal accomplishment and students' self-reported autonomous motivation for learning, and Lam, Cheng, & Choy (2009) research on

Hong-Kong teachers' motivation and willingness to implement a project-based learning, using structural equation modeling they found that when teachers perceived a stronger sense of collegiality, more supportive of teacher competence and autonomy, the higher the motivation and willingness to implement educational innovation. Consistent with this framework, mentors or professional development providers provide choice (autonomy support), social interaction (relatedness support), and professional development activity connections (competence support) to teachers who are intrinsically motivated to take part in teacher learning, development, and change. As Deci & Ryan (ibid) argue, it is the social contexts that provide people with the opportunity to be autonomous and self-determined, rather than controlled. In the end, teachers will have to take control of their learning, experience the process of enquiry, development and change, and refuel their desire to learn and explore endless possibilities. In the following section I will discuss the features of effective professional development and their impact on teacher change and student learning.

2.5 Features of Effective Professional Development

In the previous section, various models of professional development activities were discussed. As much as it is important to know what possible choices there are for teachers to take, carefully analyzing the factors that influence the effectiveness of teachers' professional

development can help teachers make informed decisions. In the following section, features of effective professional development based on Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon (2001) research will be discussed as these characteristics are vital for teachers to gain knowledge, enhance teaching skills, and improve instruction that will have significant consequences for students' learning.

2.5.1 Garet, et al (2001) Features of Professional development

Garet, et al (2001) conducted an empirical study where they collected data from a large (1027) sample of mathematics and science teachers (with 72% response rate) as part of a national evaluation of the Eisenhower Professional Development Program, a federal program which supports professional development for teachers (p. 918). They compared the effects of different characteristics of professional development on teachers' learning based on the teachers' self-reported change in their knowledge and skills and classroom teaching practices. The results they found indicate that there are two main categories where the major features of professional development fall into. They classified these features as: Structural features and Core Features (Figure 2.2) of professional development. They argue that the core features of professional development activities have "significant, positive effects on teachers' self-reported increases in knowledge and skills and changes in classroom practice" and that "it

is primarily through these core features that the following structural features significantly affect teacher learning (p. 916)".

Figure 2.2: Garet et al's (2001) Features of Professional Development
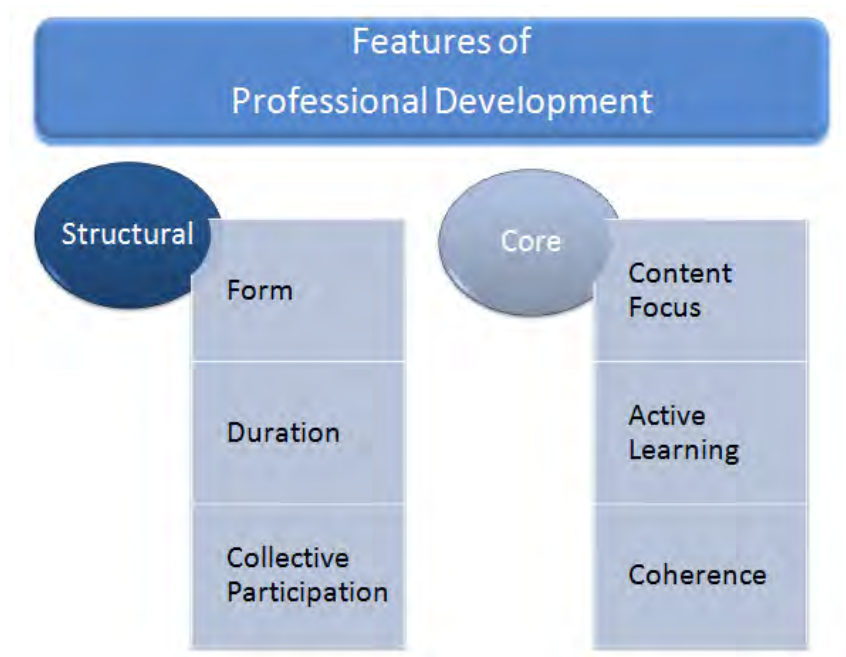
The structural features in their model refer to the structure or design of professional development activities which consist of a) form, b) duration, c) collective participation (pp. 919-920). Form refers to what type of activity is being conducted. Activities are either classified as traditional or reform type. Traditional activities such as workshops, course, and conferences are more common compared to the reform types i.e. study groups, mentoring, and coaching. Duration pertains to the length of the activity i.e. hours, days, weeks, etc. It is also refers to the time in which the participants spent in the activity (Fullan, 1993). Experts in teacher education and learning argue that professional development is a long-term process

which involves a range of related events or experiences to allow teachers to integrate newly learned experiences (Cohen, 1990). Collective participation or the participation of other teachers is a potential form of teacher learning since it provides opportunities for meaningful interaction (Clement & Vanderberghe, 2001).

The core features, on the other hand, include a) content focus, b) active learning, and c) coherence.   Content focus refers to the activity or activities that focus on improving teachers' knowledge of the subject content that students will be learning; the process of professional development takes place within the teachers' teaching context, thus making it feasible to relate the outcome to actual classroom events and students' daily activities (Ganser, 2000). Active learning, as opposed to passive learning, refers to the active engagement of teachers in the activity, i.e. meaningful discussion, planning, and practice. Teachers participate in discussions and engage in class observations (either observing experts or being observed) combined with interactive discussions and feedback (Borko, 2004). This is consistent with the principle of constructivism where teachers are engaged in specific tasks of teaching, observation, assessment, and reflection (Dadds, 2001). According to Garett (ibid), coherence relates to "the degree to which the activity promotes *coherence* in teachers' professional development, by incorporating experiences which are consistent with teachers' goals" (p. 920); they assessed the coherence of a teacher's professional development based on the extent to

which the activities 1) build on what teachers have already learned,   2) focus on content and pedagogy, and 3) support teachers in continuous professional development by communicating with other teachers who are in the same plight (pp. 927-928). Teachers who engage in professional development are assumed to possess prior knowledge and an existing frame of reference. If the professional development activity that they participated in is coherent with their other professional development activities that they have engaged in the past, they are more likely to change their practice.

In this section, I discussed the various features of professional development that are proposed by Garet and his colleagues (2001). Different measures in determining the effectiveness of professional development activities and their impact on student learning will be discussed in the following section.

2.5.2 Measuring the Effectiveness of Professional Development

The features of professional development discussed above provide teachers what Guskey (1995) calls the 'optimal mix'- to help them improve their teaching practice. The choice of what form/s and features of professional development teachers make could only be effective if there was any change in their attitudes, behavior, and practices and on their students' learning outcomes. Borko and Putnam's (1995) research provide evidence that professional

development had largely influenced the changes that took place in the teachers' instructional methods which then had positive ramifications on their students' learning. Cohen & Hill (1998) and Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995) also reported on the inevitable link between improvements in teaching and students' achievements. This pattern is compatible with Garett et al's (2001) recommendation to "provide useful and effective professional development that has a meaningful effect on teacher learning and fosters improvements in classroom practice" (p.937).

2.5.2.1 Desimone's Core Conceptual Framework

Desimone (2009) proposes a model, which she calls a 'core conceptual framework' (see Figure 2.3) in measuring the effectiveness of professional development activities (p. 184).

Figure 2.3: Desimone's (2009, p. 185) Core Conceptual Framework
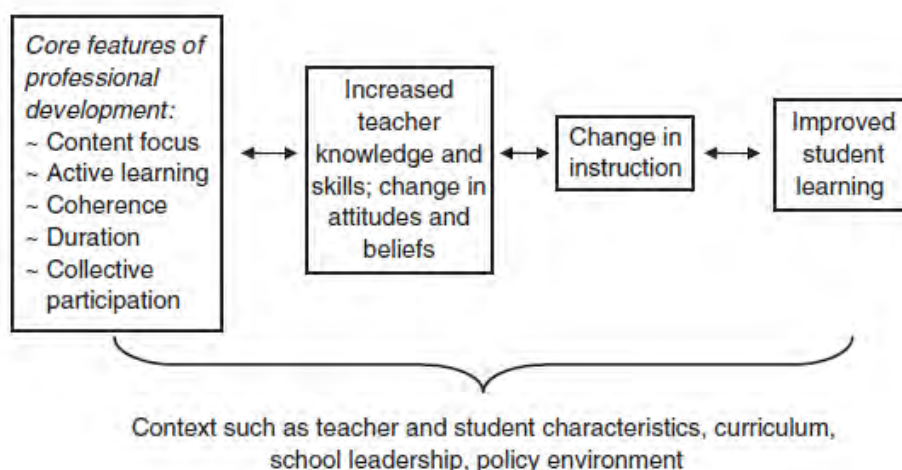
According to Desimone this framework/model "allows the testing of both a theory of teacher

change and a theory of instruction" (p. 185); based on this model the course of action for professional development would proceed as follows: a) Teachers participate and experience effective professional development, b) as a result, teachers gain knowledge and skills affecting change in their attitudes, c) learned knowledge/skills are likely to be transferred in the way their instructional approach, d) which then promotes student learning. By following these steps, teachers would be able to see whether their knowledge, beliefs, or practice were altered, and whether there were any changes in their students' learning outcomes i.e. test scores, class performance, etc., as a result of the changes in these teachers' instructional methods. This process, therefore, allows teachers and providers (stakeholders) of professional development activities to 'test' the actual application of the theories (teacher change and instruction); a positive outcome equates to the effectiveness of this framework that outlines the relationship of the features of professional development, teachers' knowledge, attitude, practice, and student learning.

Taking a closer look at the core features of professional development in Desimone's framework and comparing it with Garet, et al's (2001) features of professional development, it is strikingly noticeable that the structural and core features in Garet's et al (ibid) study were combined into one label: 'core features'. She referred to Garet, et al's (2001) and Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman's (2002) reports (in which she co-authored), as a source for

readers to use as cross-reference regarding the detailed explanations of the features of the

professional development activity and how the structure of the various teacher learning

opportunities affect teacher change. She reports that Garet et al's finding "suggests the

potential usefulness of focusing on measuring not the structure of the activity but the features

of professional development that have been shown to be related to the outcomes", which she

then uses as an argument to exclude the Form (in the structural feature) and focus instead on

the measurement of the "*critical features* (sic) of the activity- those characteristics of an

activity that make it effective for increasing teacher learning and changing practice, and

ultimately for improving student learning—rather than on the *type* (sic) of activity (e.g.,

workshop or study group)" (Desimone, 2009, p. 183).

Another striking issue in Desimone's framework is the similarity of the steps to Guskey's

(2002) Model of Teacher Change wherein he argues that the re-examination of the series of

actions directed to gaining teacher change is important in creating effective professional

development programs (see Section 2.5.2.2). Although the empirical studies that Desimone

provided in her paper were conducted by other scholars, she was able to provide an extensive

list of up-to-date studies available in the literature to prove that her 'path model is reflected in

the literature' (p. 185). Table 2.9 is a list of the literature she included to support her model.

Table 2.9: Empirical Evidence that Supports Desimone's Proposed Core Conceptual Framework

1) Core Features		Empirical evidence available in the literature
	Content Focus: link between activities that focus on subject matter content and how students learn	Case study: Cohen, 1990 Correlational Analyses: Garet et al., 2001; T. M. Smith et al., 2007 Quasi-experiments: Banilower, Heck, & Weiss, 2005) Longitudinal studies: Cohen & Hill, 2001; Desimone, Porter, et al., 2002) Experimental designs: Carpenter, Fennema, Peterson, Chiang, & Loef, 1989
	Active Learning: opportunities for teachers to engage in active learning as opposed to passive learning i.e. taking part in class observations, participating in feedback and discussions, etc.	Garet et al., 2001; Loucks-Horsley et al., 1998; Banilower & Shimkus, 2004; Borko, 2004;
	Coherence: teacher learning is consistent with teachers' knowledge and beliefs, and school/district/state reforms and policies	Firestone, Mangin, Martinez, & Polovsky, 2005; Fullan, 1993; Guskey, 1999; Penuel et al., 2007).
	Duration: span of time over which the activity is spread	Cohen & Hill, 2001; Fullan, 1993; Guskey, 1999
	Collective Participation: participation of teachers from the same school, grade, or department.	Banilower & Shimkus, 2004; Borko, 2004; Fullan, 1991; Little, 1993; Loucks-Horsley et al., 1998)
2) Increased Teacher knowledge; change in attitudes and beliefs		links between teacher knowledge, practice, and student achievement: Hill, Ball, & Schilling, 2008);

3) Change in Instruction	instruction and student achievement: (Von Secker, 2002);
4) Improved student learning	
	professional development and teachers' practice: (Heck, Banilower, Weiss, & Rosenberg, 2008);
	professional development and student achievement: (Jacob & Lefgren, 2004).
	Links in all four areas: (Franke, Carpenter, & Levi, 2001; Saxe, Gearhart, & Nasir, 2001)

Adapted from Desimone, 2009, pp. 184-185

2.5.2.2 Guskey's Model of Teacher Change

Guskey's Model of Teacher Change (2002) suggests that significant change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes is likely to take place only after a teacher has experimented and evidenced changes in student learning outcomes. According to Guskey (ibid), the improvements in student learning are the consequential result from changes in the teachers' pedagogical approach that they have implemented in their classroom. Changes in pedagogy can take various forms such as adaptation of new teaching methods, modifications in classroom arrangement or format, use of new curriculum or teaching materials. Teachers finding out ways to help students learn and meet their learning goals are widely cited in the literature (Goodlad, 1984). Guskey's model (see Figure 2.4, ibid) process highlights the outcomes of the stages listed in the following order: (a) professional development, (b) change

in teachers' classroom practices, (c) change in student learning outcomes, and, (d) change in

teachers' beliefs and attitudes.

Figure 2.4: Guskey's Model of Teacher Change

A model of teacher change.
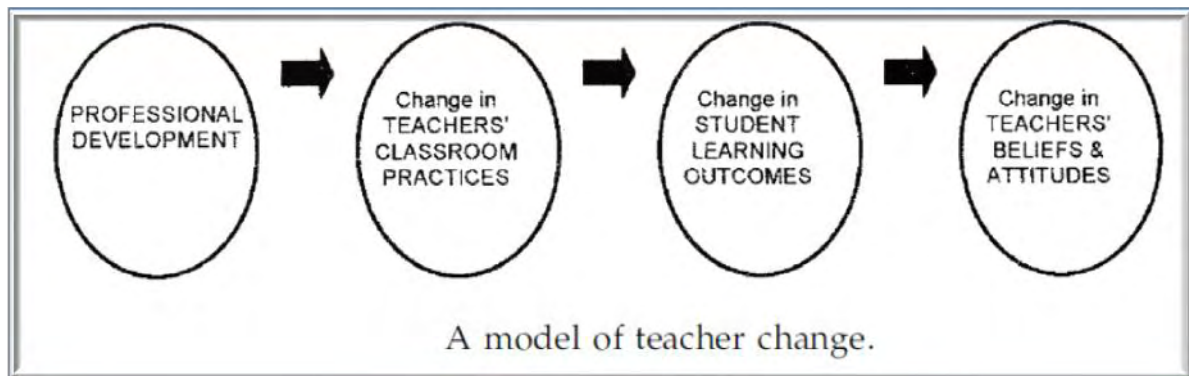
Adapted from Guskey, 2002, p. 383

He supports his model using Bolster's (1983) work, who suggested that a validation of

the teacher's knowledge of teaching is required to gauge how successful were the efforts

employed in trying to improve what and how students learn. This is also consistent with

Crandall's (1983) empirical study (The Study of Dissemination Efforts Supporting School

Improvements) where she looked into teachers' commitment to new practices and how it

evolves in time, and Huberman's (1981) case study on one school district's efforts to

implement the Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction (ECRI) program. The crucial point

of this model, according to Guskey (2002) is that:

> "it is not the professional development *per se* (sic), but the experience of successful
> implementation that changes teachers' attitudes and beliefs. They believe it works
> because they have seen it work, and that experience shapes their attitudes and beliefs.
> Thus,…the key element in significant change in teachers' attitudes and beliefs is clear
> evidence of improvement in the learning outcomes of their students" (pp.383-384).

Guskey suggests three guiding principles essential to planning effective professional development programs: (a) recognize that change is a gradual and difficult process for teachers, (b) ensure that teachers receive regular feedback on student learning progress; and, (c) provide continued support and follow-up after the initial training.

Although Desimone's (2009) framework was designed to measure the effectiveness of professional development, one cannot help but notice the striking similarities with Guskey's model of teacher change. Both models view professional development activities as the beginning of the process that teachers get involved in. Both models look at the change in practices as a learning outcome after engaging in the activities. In Desimone's framework, change in teachers' attitudes and beliefs also occur in this stage, whereas Guskey believes that change in teachers beliefs and attitudes can only happen "after they gain evidence of improvements in student learning" (p. 384). Nonetheless, both models see increased in teachers' knowledge can spark the change in teachers' instructions, which then affect student learning. The improvements in the students' achievements can be seen as a positive result of the process of professional development, which also signifies the last stage in her framework. In Guskey's model, however, the process does not end there. The final step in the process of teacher change happens when teachers could actually see the evidence of improvements in students' learning, only after such realization can change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes

happen. The significance of Guskey's model does not only apply to teachers and students and on how they change, but to the practice and continuous advancement of professional development. In his model, learning outcomes encompass a broad range of cognitive and achievement indicators, which can also include benchmarks for assessing student behavior and attitudes. Scope of assessment can involve gauging students' scores on class quizzes and tests, students' attendance, participation in class discussions and activities, classroom behavior, motivation for learning, and their attitudes toward school, the class (towards other students and teacher), and themselves. In other words, learning outcomes include "whatever kinds of evidence teachers use to judge the effectiveness of their teaching." (p. 384).

In the following section, I examine the professional development opportunities available online and the web tools that could facilitate professional learning and development i.e. transfer/construction of knowledge and skills, collaborative opportunities in sharing and mentoring, tools for reflection and feedback, etc.

2.6 Online Teacher Professional Development

Teacher professional development has conventionally been offered as a face-to-face activity, and in most cases, held after school, during the weekends, and sometimes during holidays where teachers could find time to participate. Conferences, lectures, short-term

training sessions, workshops, seminars, etc. are some forms of traditional professional

development and often fall under the realm of formal learning (Elmore, 2002); traditional

professional development is costly and hierarchical in nature (Killeen, Monk, & Plecki, 2002).

Guskey (2002) argues that such programs have been less successful; and as Garet et al (2001)

posit they are "widely criticized as being ineffective in providing teachers with sufficient time,

activities, and content necessary for increasing teachers' knowledge and fostering meaningful

changes" (p. 920). In many cases, professional development becomes an isolated training or

workshop event when the content or focus of learning is not connected to the teachers' context

of practice (Loucks-Horsley, Hewson, Love, & Stiles, 1998). Such reproof on the deficiencies

of traditional professional development creates a niche, particularly for teachers who are

denied professional development because of the constraints and barriers mentioned above.

The advent of new technologies and the massive popularity of the Internet provide endless

possibilities for innovative approaches in delivering and/or facilitating continuous online

teacher professional development (oTPD) (Lock, 2006); the dynamic nature of oTPD using

interactive web tools bridges the gap in providing teachers access to professional development.

Sprague (2006) explores the various oTPD models and their impact on teacher education

programs; she reports that some of these models are:

- Formal and developed through multiple partnerships
- Designed by a university and lead to a formal degree or certification program
- Less formal and involve the use of variety of tools including
  - case studies,

- e-mail and discussion boards
- course websites supplementing face-to-face (f2f) professional development programs

She states that all the models shared the same goal: "to improve teachers' understanding of learning and to change their teaching practice" (para. 2). In mid-2006 The Education Development Center[1] published brief reports on the preliminary findings of some of the formative research and experimental studies on various models of online professional developments that were being undertaken by some educational institutions in the United States; some forms of oTPD that were offered by the institutions named in the report share resemblance with those that Sprague (ibid) mentioned: online workshops, online courses, and hybrid/blended components (community-based model coursework supplemented with asynchronous discussion board). Although workshops and online courses are still at the core of oTPD, Salpeter (2003) reports that, "in recent years these professional development offerings have evolved in several key ways (para. 5)". In addition to online workshops on instructional strategies and needs, she states that sessions on how to use technology i.e. new software programs, video editing techniques, etc. continue to be in high demand, and that more and more teaching and learning resources are made available online for just-in-time learning.

In an interview conducted by Anthony Rebora of Edweek.org (2009) with Chris Dede, a

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[1] http://www.edc.org/newsroom/articles/online_professional_development

professor of learning technology at Harvard University and a leading authority on online

teacher professional development, Dede states that, "one of the strengths of online PD is that

it gives the opportunity for reflection" (para. 3). He adds that "the online format provides a

layer of distance that helps people feel more willing to share things that are a little bit risky

than they might in a face-to-face environment". Dede also observes that teachers are more

engaged in learning and knowledge-sharing which involves a lot of interaction.

In the following section, I will discuss the different online tools that could facilitate the

delivery of oTPD.

2.6.1 Information Communication Technology

Using the definition Dutton (1999) provided, Information and Communications

Technologies or ICT refer to "all kinds of electronic systems used for broadcasting,

telecommunications and computer-mediated communications or CMC" (p. 7). Dutton adds

that the most seminal feature of CMC is its ability to shape tele-access to information, people,

services and technologies. Tele-access or the use of online resources emanates from the social

components or processes that are at work when people use CMC. In comparison to f2f or

traditional learning, learners in CMC environments need not travel or be physically present in

a classroom to be with the instructor and/or other learners (Salmon, 2000). For people

learning at a distance, the implications of CMC provide them a certain amount of freedom in

accessing learning materials that are provided online. It decentralizes the nature of controlled

learning that is usually found in traditional environment as students develop their own style

and learning strategies (White, 2003). Riel and Harasim's (1994) study found that the

pedagogical and technological innovations that have surfaced in recent years have shown

increased potential for social interaction and collaborative work. This development is based

on the underlying principle that learning is a social process where discourse is a key factor

(Brufee, 1999). In a research study conducted by Roschelle (1992) on collaborative learning,

he found that "the crux of learning by collaboration is convergence" (p. 41), which

emphasizes the "mutual construction of understanding" (p. 42). His findings, although

focused on f2f environments i.e. computer labs, highly complement the Vygotskian and

Piagetian theories on collaborative inquiry that suggest the application of scaffolding (by an

expert peer) and the positive gains of conflict in relation to conceptual change. With the

spread of ICT and CMC online tools and web applications, their use in the classroom setting

has been unstoppable since 'educational institutions are investing more and more in

technology' (Fitzgerald, Taylor, & LaValle, 2003, p. 10). Thus, the adoption of ICT and

Web/Internet technologies as vehicles to provide oTPD is inevitable.

2.6.2 Computer-Mediated Communications (CMC): Asynchronous and Synchronous

Romiszowski & Ravitz (1997) define computer-mediated communication (CMC) as "communication between different parties separated in space and/or time, mediated by interconnected computers (p. 745)." There are two types of CMC: Asynchronous and synchronous. In asynchronous environments, postings or information shared are staggered. The participants have more time to think about the discussion topics, refine their responses, and post them whenever they want (Ioannou-Georgiou, 1999). Examples of asynchronous communications are: email, discussion list (group list, e-list or list-serv), bulletin boards, forum, etc. Synchronous communications, on the other hand, are commonly referred to as online chat or real time chat where the participants are online at the same time. The messages are posted and received instantaneously usually by typing text messages and/or by using a microphone to speak thus allowing voice communications as well. With synchronous chats the flow of communication is simultaneous and can be compared to f2f discussions. Examples of synchronous communications are: video conferencing, audio conferencing, Internet-relay chat (IRC) or Instant messenger chats (text and/or voice chat). LaPointe (2007) claims that 'synchronous virtual voice settings are appealing as learners gain the advantage of voice plus the contextual information of tone, enthusiasm, inflection, speed, as well as hesitation and silence to provide richer information' (p. 94). However, Pallof & Pratt (2007) found that for

synchronous communications to be successful, the facilitator should have the necessary skills to make the discussions productive otherwise 'it will disintegrate into simple one-line contributions of minimal depth and wander off topic.' (p. 68). CMC can also be classified according to the number of interlocutors and the type of communication, i.e. one-to-one, pair, or group communication (Yates, 2001). One or a mix of the following media can be used in CMC: text, audio/voice, video, graphics, presentation materials i.e. Powerpoint, interactive whiteboard, etc. Communication protocols, i.e., participants taking turns to speak, how fast should they give their responses, and consideration of others become increasingly critical in synchronous communication environment (LaPointe, 2007). According to Shea-Schultz & Fogarty (2002), "people who have poor writing or typing skills may be at a disadvantage in an online environment" (p. 42); this is particularly true for synchronous text chats where the need to provide an immediate response dictates the flow of communication. Situations could be worse for people with poor reading and/or writing skills (Suler, 2008). The same level of anxiety can also happen to people with poor verbal/oral skills in voice synchronous chats; they will experience difficulty in expressing themselves, and this could make them feel uncomfortable, which could also cause unwanted embarrassment. On the other hand, an asynchronous mode of communication gives people time to think and compose their responses.

2.6.3 Web 2.0

What does Web 2.0 mean, and what came before it? Web 1.0, also known as the 'old web', is about content or information resource (Abelson, Ledeen, & Lewis, 2008, p. 58). The information is static and is made available online for other people to read (Stevens, 2006). Thus, web technology back in the early 90s was called the 'read-only era' (Singh, 2010). Only the author/creator of the website could add contents onto the webpage; only one-way communication was possible on site since the average internet user could only read the data/information presented to him; they could however send comments/suggestions by sending an email, fax, or a contact form (Qumar, 2007). Web 2.0 is a concept coined by O'Reilly (2005), and Stevens (2006) provides a description of what it is about. He states that, it "is where anyone can not only *take* information down *from* it but also create content and upload *to* it. In this respect the Web is not simply a one-way means of *obtaining* knowledge, but also a place where you *interact* with the materials and *annotate* and *contribute* to the content" (para. 9). It allows the internet user to read-write-publish using new tools which makes it easy for people to communicate and establish a social network (Singh, 2010). Cormode & Krishnamurthy (2008) provide a list of actions that computer-users make when generating or manipulating content (see Table 2.10).

Table 2.10: List of computer-users' actions when generating or manipulating content

"Clicks and connections": simple activities which only require a single click to complete, such as rating a movie, voting in a poll or voting for a story (as in Digg), or adding a semantic link, such as adding a friend.
"Comments": adding a short response, comment or tag to existing content, such as a news story, blog entry, photo, etc.
"Casual communication": sending a message to another user, either via an e–mail–like system or via instant messaging. These are typically short, a sentence or two per communication.
"Communities": interacting in larger groups or communities by joining a group or posting a message to a group.
"Content Creation": uploading or entering some entirely new content, such as a webcam movie, digital photo, or blog posting.

Adapted from Cormode & Krishnamurthy (2008, para. 48)

The social interactive technologies of Web 2.0 allow collaborative opportunities and the possibilities for knowledge sharing. How people interpret, use or re-use, invent or re-invent the information online shows the social dynamics that exist in Web 2.0 applications (Miller, 2006). Singh (2010) posits there are three different types of Web 2.0 technologies used today: 1) Social Networking, 2) Social Media, and 3) Social Bookmarking (para. 9). Hartshorn (2010) differentiates social media from social networking in five ways: based on definition, communication style, return on investment, timely responses, and asking or telling. Although her article focuses on what the differences between the two mean from a marketing/business perspective, the definitions and analyses she provided can easily be generalized and applied to oTPD (see Table 2.11). Social media is "a way to transmit, or share information with a broad audience", while social networking is "an act of engagement" (para. 2-3). In other words,

social media is more about the media, the tools used to disseminate information i.e. video, audio, texts, or multimedia; while social networking focuses more on establishing networks or connections through exchanged conversations and collaborations on or about the medium shared.

Table 2.11: Five Differences between Social Media from Social Networking

5 Differences Between Social Media and Social Networking		
	Social Media	**Social Networking**
By Definition	a way to transmit, or share information with a broad audience	an act of engagement; associate together on social networking sites and build relationships through community
Communication Style	more akin to a communication channel. It's a format that delivers a message	communication is two-way; Conversations are at the core of social networking and through them relationships are developed.
ROI (Return on Investment/value of medium)	influence, or the depth of conversation and what the conversations are about, can be used to gauge value of the medium used	overall traffic to your website is on the rise, increasing social networking base could be attributed to your social efforts.
Timely Responses	it takes time	social networking is direct communication between you and the people that you choose to connect with, your conversations are richer, more purposeful and more personal. Your network exponentially grows as you meet and get introduced to others.
Asking or Telling	Asking friends, family, co-workers or anyone else to cast a vote just to cast it	you can tell your peers about your new blog and discuss how to make it a success. The conversations that you create can convert many people into loyal fans, so it's worth investing the time.

(Adapted from Hartshorn, 2010)

Social Bookmarking allows internet users to save, store, classify, share, and search web links or sites that are bookmarked for future use (Qumar, 2007). The bookmarked sites are saved using tags (labels or keywords) to categorize them for organization purposes. Web users participate in collaborative tagging in social bookmarking sites when they post/share a link on to a site, e.g., Delicious.com, and associate that link with text labels or tags which are great for categorizing and navigating a huge pool of online resources, which could easily streamline search results based on the specific tags used during the search.

The success and popularity of social networking/social media sites such as (Facebook), video blogs (YouTube), blogs (blogger), microblogs (twitter), wikis (PbWorks), podcast (Podomatic), photosharing (Flickr), Delicious, Digg, Spurl (social bookmarking sites) etc. can be attributed to the people who generate the content and making them available for others to view, comment on, share, and even edit. These Web 2.0 systems enhance the concept of social networks, community, collaboration and discussion. As O'Reilly (2007) points out, "without the data, the tools are useless; without the software, the data is unmanageable." (p. 4); therefore, Internet users play an important role in providing the data, while Web 2.0 tools' most essential feature is, in O'Reilly's terms, 'harnessing collective intelligence' (p. 10). As teachers become knowledgeable about Web 2.0 tools, such as blogs, wikis, online groups, etc., they get the chance to participate or even create their own personal learning environment

(PLE) and online community and establish an open link to continuous professional development as they connect with peers and experts in various pedagogical areas.

In the following section, Web 2.0 tools used in this study and how they aid in teacher professional development will be discussed.

2.6.3.1 Social Network Sites

Boyd & Ellison (2007) define social network sites as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system." (p. 1). Such sites are popular among the youth and have become a place to express their personalities, be connected with friends and other people with the same interests Aside from this, social network sites, such as Facebook and MySpace, have added applications where people can share videos, pictures, and web links. Sending online gifts or online games have also become popular. The CEO of Nielsen Online, John Burbank claims in a report (Nielsen, 2009) that "Social networking has become a fundamental part of the global online experience," (p. 1). There are fora and groups created on Facebook specifically for extending access to teacher professional development (both formal and informal), e.g., Teachers for Global Awareness, English Teachers' Forum Libya; TESOL, IATEFLOnline, IATEFL Teacher Development Sig, English

Language Fellow Program, Rutgers University's Professional Development Institute, etc. Rutherford in an article published by the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences (2010) states that the group 'Ontario Teachers: Resources and Idea-Sharing', which she observed as part of a longitudinal project, turned out to be a "a serious forum for professional development – a forum used not only by Ontario teachers but also by educators from around the world interested in Ontario's education system (para. 2)." She also stated that her research findings suggest that social media, such as Facebook, are "serving unmet needs by allowing teachers – and potentially other groups of professionals – to connect and exchange information on serious topics in new ways (para. 3). In a qualitative study conducted by Saunders (2008) on social networking sites, she argues that Facebook has a role to play in teacher professional development that also encompasses professionalism and intercultural aspects of networking with teachers from within the U.S. and around the globe.

2.6.3.2 Blogs

Blog is used by people as an online journal where they express their thoughts or opinions about anything (Cole & Foster, 2007). Unlike diaries, blogs can contain photos, links to other websites, embedded audio or videos, and readers' comments about the blog post. It is that ability to allow other people to share their ideas. So, instead of having static texts, blog

readers can interact with the blog author, and generate conversations. Richardson writes (2009) that blogs "engage readers with ideas and questions and links. They ask readers to think and respond. They demand interaction" (p. 18). In such environment where there is mutual reciprocity and where ideas can be developed and expanded, blogs can be a great tool for professional development activities. Blogs provide people with an online space that encourages them to write or publish a combination of personal thoughts, reflections, and ideas or information that could be of interest to others. Examples of blog sites being used today are Blogger.com, Wordpress.com, Typepad.com, etc. EFL classroom-based empirical studies have been conducted investigating its usefulness in learning the target language (Arena, 2008). On the potential use of blogs on teacher education and learning, Richardson, the author of *Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, and Other Powerful Web Tools for Classrooms* (2009), argues that with the availability of these tools, teachers need to tap their imagination, creativity and think how they can be used in a way that would increase learning and productivity. Blogs, he added, can serve as an online portfolio or eportfolio that displays a collection of past or ongoing work; writing reflections on blogs can also empower teachers, and by sharing and opening your blog to other teachers/colleagues allows continuous conversation with them, which then paves the way for learning to take place as meaningful discussion are developed. According to Solomon and Schrum (2007), the same concept can be applied in teacher development as

teachers use blogs as a tool where they can write the process and/or outcome of their inquiry

and reflections, and get immediate feedback from blog readers.

2.6.3.3 Online Groups and Communities

Preece's (2000) definition of online community involves four common elements: 1)

people who interact socially for their own personal/professional need, 2) purpose i.e. interest,

need, exchange of information, 3) rules or protocols that guide people's online behavior when

they interact with others, and 4) computer systems to facilitate social interactions (p. 10). The

ability of the group to connect and bond makes it more likely for the members to work

collectively and contribute in achieving its goals. However, there are instances when people

feel that their individual contribution may not be relevant and settle to be a mere observer

(Weldon, Blair, & Huebsch, 2000). One solution to poor participation is to employ team

building strategies to establish an online atmosphere where members' contribution and

participation are valued (Black, 2002).

Some of the leading online group providers are Google Groups and Yahoo! Groups.

Online groups both function as electronic mailing lists and Internet forums. Group messages

can be posted and read by e-mail or on the Group site. They also have file storage areas, space

for photos, web links, calendar, etc. Group owners/members can also create Polls or database

within their Group site. Google (2009) describe a Google Group as 'a user-owned group created using the Google Groups service. Google Groups not only allows you to manage and archive your mailing list, but also provides a method for true communication and collaboration with group members'. Yahoo! Groups, on the other hand, is the one of the world's largest collection of community-driven online discussion boards. Hanson-Smith (2006) points out that Yahoo! Groups "remain superior in many respects for voluntary CoPs which are not graded, hierarchically ordered, or directed by a sole teacher" (p. 306). There were several studies, however, that have been conducted on the use of online groups, e.g. Yahoo! Groups as part of a course or formal learning. Kirschner & Wopereis (2003) used Yahoo! Groups as a mindtool for professional development for student–teachers in Amsterdam enrolled in a one-semester course, 'Networks for the Teaching Methodology of Foreign Languages', where they participate in electronic discussion forum with facilities for collaborative work (p. 114) and 'providing feedback on each other's work is an important element in the process of learning where, by the end of course, they would have had formed a community of practice.

Whether institution-based or not, online groups have great potential in delivering oTPD. For one, many professional organizations, such as National Institute for Literacy, Classroom 2.0, British Council's English Language Teaching (ELT) listservs (Asia & Europe), TESOL,

IATEFL, and their special interest groups or sections, have created online groups for their

members, and many of the groups are open to non-members as well. They offer regular online

discussion sessions and many of them do not require any monetary payment. In times of

financial crunch, listservs and discussions from these groups could mean a lot, especially to

those teachers who just could not afford to attend local or international conferences. Online

groups can further help and solidify the whole oTPD experience for EFL/ESL teachers by

providing them with PD support related to their teaching context or those that they can also

avail locally.

2.7 Lave & Wenger's Community of Practice

First identified in the early 1990s by Etienne Wenger and Jean Lave, and developed

extensively in Wenger (1998), the concept of Communities of Practice (CoP) has been the

focus of academic study in the last decade. The following are some of the commonly used

definitions of CoP:

> "… an aggregate of people who come together around a mutual engagement in an
> endeavor…practices emerge in the course of this mutual endeavor." (Eckert &
> McConnell-Ginet, 1992, p. 464).
> "…groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic,
> and deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing
> basis" (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p.4)

Lave and Wenger (1991) described how the CoP often evolve and self-organize because of the community members' passion to know more about an issue or topic through collaboration with others. Social interactions are a means for them to learn, and in the process, they develop a sense of identity and belonging. Wenger's model consists of a unique combination of three structural elements: domain (of knowledge), community (of people), and (shared) practice; and no matter what form a CoP takes, they uphold the same basic structure (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

2.7.1 Domain

Domain of knowledge is the shared understanding of things/topics that are considered important to people belong to a particular CoP. This is what unites people- a common ground that each CoP member shares with the rest of the community. Lave & Wenger (1991) posit, "the most successful communities of practice thrive where the goals and needs of an organization [or of the collective community] intersect with the passions and aspirations of participants" (p. 32).

2.7.2 Community

Community refers to "a group of people who interact, learn from each other, build

relationships, and in the process, develop a sense of belonging and mutual commitment"

(Wenger, et al, 2002, p. 34). For a CoP to thrive, it is vital for the members to establish a

sense of shared leadership, which helps in creating a "pool of goodwill" (p. 37), where

members take the initiative to contribute to the community, hoping that others will benefit in

some form or another. A harmonious relationship is certainly ideal, but there are occasions

when disagreements happen due to cultural differences or simply a matter of differences in

opinion. If such differences or conflicts are not settled in an appropriate manner, they could

lead to the disintegration of the community. It is pertinent for the members of a CoP to

"encourage differentiation" among themselves (p. 35). This can help them to foster a sense of

individuality, and respect other ideas or opinions that are in contrast with their own.

2.7.3 Practice

Wenger et al (2002) describe practice as a "set of socially defined ways of doing things

in a specific domain" (p. 38). It simply refers to what and how members of a CoP do to apply

a certain idea (knowledge) in practice. There is a shared common knowledge that exists

among community members. They practice doing things and exploring new ways together.

Knowledge exploration could involve sharing of books/e-books, articles, useful websites that

members-at-large could benefit from. Being comfortable with what is being shared and how it

is shared helps in maintaining an effective CoP. In the following section, I discuss an example

of a successful online CoP, Webheads in Action, based on Wenger's three criteria.

2.7.4 Webheads in Action: A Community of Practice

Webheads in Action (WiA) is an online community that embodies the characteristics of

a successful Community of Practice based on Wenger's three criteria: promotes knowledge of

a domain, revolves around a practice, and forms spontaneously, voluntarily. Webheads in

Action was formed as an Electronic Village Online (EVO) Session in 2002 (EVO is a

TESOL Computer Assisted Language Learning Interest Section [CALL-IS] project which

provides 6-week[2] free courses/online professional development for language teachers every

year). Webhead's main communication hub is the Yahoo! Group[3], which was created to host

the discussions of the 2002 EVO Webheads in Action session. Webheads' population

continues to grow, with the most recent count reaching eight hundred thirty eight and still

growing. According to its creator/lead moderator, Vance Stevens, most of the members of

WiA are language teachers who "engage in helping each other pursue lifelong, just-in-time,

informal learning through experimentation in use of social-media and computer mediated

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[2] Beginning 2011, EVO sessions were shortened to five weeks
[3] URL: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/evonline2002_webheads/

communications tools. (2009, para. 9)". One factor that makes WiA a successful CoP is the fact that many of the members who joined the community as complete novices in the use of technology end up being experts and greatly influencing their own careers and professional development. Members' own success stories and how much WiA has influenced their academic profession are documented in articles and conference presentations (Verschoor, Cruvinel, & Izquierdo, 2009; Almeida d'Eça, 2004; Gonzalez, 2003).

2.7.5 Wenger on WiA

Etienne Wenger was a keynote speaker at the 2007 WiAOC (Webheads in Action Online Convergence), where he presented in an online conversation format, which was moderated by Susanne Nyrop. In this online conference, Wenger's presentation entitled "Communities of Practice in an interconnected world: New geographies of knowledge and identity" focused on how the technology and the aspect of a community continue to influence each other (Wenger, 2007). New technologies pave the way for members of a CoP to establish mutual connections- and it is this connectivity that transforms the way people understand the concept of communities. However, he pointed out that through a vast landscape of possible tools, it is the trajectory of an individual member's identity and his/her role in the community that matters. Wenger's traditional concept of a community is closely associated with space- the

geography of belonging. For example, a list-serv is defined by space and the boundary of that

community is well defined. However, having met members of WiA and having experienced

the discussions about CoP, Wenger admitted during this online conference that Webheads has

'freed' him from that traditional notion of space and community. Stevens (2009, para. 19)

summarizes that experience:

> "When Cristina Costa entered the conversation, Etienne asked her when she felt that she
> was a member of a CoP. Cristina replied that she realized this when her practice began
> to change. Etienne referred back to this later when, during the question period, I asked
> him whether his concept of CoPs had evolved after his encounter with the Webheads
> online. He said indeed it had. He said that the fact that Webheads met in so many spaces
> while clearly being a CoP was a revelation to him. He now realized he could relax his
> previous thinking on constraints on SPACE occupied by a distributed CoP."

In other words, Webheads (as a member of WiA as a CoP) explore new tools, join and belong

to many communities, create/maintain multiple interactions between places (groups or

networks), and yet they are able to manage polarity or what Wenger calls 'multiplicity of

places' (or having online presence in various online groups or networks) without losing the

voice of the group (WiA) which they strongly identify themselves with. The glue that binds

WiA is the people that helped shape what the community is today. A number of academic

research study and papers have been written studying how this vibrant online group thrives as

an online community of practice (Almeida d'Eça, 2006; Costa, 2009).

2.8 Cognitive Apprenticeship in Online Environments

Different forms of pedagogy can play an important role in determining the success of a learning process. Such forms include how to cater to students' learning needs, communicating tasks clearly, and developing a positive learning environment (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). The application of pedagogical strategies will depend on the specific learning context, degree of negotiation/communication between learners and instructors. One of the propositions that guide the growth of online professional development is the presence of communities of practice. From a social point of view, people learn within a social context and together build and share knowledge. Online environments make it possible for teachers to gain access to new ideas and competence that was previously difficult to attain or even nonexistent. The collaborative nature of social online environments makes it relatively easy for teachers to engage in apprenticeship learning where teachers take on the various roles of apprentice/learner and/or mentor/coach (Collins, 1991, p. 121). The same principles of Cognitive Apprenticeship can be applied in Web 2.0 learning environments. A summary of how cognitive apprenticeship can take place in Web 2.0 and what roles are enhanced in teacher learning and professional development activity is available in Table 2.12.

Table 2.12: Summary of Cognitive Apprenticeship in Web 2.0 Environments

Summary of Cognitive Apprenticeship in Web 2.0 Environments		
Cognitive Instructional Methods	Process	Web 2.0 and ICT Tools
Modeling	● Expert, Mentors, Experienced Colleagues provide examples of effective practices via webinar and online conference ● Online discussions of problem solving samples, sharing experiences	● Virtual Online Conference ● Audio/video recording of online conference, lecture, discussion ● Live or recording of online meetings and discussions ● Email ● Forum/Fora ● Online Group discussions (threaded and archive-able) ● Blog Comments ● Written, audio, video messages posted on social networking sites ● Wikis ● Twitter/mini-blogging ● Voice board ● Audio/video hosting sites ● Digital audio/video recording ● Slideshare or Slideboom, etc. ● Flickr, photosharing sites
Coaching	● Expert, Mentors, Experienced colleagues provide examples of effective practices via webinar and online conference ● Online discussions of problem solving samples, sharing experiences	
Scaffolding	● Experts provide help ● Computer conferencing with experts and peers ● Providing problem solving strategies	
Articulation	● Online questioning and answering ● Online discussion ● Writing blog/wiki entries ● Creating audio/video journal ● Twittering	
Reflection	● Reflecting on what was shared ● Comparison of own solutions/methods with expert and/or peer solutions/suggestions/comments	
Exploration	● Online exploration strategies ● Constant availability of tools and instructional library (archive of audio/video recordings available online)	

Modeling can be performed in online using various forms and tools. Audio/Video conferencing allow mentors, teachers, experts, or experienced colleagues to show their mentees, students, or less experienced peers how something is done and how the task can be

completed. They can make use of a mixture of presentational skills to make the online meeting more productive and interactive. Powerpoint slides or pictures can be shared to show the step-by-step process. An audio or video recording can also be used to deliver the modeling process.

Coaching and Scaffolding can also be done via audio/video conferencing after modeling the process. With Web 2.0 tools, these two approaches can be done asynchronously via exchanging of emails, posting messages on blogs, wikis, online group discussion boards, audio/voice forum, etc. The process of coaching and scaffolding can be performed over an extended period of time and could be flexibly integrated in the learning process. The immediacy of sending and receiving feedback or comments/suggestions is one of the advantages of Web 2.0. The continuity and ease of access to provide help is just a mouse click away.

With blogs, wikis, and other formats allow users to post audio/video/written entries; these tools provide the means to articulate what they are thinking or feeling at any given time. They could document the process of their learning activity from start to finish. Treating these tools like a journal gives them a medium of their choice to reflect on their actions in relation to the task or activity that they needed to complete.

Teachers can easily explore a task or activity on their own using the Internet. Web search

engines provide a massive source of information. Doing action research where teachers need

to videotape a class activity can be done using a digital camera; the video file can be shared

with others using email, via sites that host audio/video files i.e. youtube, blip.tv, etc., or by

burning it on a CD-rom. Sites like youtube, blip.tv, etc. automatically give the user an embed

code that he/she could use to embed files on his/her blog or social networking sites.

2.9 E-Mentoring

With the increasing popularity of Internet technologies, current educational trends show

a steady shift towards the integration of such technologies that altered the way mentoring

programmes are delivered and practiced (Gutke & Albion, 2008). Various mentoring models

have been restructured making them flexible to allow greater opportunities for teachers to

participate beyond the borders time, location, and even cultures (Single & Muller, 2001).

Online mentoring, also referred to as e-mentoring, telementoring, webmentoring, is defined

by O'Neill, Wagner, & Gomez (1996) as the "use of email or computer conferencing systems

to support a mentoring relationship when a face-to-face relationship would be impractical" (p.

39). Bierema & Merriam (2002) provide a more detailed definition of e-mentoring as "a

computer mediated, mutually beneficial relationship between a mentor and a protégé which

provides learning, advising, encouraging, promoting, and modeling, that is often boundaryless,

egalitarian, and qualitatively different than traditional face-to-face mentoring (p. 214). They add that the multiple types of computer-mediated communication, i.e., email, discussion board or listserv, webchats, webconferences, blogs, web-based learning platforms can facilitate the mentoring process. Based on their research findings, DeWert, Babinski & Jones, (2003) posit a successful online mentoring "increased emotional support, decreased feelings of isolation, increased confidence as teachers, more enthusiasm for work, increased reflection, ability to adopt a more critical perspective, and improved problem solving skills" (p. 317). Below is an example of a free online teacher professional development that is offered yearly where cognitive apprenticeship and the models of professional development are put into practice.

2.10 Electronic Village Online Professional Development Sessions

With the advancement of Internet technology, teachers find it necessary to expand their knowledge and enhance their technological skills to be able to effectively integrate technology into their teaching. One of the traditional ways of doing this is by attending local and/or international conferences e.g. TESOL or IATEFL. However, attending such conferences does not come cheap; airfare and lodging, plus conference fees can be very expensive. For some teachers, the cost is more than their monthly salary, and may not have

access to other sources of funding, thus finding it impossible to travel and participate in traditional forms of professional development. Recognizing these constraints, the CALL-IS took advantage of the availability of technology and the advancements of online distance learning courses and came up with an idea of bringing a similar-high caliber TESOL colloquia, forums, discussions, and workshops to teachers all over the world thru the Electronic Village Online (Hanson-Smith & Bauer-Ramazani, 2004). As was mentioned earlier, the EVO is a six-week session (from January- February) offered entirely online to language teachers worldwide every year. Usually there are about 10-12 sessions offered, and some of these sessions are also presented at the TESOL annual convention. So how different is EVO from other online professional development courses?

2.10.1 How EVO Differs

One of the biggest differences is that EVO sessions are free and are offered by educators/language teachers who have vast experiences and are considered experts in using Web tools as part of their language instructions and/or knowledgeable enough on topic/s of their EVO session. These EVO moderators are volunteers, so are the EVO coordinators and participants. There are no course fees and participants are not graded. Although there is no money involved, the process of vetting EVO proposals, training of EVO moderators,

publication of Call for Participation, and the way the actual sessions are conducted adhere to the same professional quality TESOL colloquia, discussions, and workshops are known for. The EVO sessions are not formally sponsored by an institution, nonetheless the structural and core features of EVO follow a highly structured outline of events from proposal vetting, moderator training, and the detailed line-up of the weekly activities. Most of the discussions and hands-on workshops are geared towards providing the teachers with the knowledge and skills that they could personally apply in their own teaching contexts. EVO participants (also teachers and professionals in their own right) who voluntarily signed in the free sessions are advised early on to participate in a few sessions to maximize their involvement and benefit from their experience.

2.10.2 Training, E-mentoring, Cognitive Apprenticeship in EVO

The EVO coordinators send out a Call for Proposals (CfP) in July; guidelines,[4] i.e., title for the session, abstract (description of the session), and week-by-week outline of activities, regarding proposal format and deadlines. Submitted proposals are then vetted, and moderators are notified whether their proposals are accepted or not by the end of September. Accepted proposals are immediately notified about the EVO coordinators' comments and suggestions for improvements on their syllabus (session description and weekly outline of activities),

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[4] http://evosessions.pbworks.com/CfP, because EVO is under the wings of TESOL CALL-IS, it is a requirement that at least one moderator should be a TESOL member.

which they could refine during the EVO training period, and they are made aware who their EVO mentor/s will be. During the training, the EVO coordinators also serve as mentors for the moderators, and past EVO moderators are also invited to mentor new/incoming moderators. The mentors will be the contact person if they needed help with the technology that they plan to use in their respective session i.e. setting up their session platform (a wiki, Yahoo! Group, Ning, Grouply, etc., where main communications and distribution of learning resources will take place), training on e-moderation and facilitation, hands-on training on synchronous webconference (i.e. how to use Elluminate, WizIQ, etc. as a virtual conference room), etc. EVO Moderators undergo a 5-week training[5] where they get to hone their skills needed for effective online moderation. They also have the opportunity to try out new tools that they could use in their own respective session such as webinar or video/audio conference platform for synchronous meetings or presentation; it is also a chance to familiarize themselves with the use of Yahoo! Group as the main platform for asynchronous discussions or learning/course management system (LMS/CMS).

During the first week of the EVO Moderators' training, discussions are based on the required readings about e-moderation, papers on EVO and what makes it unique, articles and practical applications of online presentation skills, tips and tricks in engaging online participants, etc. Moderators are reminded that the participants are also busy teachers who

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[5] http://evo-training.pbworks.com/

probably may not have enough time to go through the planned activities for the session, and would be active in the first couple of weeks and then lurk towards the end. Lurkers have their own personal reasons why they no longer participate as they used to, but it does not mean that they do not read the discussion messages or follow through the events. Having all the materials i.e. syllabus, required readings, links, etc. archived in the Yahoo! Group allows them to peruse these files whenever they have got the chance. From Week 1 to Week 5 of the EVO training gives them the chance to experience how it is to be 'participants' in a course/session, and in a way provides them with the chance to reflect on what they expect from a good moderator. The EVO coordinators work hard to exemplify what effective online moderators/facilitators should be, and the training itself becomes a stage for showing how to conduct dynamic asynchronous and synchronous discussions, how to facilitate online conversations, how to attend to participants' questions, etc. Weekly benchmarks are given to guide EVO moderators with the weekly tasks and they also serve as reminders for deadlines, etc. They are also encouraged to visit other EVO sessions' Yahoo! Groups or session platform and look at how they were set up, how creative the sessions' logos are, how impressive the list of guest speakers is, etc. Observing that other moderators work hard on their sessions makes them critical of what they are doing and how they are performing in their own session preparation. By the end of the training, sessions which have incomplete syllabus, materials or

readings to be used for their session that are not readily available on their session's Yahoo!

Group or discussion platform, wikis to be used as course/session webpage, etc. will not be

offered. Announcements of the Call for Participation are made in early December and

registration for the sessions is in early January. Participants are advised to enroll in not more

than 2-3 sessions so they could devote their time and energy, and truly benefit from these

sessions.

An online survey is given out to EVO moderators before and after the training. This is to

help the coordinators evaluate what the moderators' needs are and to help them to be able to

meet these needs during the training. The post-training survey provides the EVO coordinators

with an assessment on how they managed the training; survey results are used to evaluate the

performance of the coordinators and give them ideas for improvement. The EVO sessions are

great examples of effective online professional development for language teachers. The rigid

process involved in training moderators and over-seeing a successful delivery of the EVO

sessions, i.e., implementation of the activities based on a well thought-out syllabi is a case in

point that online professional development requires the same (or even better) planning and

strategies involved as in traditional teacher professional development. The roles of mentors

and mentees are clearly exemplified in the EVO training; a successful relationship throughout

the session (from training to completion of EVO session) can have a positive effect on the

moderators. Some of the comments and feedback made by the EVO moderators about their

mentors, training, and the EVO sessions in general are shown in Table 2.13. Included in the

report is some feedback from the EVO participants which describe how the coordinators and

moderators practiced the principles of cognitive apprenticeships in online environments.

Some elements of an effective CoP were also at play here i.e. collaboration, sharing of

knowledge, sense of belonging to a community, learning and practice, and multiciplity of

places to learn and socialize.

Table 2.13: Comments and Feedback on EVO Moderators and Sessions

Comments and Feedback on EVO Moderators and Sessions	
Moderator Feedback	You (EVO Coordinators as mentors) are an amazing resource -- a model and inspiration -- thank you! I hope I will feel more a resource of help (rather than a resource of generating confusion, as I so often feel now!) in the future -- to give back in a worthwhile, meaningful way. Thank you!
Enhancing Lessons Session	We would like to thank the EVO moderating team for their dedication and sharing. We benefited greatly from the training, resources and advice of the group.
Conflict Resolution Session	Although participation tailed off after session 3, the 'attendance' was still good --participants varied from week to week, with a solid core of approx. ten participants. [Moderator] was very helpful - thank you [name deleted] - and tolerant of our lack of ingenuity. The feedback was extremely enthusiastic. Grateful, and keen to continue sharing ideas

(Taken from the EVO Report submitted and presented at the CALL-IS Committee Meeting in TESOL 2009, Denver[6])

In this section, I discussed what EVO is about and how the coordinators and moderators

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[6] http://evosessions.pbworks.com/Call_for_Participation09

practice the principles of cognitive apprenticeship, and how positive relationships between

mentors, mentees, and participants form a strong sense of online community by the end of the

EVO sessions. Both the Webheads in Action and EVO are great examples of online

professional development practices. It is clear from the feedback and comments received that

teacher learning took place.

Using the TPD measurement given by Desimone, teacher change could be evaluated

using the knowledge and skills they learned as a result of their participation in EVO. There

are two groups of teachers involved: the EVO session moderators and the EVO session

participants. The EVO session moderators learned from the outcomes of the moderators'

training provided by the EVO coordinators who served as e-mentors. Products of the

moderators' learning outcomes could be measured using the 1) weekly benchmarks given to

identify which areas (technical or content) in the session-preparation training were fully

accomplished, 2) the online tools that they needed to set-up and get-ready prior to the actual

session kick-off, and 3) the manner in which they executed their e-mentoring and

e-facilitation skills that guided the success of their session can be seen from the

communications with participants, organization of live events and/or hands-on workshop

from planning to execution, etc.

For EVO session participants, their learning as an outcome of their participation in an

EVO session could be measured using 1) their performance in the completion of the weekly tasks provided by the moderators, 2) their level of participation in online discussions, 3) quality of responses given, and 4) quality of the produced-work e.g. blog, wiki, lesson plan, e-brochure, etc. During the 6-week session, EVO participants get to learn and acquire new skills and knowledge (which vary based on the purpose and objectives of each session). Although EVO coordinators and moderators could only see the session-learning outcomes of the active participants, the materials used in the session and links to the recordings of live discussions were still made available to participants, which they could peruse whenever their time permits. What the EVO coordinators could not measure was/is the impact of their (session participants) participation and acquired knowledge and skills on their EFL/ESL class, specially to those sessions where skills such as creation of online writing tools (blogs, google docs, or wikis) could be used in teaching EFL writing, or podcasting (audio/video recording & online sharing) can be used in teaching EFL speaking/conversation skills. In other words, if Guskey's model of teacher change is to be applied what effect did they (learned skills and knowledge from EVO) have on students' learning?

2.11 Approach and Selection of Teacher Professional Development Models

The focus of this research was primarily aimed at Taiwanese EFL teachers in the private supplementary schools who were/are often marginalized in the workplace and have little access to TPD. As mentioned in Chapter 1, there is a gap in the local EFL system that is brought about by this marginalization which has influenced the kind of professional development and teacher training these teachers receive. The aim of this study was to facilitate an effective online teacher professional development (oTPD) using various tools that would support 1) the successful planning, designing, organizing, implementing of oTPD , and facilitate its delivery over a period of time, 2) the transfer and construction of teacher knowledge and skills that would have direct implications on teachers' practice and on EFL students' learning (Gutskey, 2002), and 3) the social interaction and collaborative efforts of local and international teachers in the oTPD process. The underlying research philosophy in choosing the approach and selection of TPD models that allowed the facilitation of oTPD to Taiwanese EFL teachers in private language supplementary schools was constructivist in nature since the whole process required the involvement and support of the invited guest mentors/experts, teachers, and the TPD provider. The constructivist paradigm maintains a strong view that humans as research subjects are complex (Guba & Lincoln, 2005), and as Phillips (1992 in Gliner & Morgan, 2000) states, "…to understand or explain why a person

has acted in a particular manner, the meaning (or meanings) of the action have to be uncovered - and to do this the roles of language and of social symbolisms and values have to be taken into account" (p. 17). Crotty (1998) argues that meaning is "being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context… In the constructionist view, as the word suggests, meaning is not discovered but constructed." (p. 42). Engaging in TPD activity, social interactions and discussions helped in the construction of knowledge and transfer of learning into practice, which ultimately built a strong connection between all stakeholders; this approach is very much coherent with the principles of constructivism. The oTPD that was facilitated in this study, therefore, helped construct new pedagogies and ways of practice, which enhanced the teachers' skills and developed their expertise. A number of professional development models consistent with a constructivist approach were used, and the final part of this chapter provides a rationale for their selection.

2.11.1 Rationale for the Models

Since the oTPD conducted in this study was not sponsored by any institution or organization, it is categorized as an informal TPD. However, by using Garett et al's (2001) structural and core features of effective traditional professional development framework as a

pattern for this study's oTPD design, it showed that facilitating an informal oTPD can be a planned, structured, and coordinated TPD effort. By following the same structural components and applying them in online environments allowed me to plan 1) the activities (webinars, asynchronous discussions in various social groups and networks, blogging, e-mentoring, coaching, etc.), 2) the duration or the length (number of hours for webinars, weeks/months for the asynchronous discussions) of the activities that will permit that integration of what the teachers learned into their practice, and 3) the collaborative participation of international mentors/experts and Taiwanese teachers. The same core features were also used in designing the 1) content of the oTPD (knowledge and skills the Taiwanese teachers would be learning, e.g. how to teach writing to young learners), 2) active learning (which involved meaningful discussions, class observations, reflections, etc.), and 3) achieving coherence where the oTPD experience is consistent with the teachers' personal and/or professional learning goals, i.e. enhancing pedagogical skills to become effective EFL teachers. Following this framework require active participation from both mentors and the Taiwanese EFL teachers. Due to the voluntary nature of the EFL teachers' participation in this study, it was assumed that teachers were self-determined to engage in oTPD. Teacher experts from the Webheads CoP and EVO were invited to serve as e-mentors; their participation in the oTPD process was also voluntary. The level of collaboration and quality of e-mentoring were

very much patterned to the Webheads' way of sharing, providing help, and engaging in collegial collaborative discussions, which are highly consistent with the constructivist paradigm; As Lincoln & Guba (2000) posit constructivists "desire participants to take an increasingly active role in nominating questions of interest for any inquiry and in designing outlets for findings to be shared more and widely within and outside the community." (p. 175).

The use of Brown et al's (1989) cognitive apprenticeship and applying it in online environments allowed me to examine how 1) modeling, coaching, scaffolding and e-mentoring were applied in the oTPD process, 2) the various methods which the Taiwanese EFL teachers availed themselves of in articulating their needs, thoughts, feelings, and opinions with the other local teachers and mentors, 3) how they analyzed and reflected on their teaching and their participation in the oTPD activities, and 4) how they practiced their exploration skills, i.e. transferring what they have learned from the mentors into practice by creating learning activities for their students, changing their instructional practices, etc.

This study also used Desimone's (2009) conceptual framework as a measurement tool in assessing the effectiveness of the oTPD implemented in this study, i.e. what kind of knowledge or skills were learned as a result of their oTPD experience, whether there were there any changes in their instruction, and any improvements in student learning. Guskey's

(2002) model of teacher change was also used to provide evidence of how teacher learning

affected the student learning and whether the teachers' attitudes and beliefs changed as a

result of that experience.

To implement the measures   mentioned above (Brown, et al's (1989) cognitive

apprenticeship, Desimone's (2009) conceptual framework, and Guskey's (2002) model of

teacher change), participant observation (during asynchronous discussions, synchronous

webinars, class observations, etc.) was necessary. Observation is a method used by

constructivists, and it requires interpretative and qualitative analysis of the interactions in a

social setting (Henwood, 1996). In this study, observations (of the webinars and teachers'

class observations) were video recorded and archived for data analysis. The use of video

recordings to evaluate teaching practices is commonly adopted by educational practitioners

doing qualitative studies (Tochon, 1999); qualitative research methods focus on analyzing and

observing subjects/participants' perspectives and, almost always, make use of case studies of

specific situations (Wallace, 1987).

Selwyn (2010) argues that research that provides "credible evidence of the assumed

educational benefits associated with social media use is hard to come by" (p. 4). A report on

the workshop "Enhancing Professional Development for Teachers' Potential Uses of

Information Technology" the Center for Education supports the claim that empirical research

is needed to know what sort of learning teachers gain in oTPD; specifically, "Do they learn mainly content knowledge, values, new perspectives on teaching, or gain a better understanding of how their students are learning and where they are in the learning continuum?" (p. 25). In a webinar presented by Treacy (2010) on Web 2.0 and TPD sponsored by edweek.org, she shared five lessons from EdTech Leaders Online that Web 2.0 and oTPD should enable the following:

1. PD to be extended over time *(intensive, ongoing, connected to practice)*
2. Teachers to implement what they're learning in the classroom *(focused on student learning)*
3. Strong focus on content and pedagogy through rich readings, multimedia activities, online explorations *(address teaching of specific curriculum content)*
4. Capacity building approaches with local educators leading the PD *(align with school improvement priorities and goals)*
5. *Learning community* models with rich online discussions with participants and facilitator *(build strong working relationships among teachers)*

The oTPD framework and models used in this study share the same characteristics mentioned by Treacy (ibid); they were on-going and sustained, practical and directly related to local classroom practice and student learning, collaborative and involved the sharing of knowledge, and participant driven, which make the approach in the selection of TPD models constructivist in nature.

In the next chapter, I will be discussing the quantitative and qualitative methods of data gathering used in this study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter I describe the research methods (Section 3.1) used in this study, which entailed looking at both qualitative (Section 3.2.3) and quantitative data (Section 3.2.2). The data were gathered using triangulation (Section 3.2.1), which allowed me to validate the results from three various sources: questionnaires (Section 3.2.2.1), class observations (Section 3.2.3.3), and electronic discourse (Section 3.2.3.4), which includes computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools used in the discussions or communications with Taiwanese EFL teachers in buxiban/supplementary schools: web conference/meeting transcripts, blog entries and blog visitors'/readers' comments, E-mail correspondence, archived chat activity in a list-serv/ Yahoo! Group, and messages posted on Facebook social network. The preparation (planning the teacher professional development), collection, and method of analysis for qualitative data are discussed in Sections 3.3 to 3.7.

3.1 Research Methods

The blending of quantitative and qualitative research methods is nothing new, and it has been suggested by Becker (1998) and Creswell (2003) that research requires either qualitative, quantitative, or a mixture of both data. However, quantitative and qualitative methods derive from quite different and apparently incommensurable research philosophies. Quantitative

methods presuppose a positivist paradigm, which supports the idea that "all knowledge comes from experience with a knowable, unchangeable reality" (Clark, n.d., par. 4). Based on this assumption that reality is concrete and factual, the goal is to present the research findings as objective as possible. Thus, the preferred approach is quantitative in nature, which entails the use of statistics in measuring and testing hypotheses. It also requires numerical reporting and quantitative analysis to achieve generalizations across research populations (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). On the other hand, the use of qualitative methods is usually underpinned by a constructivist paradigm, in which reality is viewed as subjective and socially constructed by people active in the research process. Unlike positivist paradigm, which aims to be objective in reporting and analyzing research findings, the constructivist researcher's goal according to Mertens (2010) is to "understand the multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge" (p. 18). Constructivists prefer modes of data collection that are more personal and interactive; thus, interviews, observations, case study designs, and document reviews are the primary methods used. In constructivist paradigm, objectivity in the data, interpretations, and results is substituted by confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Mertens (ibid) posits that "data can be tracked to their sources, and the logic uses to assemble interpretations can be made explicit in the narrative" (p. 19). Constructivist researchers provide explicit descriptions of research contexts, which also emphasize understanding and analysis of qualitative data. Nevertheless, I

agree with King, Keohane, & Verba (1994) who posit that "the best [research] often combines

features of each (p. 5), and both methods can be used in the same research effectively (Strauss

& Corbin, 1990). In this longitudinal research study, I made use of both qualitative and

quantitative approaches because 1) they were useful as they addressed the research questions of

this study, 2) they allowed me to be more confident of the results and findings of the study, and 3) they

provided me creative ways of collecting data. In determining which, when, where, and how the

data will be gathered Grinnell & Unrau (2008) suggest that it is highly important to look at

the research questions and the purpose of research as they should be able to guide the data

collection process. The following are the five research questions that guided how the

collection of data for this study would be administered and which methods would be used:

1. What are the Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and practices toward professional development?
2. How and to what extent can Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Web 2.0 tools be integrated in the collaborative professional development activities for Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers' professional development?
3. What aspects are enhanced in Taiwanese EFL teachers' learning and professional development as the principles of cognitive apprenticeship (modeling, coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection, and exploration) take place in online environments?
4. What is the role of ICT and Web 2.0 in helping Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers translate new knowledge into practice?
5. Have buxiban/supplementary school Taiwanese teachers' attitudes, behavior, and practices changed as a result of participating in online teacher professional development activities?

Looking at the first research question, a survey questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was necessary to be able to gather the required information. The self-developed questionnaire contained both closed and open questions, which produced data that were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The answers provided by the respondents should be able to provide a descriptive account of what their attitudes, beliefs, and practices are towards teacher professional development, i.e. teacher quality, instructional skills, English language skills and proficiency, etc. (Details on how the survey was conducted are discussed in Section 3.2.2). Bryman (1988) posits quantitative research "is conventionally believed to be positivist in conception and orientation" (p. 18). It is designed to identify and describe the variables and how they relate with one another. It makes use of numbers and statistical methods, and analysis of data tends to be based on numerical instruments (King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994). According to Glesne & Peshkin (1992), "in quantitative research, the researcher's role is to observe and measure, and care is taken to keep the researcher from 'contaminating' the data through personal involvement with the research subjects" (p. 6). The researcher draws inferences from a specified population based on the processed data (Wagner & Okeke, 2009). I conducted a frequency count on responses to the open-ended questions, which made the approach quantitative and, is therefore, based on positivist paradigms (Cresswell & Clarks, 2007). However, I also used the interpretive approach when I coded and analyzed the answers,

explicating the meaning of the words or phrases and its relevance to the question. Reading the responses allowed me to form an impression whether they were of sufficient interest and value that warrant coding. In other words, analyzing the responses to open-ended questions required me to interpret the data and extract meanings from them.

Research questions two to five, on the other hand, required an in-depth look into the integration of ICT and Web 2.0 tools in buxiban/supplementary school teachers' TPD and whether the online TPD activities played an instrumental role in the transfer of knowledge (learning) and in affecting change in the teachers' behavior and students' learning. To be able to do this, a case study approach was inevitable, which allowed me to implement online TPD activities and document the process of change. The philosophical underpinnings behind the selection of qualitative research methods and methodology are based on a constructivist paradigm (see Clarks 1999) that also supports the philosophy for the selection of teacher professional development models used in this study. Qualitative research is described by Denzin & Lincoln (1994) as "being multimethod in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter" (p.2). It involves the study of the subjects/people in their natural environment or social settings and the interpretation or examination of what they think or how they behave towards something using different empirical data deriving from case study, personal experience, personal perspective, life story, narratives, interview, observation,

or interactions, etc. (Berg, 1998). The approach is highly interpretative and it is the role of qualitative researchers to look for meaning and relevance from these data (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2000). The interpretive approach is appropriate for analyzing the results from the research methods used in this study, i.e. case studies, observations, and in the analysis of the discourse that took place in 1) the classroom, 2) webinars, 3) asynchronous discussions via various Web 2.0 tools i.e. group, Facebook, e-mails, etc., and 4) blog as reflective journal. It focuses on the Taiwanese EFL teachers and the invited experts/mentors, in order to learn more about what aspects of learning and professional development as cognitive apprenticeship models take place in online environments. In class observations, the interpretive approach focuses on the Taiwanese EFL teachers to find out how they transfer what they have learned from their oTPD experience into their practice and its effect on their students. Constructivist researchers acknowledge the social construction of knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), and in this study meaningful social interactions and discussions helped in the construction of knowledge and transfer of learning into practice.

In the following section, I discuss the research methods used in this study for gathering data, the advantages of employing method triangulation, i.e. observations, questionnaire, and discourse analysis, and the rationale for using these methods in finding answers to the research questions.

3.2 Data Collection

This study made use of multiple data collection techniques and data analyses procedures (also known as multi-method) where there was a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analyses procedures. Multi-methods are generally useful to help researchers to answer their research questions, and to evaluate the validity of these findings and the interpretations and conclusions generated from them (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). Creswell and Clark (2007) in the Handbook of Mixed Methods define it as a method, which "…focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies" (p.5). Although both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analyses procedures have their strengths and weaknesses (Patton, 1990), their relationship affects the results obtained from one or both of these two techniques. Greene, Caracelli, & Graham (1989, p. 259) provide five rationales for using mixed-method designs (see Table 3.1): (1) Triangulation - to test the consistency of research findings within the same study by employing convergence and corroboration between qualitative and quantitative data; (2) Complementarity - to provide evidence of consistency and/or validity by elaborating not only the converging data but also the different features of the findings or phenomenon that comes out of the study; (3) Development - to use the research findings from one method to provide structure to the other methods; (4) Initiation - to serve as a catalyst for new research

questions or dispute findings garnered through one method; (5) Expansion - to use different

methods for different research investigations to develop or expand research parameters. Based

on their analysis, Initiation was the least common.

Table 3.1 Five Rationales for Using Mixed Method Designs

Table 3.1 Five Rationales for Using Mixed Method Designs	
Triangulation	the use of convergence and corroboration to tests the consistency of research findings within the same study
Complementarity	seeks elaboration, enhancement, illustration, clarification of the results from one method with the results from another
Development	seeks to use the results from one method to help develop or inform the other method, where development is broadly construed to include sampling and implementation, as well as measurement decisions
Initiation	seeks the discovery of paradox and contradiction, new perspectives of frameworks, the recasting of questions or results from one method with questions or results from the other method
Expansion	seeks to extend the breadth and range of enquiry by using different methods for different inquiry components

Greene, Caracelli, & Graham (1989, p. 259)

In a study conducted by Bryman (2006, cf. 1988 study), he investigated the different

ways mixed-methods research (232 social science articles) are reported in published journal

articles. He suggests a long list of uses of multi-strategy research. His findings also suggest

that "multi-strategy research provides such a wealth of data that researchers discover uses of

the ensuing findings that they had not anticipated…" and that triangulation "may be an

unanticipated consequence of conducting multi-strategy research" (p. 110). He concluded that

if both quantitative and qualitative methods are conducted, there is a high possibility that the

outcomes maybe unpredictable. Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill (2009) provide a shorter list of

Bryman's findings; the categories they used were based on the main reasons given by Bryman

(see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Reasons for Using Mixed-Methods Research

Reasons for Using Mixed-Methods Research	
Triangulation	Use of two or more independent data gathering approaches to corroborate findings within a study
Facilitation	Use of one data collection method to facilitate support to another data collection method used in the same study
Generality	Use of independent source of data to provide context to the main study
Aid interpretation	Use of qualitative data to explain relationships between quantitative variables or vice versa
Study different aspects	Use of either quantitative or qualitative to analyze macro/micro bearings of the study
Solving a puzzle	To look for alternative data collection methods if preliminary methods used provided insufficient data relevant to the study

(See Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009, p. 154; Bryman, 2006, pp. 97-114, for the full list of justifications)

Comparing Bryman's and Green et al's justifications for using mixed-methods research,

there are some striking similarities. Both Bryman and Green et al. use the term 'Triangulation'

and both studies share the same definition. Bryman's Facilitation corresponds to Green et al's

Complementarity, aside from the different terminology used: the slight difference lies on the

phrasing used to describe the categories. Bryman reiterates the phrase 'to facilitate support' in

explaining the use of one data collection method to aid the other; thus, in Facilitation,

qualitative research 'facilitates' quantitative research, quantitative research 'facilitates'

qualitative research, or vice versa. The focus on Facilitation is on the data colletion method

used, which implies the process or manner in which the method is conducted. Whereas in

Green et al's Complementarity, attention is given to the results from one method and on how they correlate with the results of the other method used. Complementarity also bears similarities with Bryman's Aid interpretation since it also looks at the data or results to establish relationships (if any) between variables. Both Initiation and Bryman's Solving a Puzzle aim at finding a resolution when data results tend to be problematic; the difference, however, is in the type of action taken. Bryman suggests looking for other suitable methods, while Green et al. propose less dramatic means, i.e. looking at a research framework from various angles, amending questions or results by looking at the questions or results from the other method. Green et al's Expansion is similar to Bryman's category of Study Different Aspects, because both suggest the use of quantitative or qualitative methods in examining the scope or significance of the study. The slight difference, again, is in the phrasing of words: Bryman used 'macro/micro bearings of the study', while Green et al., used 'breadth and range of enquiry'; both refers to how large or small in scale the relevance of the study is.

The comparison done above only included Bryman's major categories of reasons for using a mixed-method research. Drawing similarities and differences between Bryman's and Green et al's list of justifications can be challenging because Bryman's list includes a larger number of categories which were more detailed. Nonetheless, it shows that multi-method or mixed method approaches are widely used and are recommended by various scholars to study

complex social phenomena (Creswell, 2003; Plewis & Mason, 2005).

Triangulation, the data collection method used in this study will be examined in the following section.

3.2.1 Triangulation

Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2000) define triangulation as "the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behavior" (p. 112). They add that it is an "attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint…by making use of both quantitative and qualitative data" (ibid).   There are many advantages of using triangulation. First, it provides a more detailed and balanced picture of the situation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, ibid). Second, the contradictions which are often hidden in situations become visible, enabling a more profound interpretation (Altrichter, Posch, & Somekh, 1993). Third, researchers can test the elements and constructions of credibility of data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Denzin (1978) listed four types of triangulation: 1) data triangulation; 2) investigator triangulation; 3) theory (or theoretical) triangulation; and 4) method (or methodological) triangulation. In 1989 Denzin suggested a fifth type, 5) multiple triangulation. Janesick (1994) proposed another type, 6) interdisciplinary triangulation; Brown (2001) proposed two other

types, time triangulation and location triangulation, which makes them the seventh and eighth

types. These types are listed and defined in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Types of Triangulation

Types of Triangulation	
1. **Data Triangulation**	Involves the collection of data from multiple sources (usually people with different roles) for the same study
2. **Investigator Triangulation**	Involves more than one researcher in more than one methodology
3. **Theory Triangulation**	Researchers examine the same data from various theoretical perspectives
4. **Method Triangulation**	Researchers employ a variety of data gathering techniques e.g. a combination of interviews, observations, and questionnaire
5. **Multiple Triangulation**	Combinations of triangulation approaches are used
6. **Interdisciplinary Triangulation**	Researchers use the perspectives drawn from multiple disciplines e.g. language learning, education, sociology
7. **Time Triangulation**	Using multiple data-gathering occassions
8. **Location Triangulation**	Using multiple data-gathering sites

In this study, Method Triangulation was used to add validity and reliability of data and to

test the consistency of my research findings. I collected data through observation, survey

questionnaire, and electronic discourse. Employing Method Triangulation could help gather

data that would provide answers to my research questions; other types of triangulation

mentioned in Table 3.3 do not serve the purpose or focus of this study.

The various methods/instruments used in relation to the research questions of this study

are listed in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Methods/instruments of the Research Related to the Research Questions

Research Questions (RQ)	Methods/instruments
RQ1: What are the Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and practices toward professional development?	Survey Questionnaire Analysis of Electronic Discourse (Asynchronous discussions in the Taiwanese EFL Yahoo! Group, Facebook, Emails, Teachers' Blogs)
RQ2: How and to what extent can Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Web 2.0 tools be integrated in the collaborative professional development activities for Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers' professional development?	Case Study - Observation (Facilitation of the oTPD process) - Analysis of Electronic Discourse (Webinars, Asynchronous discussions in the Taiwanese EFL Yahoo! Group, Facebook, Emails, Teachers' Blogs) - Class Observations
RQ3: What aspects are enhanced in Taiwanese EFL teachers' learning and professional development as the principles of cognitive apprenticeship (modeling, coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection, and exploration) take place in online environments?	Case Study - Observation (Facilitation of the oTPD process) - Analysis of Electronic Discourse (Webinars, Asynchronous discussions in the Taiwanese EFL Yahoo! Group, Facebook, Emails, Teachers' Blogs) - Class Observations
RQ4: What is the role of ICT and Web 2.0 in helping Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers translate new knowledge into practice?	Case Study - Observation (Facilitation of the oTPD process)

	- Analysis of Electronic Discourse (Webinars, Asynchronous discussions in the Taiwanese EFL Yahoo! Group, Facebook, Emails, Teachers' Blogs) - Class Observations
RQ5: Have buxiban/supplementary school Taiwanese teachers' attitudes, behavior, and practices changed as a result of participating in online teacher professional development activities?	Case Study - Observation (Facilitation of the oTPD process) - Analysis of Electronic Discourse (Webinars, Asynchronous discussions in the Taiwanese EFL Yahoo! Group, Facebook, Emails, Teachers' Blogs) - Class Observations

In the following section, I discuss the first approach taken in this study, that of survey questionnaire.

3.2.2 Survey Questionnaire

In this study, a self-developed questionnaire (Appendix 1) was used to gather data about the Taiwanese teachers' attitudes, classroom practices, and views on professional development. According to Cohen & Cowen (2007), a survey questionnaire can be structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. Structured questionnaires are commonly used in social surveys; the design is highly structured and the same instrument (questionnaire) is

administered to all the respondents (Miller & Brewer, 2003). The questions are closed or

prompted with a set of predefined answers, thus, the researcher has to generate all possible

answers with pre-coded responses (Brown, 2001). The use of this type of questionnaire

enables the researcher to collect a huge quantity of data from a huge population. The

respondents are asked the same question and in the same manner, the responses can easily be

coded systematically and this is appropriate for quantitative data analysis. Semi-structured

questionnaires, on the other hand, are a mixture of closed and open questions; their use is

appropriate in gathering both qualitative and quantitative information (ibid). Questions found

in unstructured questionnaires often elicit free responses; the respondents are invited to write

what they want (Cohen & Cowen, 2007). The design of the questionnaire used in this study is

semi-structured with both closed and open-ended questions. The respondents were given a set

of questions and statements, and they had to respond based on what they know and on their

personal experiences. Cohen & Cowen (ibid) provide several types of questionnaire items:

closed and open questions, dichotomous questions, multiple-choice questions, rating scales,

constant sum questions, and ratio-data questions. Fink (2003) argues that, "closed questions

are considered more efficient and reliable than open- ended questions for getting information

from groups of people" (p. 35). She adds that closed questions, although preferred by

respondents because they are easier to answer, are much more difficult to write. The

researcher has to provide all the possible answers that apply to a given item. With open questions, respondents get the chance to write their views, and these statements can be used by researchers as 'quotable material' when preparing their survey report (ibid). A dichotomous question is a two-choice question, which according to McDaniel & Gates (1998) is the 'simplest form of closed question' (p. 273). It simply asks the respondents to choose between two answers, while multiple-choice questions (also known as multichotomous questions) provide the respondents a list of choices to choose from. Rating scales are commonly used in attitude measurement where respondents choose a 'descriptor from among a set that represents some sort of dimension or continuum' (Krosnick, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2005, pp. 43-44). The answers in a continuum are ordered based on a scale of importance. De Vaus (2002) provides different ways of structuring rating scales: Likert scales, horizontal rating scales, semantic differential, and vertical rating ladder. A likert scale is usually a 5-point scale which ranges from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" where respondents indicate their 'level of agreement or disagreement with a statement (p. 102). Horizontal scales asks the respondents to 'indicate with a number where, between the positions, their own view falls' on a scale of opposite attitude positions (pp. 102-103). According to Krueger (1998), semantic differential presents a 'series of spaces with opposite adjectives anchoring each side of the scale' (p. 65) where participants indicate with a check mark in the space that they believe

highly represent their views e.g. incompetent _ _ _ _ _ competent. With a vertical rating

ladder, the respondents are presented with a rating ladder; they provide a ranking for a

particular item by indicating a particular part/area of the ladder their rating falls on. According

to Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2000), in constant sum questions "respondents distribute a

given number of marks (points) between a range of items" (p. 328). Respondents have to

compare the items (answer options) given, and judge them by assigning points that would

signify which item is stronger compared to other options. Ratio data questions posit, 'deal

with continuous variables where there is a true zero' (p. 329); answer options are not given so

respondents write in the exact figure, e.g. How long have you been teaching EFL?   3 years

In the next section, I discuss the pilot survey and how it was conducted in this study.

3.2.2.1 Pilot Survey

Once the structure of the questionnaire has been completed, Brace (2008) suggests that

'it is always advisable to pilot the questionnaire before the survey goes live' (p. 174). By

piloting the questionnaire to a group of people similar to the target sample the questionnaire

has been designed for, the researcher can collect feedback about the effectiveness of the

questionnaire's structure and design, and make the necessary edits and revisions before

distributing the final version of the questionnaire (Dörnyei, 2003). According to Fink &

Litwin (2003) there are three main advantages of doing a pilot study (pp. 57-58):

1. It helps you to identify errors in the surveys
2. It allows you to learn where your survey instrument may need redesign.
3. It predicts possible problems you may encounter in using the instrument.

Months before the actual survey was administered, a pilot study was conducted to help

me refine the questions and overall design and structure of the questionnaire. The English

version of the questionnaire was piloted in October 2004. A word-file document was uploaded

in the files area of the Taiwanese EFL Teachers' Yahoo! Group, which was simultaneously

announced as soon as it was successfully uploaded. An online version of the survey using

Surveymonkey.com was also created for easy access and distribution without the need to join

the YG. The timeline below shows when the pilot study was administered (Figure 3.1):

Figure 3.1: Pilot Study Timeline

September 2004, Pilot Questionnaire Draft

October 2004, Pilot Questionnaire uploaded and distributed online via the Yahoo! Group & Surveymonkey

November 2004, Translated questionnaire in Mandarin Chinese, Revised and edited dratt

December 2004, Finalized draft
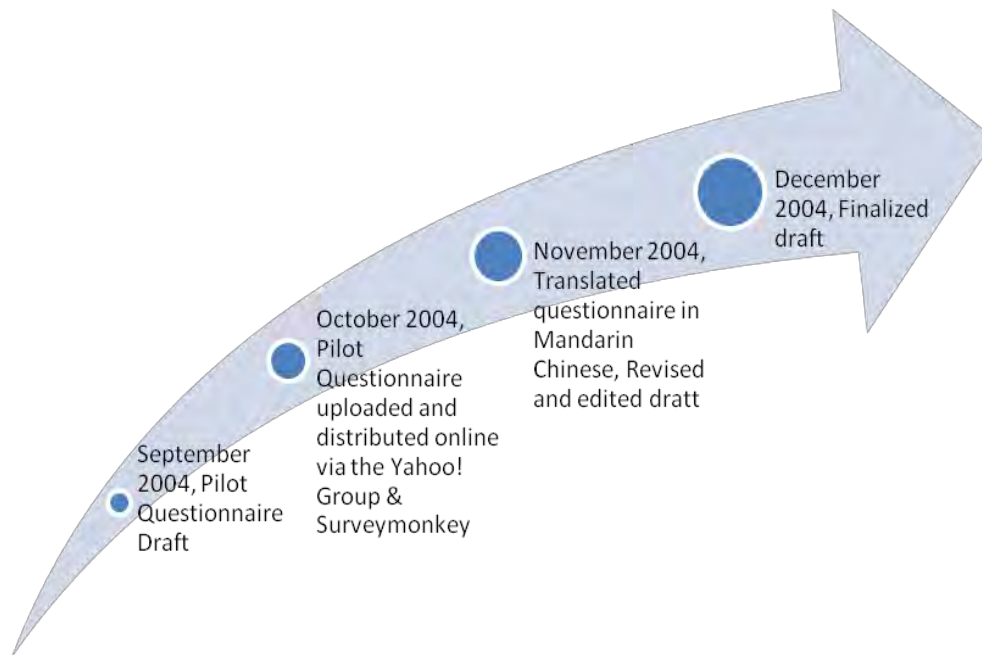
The Taiwanese EFL teachers who took the pilot survey suggested some revisions on the

survey items. In particular, a range of items that reflect the EFL teachers' instructional

methods, classroom practices, and local teacher education/training opportunities were added.

Some questions were revised to make them easier to understand; typographical and other

technical errors were also noted. The English and Chinese (bilingual) version of the

questionnaire was piloted in November 2004 and underwent further revisions, i.e. translation

of words from English to Chinese and vice versa. The list of items that were included in the

final version of the questionnaire provide 1) a general description of the Taiwanese EFL

teachers' demographic profile (age, gender, educational and professional profile); 2)

descriptive account of the teachers' occupational characteristics and practices, i.e. attitudes

and   practices   concerning   the   language   used   in   the   classroom,   teaching

methodology/pedagogical skills, teacher quality, interest in participating in teacher professional development (TPD); 3) employment history as EFL teacher; and 4) importance and satisfaction level with their employing institution's ability to provide good incentives and compensation package, and teacher training and development.

Questionnaire design and collection will be discussed in the following section.

3.2.2.2 Questionnaire Design and Collection

The survey is a longitudinal survey which was administered twice; first in 2004 and the identical survey was conducted in 2008. Random selection was used to obtain the different samples from the Taiwanese EFL teachers in the buxibans and supplementary schools (see Chapter 4). 200 questionnaires were given out both in 2004 and 2008. I administered the distribution of the survey in two ways: 1) administered directly to groups of Taiwanese EFL teachers in their workplace, and 2) adopted a snowball sampling strategy whereby key respondents also served as informants who then introduced to the researcher other potential survey respondents (friends/colleagues) who shared the same backgrounds and characteristics. The data were distributed and collected from different areas/provinces in Taiwan (from north to south). In situations where the survey was administered 'live' to a group of teachers, I was able to get the survey back almost immediately. Questionnaires that were handed out via referrals were either returned to me by the person to whom I gave the survey to or via regular

postal service since the questionnaire was enclosed in an envelope with a return postage stamp. Because all the participants were Taiwanese teachers, the survey was written in both English and Chinese to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the texts. The cover letter (see Appendix 2) attached to the questionnaire sets the context, purpose, the nature of the entire questionnaire, and ethical issues concerning their participation in the study. According to Czaja & Blair (2005) the cover letter should state "the purpose of the survey, who is the sponsor or is collecting the data, who is to complete the questionnaire, why is a response important, an assurance of confidentiality, and when to return the questionnaire' (p. 36). I also addressed, in the cover letter, key ethical issues concerning the rights of the respondents. They were informed that their participation is entirely voluntary, and they may choose not to answer some questions that make them feel uncomfortable. They were assured that anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained, and that only the researcher would have access to the data. Participants' consent was assumed granted when the questionnaire was completed and returned. In addition to this basic information, I also put in my postal and email addresses and telephone numbers in case the respondents had any questions regarding the survey.

The design of the questionnaire was constructed and organized in a way to help me gather demographic information and descriptive data concerning respondents' occupational

characteristics. Such information is necessary in understanding the Taiwanese EFL teachers' teaching context, and their attitudes and practices toward teacher professional development, which is relevant in providing answers for Research Question 1: What are the Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and practices toward professional development?

The questionnaire is composed of four parts: 1) Background Information, 2) Attitude, 3) Classroom Practices, and 4) Employment History.

Part 1 seeks to gather demographic information such as gender, age, educational level, and the number of years they have been working as English teachers in a supplementary school. The answers to these items can be correlated to find out the number of teachers who actually start teaching even before they finish college. Respondents were also asked to identify which English proficiency test/s they have taken (if there was/were any). This item was included to find out how many Taiwanese EFL teachers have taken any standardized test/s that measure their level of English proficiency. As language teachers, proof of English language proficiency is necessary and can be helpful when searching for employment. These items can yield valuable information, which tells a lot about the teaching environment and the quality of teachers in the private sector.

Part 2 looks into the Taiwanese EFL teachers' attitudes toward the language being used

in the classroom, EFL teaching methodology, teacher quality in terms of teaching qualifications, and whether or not they would be interested in participating in teacher training program or education. The answers to these items can provide information about their perceptions of various aspects of teaching; of particular interest is their attitude toward the qualifications EFL teacher s should possess. Data results can be correlated with the items in Part 3 that look into their own practice.

Part 3 aims to gather information about the teachers' classroom practices; this section begins with a question that seeks answers to what teaching goal/s is/are important to them in relation to their own particular teaching context, followed by their own teaching practices when teaching listening/speaking and reading/writing. Research findings can bring up issues of concern that need to be addressed in TPD as they have direct implications on what goes on in the classroom.

Part 4 asks respondents to provide information concerning their employment history which looks into their work status i.e. whether they teach full-time or part-time, employing institution (name of school was an optional item), number of classes that they are teaching, size of a class, number of local teachers vis-à-vis number of foreign teachers hired by the same employing institution. Open-ended questions were asked to gather teachers' opinions about the advantages of local teachers and what they think the reasons are why the school

they work for hire foreign teachers. The last question in Part 4 is a matrix (side-by-side) question which asks the teachers to rate the level of importance and satisfaction on the hiring institution's ability to communicate educational goals and strategies, to provide job-related incentives, to provide overall benefits and compensation, and to provide teacher training. Data results from the questions in Part 4 can provide an overview of the number of teachers who work part-time or full-time; this information can be correlated with the results from the importance and satisfaction matrix question and find out whether those part-time or full-time teachers feel that teacher training and job incentives on performance or development are important, and that they are either satisfied or dissatisfied with what they are actually receiving from their employing institutions. Answers to the open-ended questions can show what the teachers perceive to be the benefits of having/hiring local teachers and native speakers of English. It is interesting to see how they view themselves as EFL teachers; this can also say a lot about what they think their strengths or weaknesses are, especially with regards to accent and pronunciation. Data results from these items can be used to establish a need for oTPD.

3.2.2.3 Quantitative Data Analysis

A likert scale was used to measure the teachers' attitudes by asking them the extent to which they agree or disagree with a particular question or statement. Likert scale questions are analyzed using descriptive statistics, i.e. mode (most frequent response), and percentages that present the distribution of responses. Cronbach's α (alpha) was used to measure the internal consistency and reliability of the scales. Gap analysis was used to analyze the interaction between the scales to measure the level of importance and satisfaction in the side-by-side matrix question. Cross-tabulations were conducted in looking at the association between their satisfaction levels on various attributes and their employment status, and a chi-square test was conducted to check whether these differences were real or due to chance variation. The computations were further cross-classified by adding the type of school (employing institution) to clearly see how many of these satisfied/unsatisfied teachers actually worked at family-owned/individual owned schools or franchised schools. To test the strength of the relationship of this correlation between the three variables, symmetric measures were conducted based on the chi-square statistical results. And finally, Independent-Samples T-Tests were used to compare the responses from the two groups (Survey 1 and 2) on satisfaction levels and willingness to participate in TPD, and Levene's Test was performed to test the assumption that the variances of the two groups are equal. I conducted a frequency

count on responses to the open-ended questions. I also used the interpretive approach when I coded and analyzed the answers, explicating the meaning of the words or phrases and its relevance to the question.

In the following section, I will discuss the process of qualitative data preparation, and how they were collected, and analyzed.

3.2.3 Qualitative Data: Case Study

The qualitative data in this study were gathered using exploratory multiple case studies where two Taiwanese EFL teachers in buxiban/supplementary schools agreed to take part in both asynchronous and synchronous TPD activities and classroom-based research, and a focus-group made up of 30 Taiwanese EFL teachers who agreed to take part in the asynchronous TPD.

A case study is a research method that emphasizes elaborate and specific contextual analysis of a single of limited number of cases (events or conditions) and their relationships (Stake, 1995). Yin (1984) defines it as an empirical inquiry that examines a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context by using multiple sources of evidence; Yin (1994, p. 20) presents four applications for a case study model:

1. To explain complex causal links in real-life interventions
2. To describe the real-life context in which the intervention has occurred
3. To describe the intervention itself
4. To explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear set of outcomes.

Researchers and social scientists interested in investigating existing present-day real-life situations make use of the case study method as it allows them to look into the details of specific situations that are not easily available in numerical analysis (Cohen et al, 2000). A number of researchers have used the case study research method across diverse disciplines (Gerring, 2007). Yin (2003) has identified some specific types of case studies: Exploratory, Explanatory, and Descriptive. Exploratory cases are sometimes considered as a prelude to social research. Explanatory case studies may be used for doing causal investigations, or when determining the 'feasibility of the desired research procedures' (p.5). Descriptive cases require a comprehensive description of the study (phenomenon) within its context, while explanatory case study presents cause-effect relationships, providing an explanation of the process or how things happened. In addition to these three, Stake (1995) included three other types: Intrinsic – researcher shows interest in the case; Instrumental – the researcher uses the case study to describe what was not obvious to the observer; Collective - a group of cases is used in the study. Yin (ibid) posits that in all these types of case studies, single-case or multiple-case applications can be used. Feagin, Orum, & Sjoberg (1991) state that one feature of the case study is that it generally calls for a triangulated research strategy (see Section

3.3.1); this can be performed by making use of multiple sources of data (Yin, 1984).

According to Wadsworth (1997, p. 56) data from a case study can be generated by using any

of these data collection methods: Interviews, Questionnaires, Observation, and Self-written

accounts (Diaries/Journals). The suggestions provided by Stake (1995), Yin (1984), and

Wilson (2009) regarding the organization and the process in which the study can be

effectively conducted all share the same strategies listed in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Strategies for Effective Implementation of Case Studies

Strategies for Effective Implementation of Case Studies
● Determine and define the research questions
● Select the cases and determine data gathering and analysis techniques
● Prepare to collect the data
● Collect data in the field
● Evaluate and analyze the data
● Prepare the report

(cf. Wilson, 2009, p. 207)

There are two main strengths of case study research: its ability to investigate 'how and why'

questions (Yin, 1989) and the amount of time researchers spends in contact with the subjects

(Stake, 2000).   Using case studies enabled me to study the research context (Taiwanese EFL

teachers' professional development) and situation from its natural setting (in

buxibans/supplementary schools) and to be able to generate thematic patterns from actual

practice. A case study approach, therefore, allows researchers to look into complex social

units that are important in understanding social processes i.e. educational or learning

processes, problems, or innovations (Merriam, 1998). Lee & Yarger (1996) claim that the use

of case study in investigating the effects of teacher education programs on teachers'

knowledge and skills provide researchers the ability to gauge and describe the changes (if any)

in their (teachers') teaching practices in different settings and stages.

3.2.3.1 Selecting the Cases

Bogdan & Biklen (1982) characterize a case study model as a funnel where the

teacher-researcher starts the study at the wide end of the funnel searching for people or places

as possible sources of data that would provide valuable information regarding the topic being

investigated. Criteria for selection of participants in the case study were based on Patton's

(1990) definition of purposeful sampling:

> "…to select information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under
> study ... The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich
> cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a
> great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the
> term purposeful sampling."   (p.169)

The selection of participants was based on determining which teachers were most likely to

provide substantial knowledge and insights which would contribute to a better understanding

of the process of online TPD and its effects on teacher change and students' learning. Using

Patton's (ibid) taxonomy of purposeful sampling, the selection of case study participants can be described as based on homogeneous, criterion, and snowball or chain sampling. Homogeneous sampling strives to select elements from a particular subgroup to be investigated in depth. According to Tashakkori & Teddlie (2003) studies that make use of focus group interviews normally employ this method to collect opinions from people who share the same demographic, educational, or professional characteristics. This minimizes variation and makes the analysis simpler. Since this study focuses on Taiwanese teachers, it automatically homogenizes the ethnic description of the participants. Criterion sampling allows the researcher to 'review and study all cases that meet predetermined criterion of importance' (Patton, 1990, p. 56). To be selected as a possible participant for this case study, teachers must meet the criteria listed in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Criteria in Choosing Case Study Subjects

Criteria in Choosing Case Study Subjects
■ Must be of Taiwanese ethnicity (regardless of gender)
■ Practicing EFL teacher in buxiban/supplementary school (part-time or full-time)
■ Must have access to computer with Internet access
■ Must have basic knowledge in computing and Internet skills
■ Must be willing to participate in online TPD activities

Snowball or chain sampling was also applied to help me recruit the right people to be my case study subjects. Knight (2002) calls the snowballing sampling a kind of 'opportunity' sampling where the researcher locates informants who could provide name/s of people who could be

representative of the population that the researcher is investigating (p. 122). Following this

approach, I asked colleagues, peers, English major students, etc. who could provide me with

leads in locating Taiwanese EFL teachers in buxiban/supplementary schools who might show

interest in participating in this study. Another important source of connection was the online

group created via Yahoo! Groups for Taiwanese EFL teachers. An invitation to join the online

group was sent by email to EFL teachers in buxiban/supplementary schools; the email

message contained a web link to the YG[7] which was forwarded to EFL teachers in

buxiban/supplementary schools.

3.2.3.2 Participants

There were two groups of Taiwanese EFL teachers whose contributions to this study

were observed and analyzed: 1) the 'asynchronous' focus group on Taiwanese EFL teachers

Yahoo! Group (YG) and 2) two case study subjects, Joy and Cindy, for both synchronous and

asynchronous online TPD and classroom-based research. The first group of teachers was

those who joined the Taiwanese EFL teachers' YG on November 15, 2003. These were the

teachers who were willing to engage in online professional development through

asynchronous discussions on various topics related to their work as EFL teachers. In the early

stages of this group, recruiting teachers was done by sending out an invitation letter to join the

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[7] URL: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/taiwanese_efl_teachers/

YG, which emphasized the benefits of participating in the group and what their contributions

could mean to my study. Friends, colleagues, and other teachers who joined the group were

requested to pass on the information and web link to other EFL teachers whom they thought

would benefit from this endeavor as long as they fit the criteria (Table 3.4). Participating

teachers were made aware that any contributions to the discussion would be used as data for

my study. Thus, consent to participate in the study was made as soon as they joined and

became a member of the Taiwanese EFL Teachers YG. My role in this online group was that

of an overt participant (cf. Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993) because I was able to participate in the

discussions, and the members of this group knew that I was conducting a research and that

their participation and contributions to the discussions would be used as data in my study.

Teachers were free to post anything that would spark dialogue and sharing of opinions. As

soon as teachers signed up, self-introductions were made and discussions regarding EFL

teaching in Taiwan took off (see Figure 3.2). It was also through this YG that the survey

questionnaire was piloted and where I tried to scout for possible case study subjects for both

synchronous and asynchronous online TPD; these were teachers who would be willing to

undergo class observations. A call for participation was made, and the snowball method of

recruiting subjects was put into action.

Figure 3.2: Taiwanese Teachers' YG oTPD Timeline

Taiwanese EFL Teachers' YG oTPD Timeline

November 2003 Created Taiwanese EFL Teachers' YG

Early 2004 Taiwanese EFL Teachers Joined the YG

October 2004 Pilot Questionnaire Distributed to Taiwanese EFL Teachers' YG

December 2004 Informed Taiwanese EFL Teachers' YG List of Focus-group discussions

January-April 2005 Focus-group Discussions with Webheads/Experts
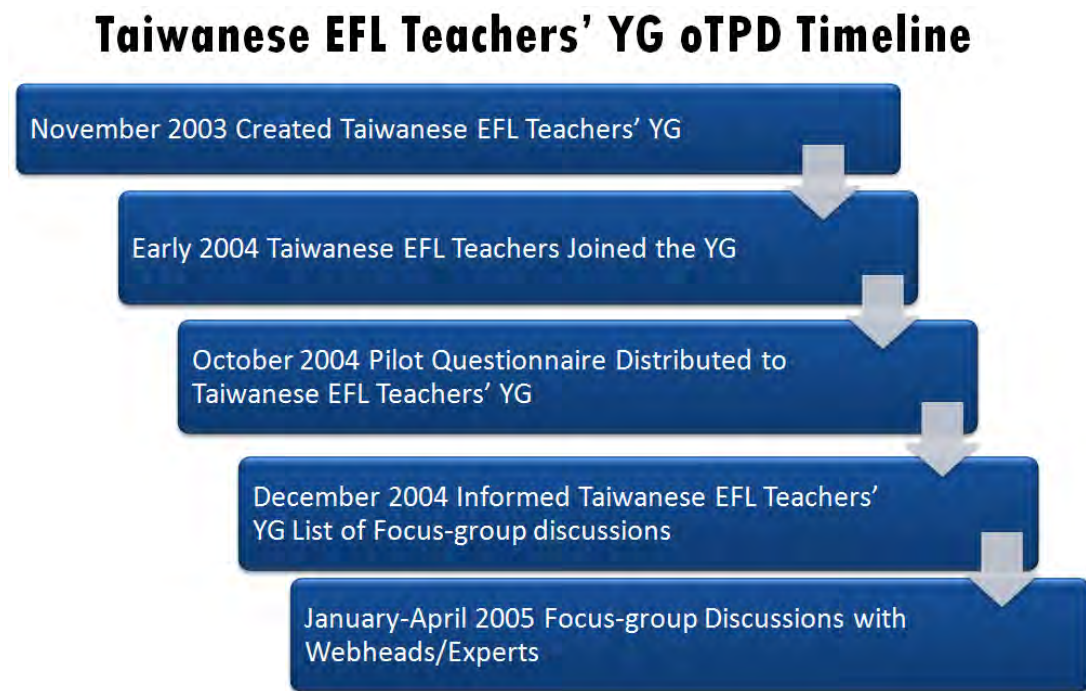
Joy, the first case study subject agreed to participate and was invited to join the YG. She signed up to the group on January 25, 2005. The initial consent was made via an email message posted to the YG stating her willingness to fully participate in the synchronous and asynchronous professional development activities (i.e. pre and post online web-conference class observations and blogging as part of the reflection process) planned for this study (see Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3: Joy's oTPD Timeline

Joy's oTPD Timeline

Taiwanese EFL Teachers' YG
- January 25, 2005 Joined Taiwanese Teachers' EFL YG
- January to April 2005 Participated in Taiwanese EFL Teachers' YG Focus-Group Asynchronous Discussions

Synchronous Discussions
- June 17, 2005 Synchronous Meeting Trial-run with Webheads
- June 25, 2005 Synchronous Discussions with Webheads/Experts

Blog
- February 5, 2005 Created blog
- February to June 2005 Posted blog entries

Feedback on Post Online Session and Post-second classroom Observation
- June 29, 2005 Feedback received regarding post-online Session: Lessons learned
- July 9, 2005 Feedback received regarding post-second classroom observation

Classroom Observations
- June 24, 2005 Pre-online Session with Experts Classroom Observation Video Recorded
- July 1, 2005 Post-online Session with Experts Classroom Observation Video Recorded

The second case study subject, Cindy, was approached and invited to participate in late 2008 using the same snowball method. Cindy joined the YG on March 18, 2009, also finishing and completing all the tasks in the same year (see Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4: Cindy's oTPD Timeline

Cindy's oTPD Timeline

Synchronous and Asynchronous Communications

- April 8, 2009 **Online Meeting** with Expert/Experienced Teacher
- From February to September 2009 **Blog** Entries
- April to June 2009 **Emails** with Expert/Experienced Teacher
- From April to July 2009. **Terry's Comments** (5 in total) Posted on Cindy's **Blog**

February 2009 to September 2009

- March 2, 2009 **Focus Topic** (Teaching speaking to seniors) was **determined**
- March 2009 **Pre-online Session- Class Observation**
- June 2009 **Post-online Session- Class Observation**
- July 2009 **Expert Feedback on class observation**

Classroom Observation

Below is a snippet of the email message sent by Cindy confirming her participation in the study:

"Thank you very much for offering this great opportunity to me. I absolutely accept the invitation to get involved in your study group. I've signed the consent form and will give it back to you on Wednesday. I'm creating my own blog. Yes, there are some questions in my mind. When would be the very first time my blog showed up, what's the length of the passage would be proper? The contents would be relevant to my teaching experiences and classes (including former and current ones), right? I know it's a precious chance for me and I got very lucky." (Sent via email on 2-23-2009).

Both Joy and Cindy were asked to participate in classroom observation and action research.

They were asked to attend a synchronous webinar, where practicing teachers from various

countries were invited to share effective teaching practices and offer advice for the participant.

Class observations were held twice: one prior the online conference and the other was

post-conference observation. Class observations were video recorded for analysis to establish the relation between perceived role and performance, and to see how much knowledge was gained from the web conference, whether or not they were implemented in their classroom, and to gauge the effect of their practice on students' learning, if there was any. As part of their action research, they were asked to create a blog to serve as their online journal. They wrote blog entries concerning the online conference, class observations, reflections on lesson plans and class activities, and other class related events. A consent letter (Appendix 3) was prepared and given to the participants explaining to them how their participation in the study would take place.

3.2.3.3 Observation

According to Mackey & Gass (2005) collecting data using the observational method is commonly used in second language research; they posit "observations are a useful means for gathering in-depth information about such phenomena as the types of language, activities, interactions, instruction, and events that occur in second and foreign language classrooms" (p. 150). Observation requires an organized and systematic method of taking notes and the recording of behavior, events (things that are happening during the observation period), and objects/subjects (teachers/students) in the social setting (classroom) which was chosen for the research study (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The record used in observation is called 'field

notes'; they are "detailed, nonjudgmental, concrete descriptions of what has been observed, the researcher makes no special effort to have a particular role in the setting" (ibid, p. 98).

Lofland (1971 in Cohen et al, 2000, p. 188) provides suggestions on field notes collection:

- Record the notes as quickly as possible after observation
- Discipline yourself to write notes quickly…recording of field notes can be expected to take as long as is spent in actual observation
- Dictating rather than writing is acceptable…but writing has the advantage of stimulating thought
- Typing field notes is vastly preferable to handwriting because it is faster and easier to read, especially when making multiple copies
- It is advisable to make at least two copies of field notes…
- The notes ought to be full enough…to provide a reasonably vivid picture of any described event

The differentiation between the kinds of observation is based on the amount of participation the researcher puts into the activities that are being observed. According to Pole & Lampard (2002) the most commonly cited texts are those of Gold (1958) who classifies four kinds of observation, namely: Complete participant (the researcher is generally a participant), Covert participant (researcher's interaction to those being observed is very minimal, and may involve the use of video recording devices, Participant as Observer (participation is highly emphasized), or vice versa Observer as Participant (where the role of being an observer is greater than that of being a participant in the research). The roles researchers' play in Gold's (ibid) description are not clearly defined since the roles are classified and placed on a spectrum; overlapping of features make it difficult to gauge just what level of participation the researchers should have. Schutt (2006) provides a more clear-cut characterization of the various roles that researchers could adopt; these roles are

listed and defined in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7 Researchers' Roles in Observation

Covert Observer	A researcher observes others surreptitiously without participating in social interaction and does not identify herself as a researcher
Complete Observer	A researcher does not participate in group activities and is publicly defined as a researcher
Covert Participant	A researcher acts just like other group members and does not disclose her research role.
Overt Participant/True Participant Observer	A researcher publicly acknowledges herself as a researcher but nonetheless participates in group activities

(Cf. Schutt, 2006, pp. 293-294).

My role in the classroom observation was a complete observer; the observations were conducted twice: pre and post online session class observations. The observations were video recorded by the teachers (Joy and Cindy), and a copy of the video recording (on CD or DVD) was given to me after recording the session. According to Grigsby (2009), one advantage of using a (audio/video) recorder is that the researcher 'has a permanent record that can be revisited (ex post facto) for continued data analysis" (p. 426). It also improves the reliability of observations since it is much easier to observe and code using video recording equipment (Langdridge, 2004). The video recording provides teachers with the opportunity to see and hear themselves teach, to observe their own classroom environment, and to check which teaching strategy works and those that need fine tuning (Davis, 2009). According to Laker (2001), video recording is a commonly used method in investigating teacher and student

behavior in the classroom; although reviewing the recorded data can be time consuming, the video recording serves as an 'objective eye', ideal for classroom observation (p. 63). It also enables teachers and researchers to study complex teaching and learning process. Stigler, Gonzales, Kawanaka, Knoll, & Serrano (1999) state that "observers can code video in multiple passes, coding different dimensions of classroom process on each pass (p. 4)."

In the present study, there were five categories that were coded: 1) Language/s used in the classroom, 2) class management, 3) lesson plan and instructional materials used and how they were used, 4) student participation, and 5) teaching methods and strategies. Looking at these categories enabled me to capture the events that took place in the classroom, thus allowing me to see how much of the new instructional approaches that the teachers learnt from the invited experts/mentors were actually used and how much of an impact they had on the students' learning. With the video recording, I was able to go back to the process several times using the play/pause button; thus enabling me to describe the behavior of both the teacher and students in great detail. As Schratz (1992) writes about the advantage of using an audio-visual recorder as a powerful instrument in reviewing what goes on in a classroom, its use, however, can also disrupt a class as it takes some time to set up the equipment, thus making it impractical to use the device on a day-to-day basis.

In Joy's case, she spent a few minutes prior to class time in setting up the video

equipment which I lent to her. Since the video camera used was rather small (widely available and commonly used by teachers and students in Taiwan), the set-up time was relatively quick, and because of its size, it did not cause major obstruction in the classroom. I met the owners of the school prior to the recording, and I told them about the purpose of the video recording and how it would be used in my study; they later gave verbal consent to video tape Joy's class. The video equipment was placed almost at the back center of the classroom; hence the shots were mostly of Joy. For students' privacy, there were no close-up shots of the students' faces; only the hands or back of some students were shot on video.

In Cindy's case, however, she supplied the video equipment which was slightly bigger than what Joy used. She also had a volunteer who did the actual video recording. Cindy had informed the school administrator and her students about the purpose of the video recording; all gave verbal consent and students agreed to be videotaped.

Although video recordings can provide detailed information about classroom events, they cannot reveal intrinsic relationships and intangible aspects of what go on in the teacher's mind as she conducts her/his lessons (Hopkins, 2003). This is where the use of other qualitative data such as teachers' online journals or blogs and other electronic discourse play an invaluable part in complementing the data gathered from video recording devices.

Since the focus of this research is on the application of an online teacher professional

development framework, it is imperative to look into how ICT and Web 2.0 tools were used and what sort of data were gathered, and how relevant the data are in measuring change in the teachers' (case study subjects) attitudes and behavior, and on the students' learning. Electronic discourse or the conversations that took place using computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools are also part of the qualitative data that will be analyzed; they include: E-mail correspondence, computer or web conferencing transcript, blog entries and readers' comments, archived chat activity in the online group that was created for this study, and the messages that were exchanged on Facebook.

3.2.3.4 Electronic Discourse

Electronic discourse, also known as electronic communication, net speak, web communication, computer-mediated communication (CMC) (Herring, 1996), has a great impact on the way people communicate online. The different CMC discourse types can be categorized either as asynchronous or synchronous communication (Abraham & Williams, 2009). Examples of electronic discourse present in CMC environments are listed in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8: CMC Discourse Types

CMC Discourse Types	
Asynchronous	e-mail, blog entries and posted comments, forum-based discussion, list-serv or online group discussion, wiki entries and posted comments, podcast entries and posted comments, etc.
Synchronous	Voice and/or text chats including instant messaging using various online chat tools i.e. Yahoo! Messenger, MSN, Skype, etc., Audio and/or Video Web conference with or without text and white board applications, web-tour, etc.

Harasim (1990) has written extensively on the potential use of electronic discourse in enhancing peer interaction and collaborative professional development activities that were previously provided in traditional or face-to-face forms of teacher education or learning. She describes five characteristics of electronic discourse that set a potential niche for a social learning environment, which she refers to as the learning approaches in a 'collaborative learning horizon': (1) many-to-many communication; (2) place independence; (3) time independence; (4) text-based format; and (5) computer-mediated interaction (1990, pp. 42-43). These characteristics, which are relatively similar to Rapaport's (1991) discussion of CMC and information retrieval, often denote the various communication paradigms used in CMC, and how information is distributed, published, retrieved, and accessed via CMC tools i.e.

email, bulletin boards, forum, discussion list, computer conferencing (webcast or chats), etc.

Abraham & Williams (2009) have published a collection of papers that highlight the use of

electronic discourse in understanding the contexts and patterns of communications in CMC,

pragmatic knowledge, discursive and interactional features of electronic discourse, social and

linguistic practices of online users, and how they affect and change the discourse in online

communities i.e. chats, blogs, discussion lists, etc. Research conducted using the Internet can

be quantitative and/or qualitative in nature (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Quantitative methods can

be in the form of quantitative-online surveys (Coomber, 1997), web-based questionnaires, etc.

(Hewson, Yule, Laurent, & Vogel, 2003). While examples of qualitative methods are online

interview (Chen & Hinton, 1999), use of focus groups (Gaiser, 1997), participant observation

(Hine, 2000), online interaction and discourse (Baym, 1997).

3.2.3.5 Email Correspondence and Email-based Discussion Group

The use of e-mails as a research tool creates a freedom of exchange, which according to

Boshier (1990) "provide a context for the kind of non-coercive and anti-hierarchical

dialogue…free of internal and external coercion, and characterized by equality of opportunity

and reciprocity in roles assumed by participants (p. 51). The main advantage of using e-mail

as a research tool is the flexibility, immediacy, and the speed of exchange that it provides to

both the researcher and the subject/s; however, the convenience and speed in which emails can easily be deleted add to its transitory nature which may compromise its effectiveness (Thach, 1995). Nonetheless, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Email communications allow the participants to reply when it is most convenient to them or when they feel comfortable sending their response after thinking it through; case subjects/respondents (people participating in the research) are not compelled to attend online synchronous meetings or even face-to-face interviews or discussion (for focus group). Thus, it is the friendly nature of emails that highly benefit the participants (Liamputtong, 2007). A number of research studies on the use of email in the academe have emerged over the years (Mitra, Hazen, LaFrance, & Rogan, 1999; Collins & Berge, 1995). Miller & Brewer (2003) examined two commonly used email-methodologies: electronic questionnaires and electronic interviewing. They posit that electronic questionnaires replaced the conventional postal questionnaire, and because of the email's features to send the questionnaire to multiple recipients, the researchers can save both time and money. They argue that one drawback of using electronic questionnaires is that it does not guarantee respondent's anonymity since the respondent's email address is automatically included in the reply. Longer questionnaires can be saved in a Word file and sent to respondents by attaching it to the email. Electronic interviewing, either one-to-one or electronic focus groups, allows the interview and the

exchanges of responses be done without geographical and time constraints. Miller & Brewer (ibid) add that electronic interviewing does not require additional transcription since 'the data that is eventually analyzed is exactly what the interviewee wrote' (p. 88). Rolnicki, Dow, & Taylor (2007) responses to email interviews can also be 'more coherent than answers given in person' (p. 25). This allowance for time to compose their answers, read and edit them also applies to messages sent to and from email-based discussion groups.

According to Hewson, et al (2003), electronic discussion groups are composed of people with the same interest on a particular subject. Online discussions are email based, which means that members can receive and send messages via email. Messages such as announcements, questions, replies, etc. sent to the online group are automatically distributed to all its members. Messages are sorted by topic (also known as thread) and they can also be archived and accessed online by going to the group site (Maier, Barnett, Warren, & Bruner, 1998).

Emails from Facebook (online social network) are notifications on the comments and private messages posted by people who usually belong to the same network. I belong to a handful of social network, including Facebook, and since some of the teachers who joined the Taiwanese EFL teachers' YG also have Facebook accounts, connecting with them and adding them to my network of Facebook friends was convenient and easy. Private messages on topics

concerning EFL teachers' training were made with a couple of teachers who were willing to respond to my questions. Sending their opinions and answers via Facebook instead of the YG was a matter of personal preference. Nonetheless, their contributions were highly relevant since they provided me with valuable data about the what and how of EFL teacher training in buxiban/supplementary schools based on their personal experiences.

In this study, email was used to 1) disseminate pilot electronic questionnaires either as an attached file or as a message that contains the URL link to the survey that was made available online; 2) as a source of invaluable data from the email-based discussion via the Yahoo! Group created for Taiwanese EFL teachers and Facebook; and 3) to collect the communication exchanges between the researcher, case study subjects, and invited experts/mentors.

Private e-mail communications between case study subjects (Joy and Cindy) and the researcher were not posted to the online group due to privacy concerns. There were a total of 26 email exchanges with Joy (Case study 1) and 12 email messages were exchanged between the researcher and the invited teacher-experts/mentors. There were 61 email messages exchanged with Cindy; 12 emails were exchanged with Terry, invited teacher for Case study 2. In the Taiwanese EFL teachers' YG, there were 322 messages posted to the group.

3.2.3.6 Blog Entries

The use of blogs in research has also been widely written about (Blanchard, 2004); these studies focus on personal publication and collaborative aspects of blogs through networking and communicative features (i.e. readers' comments). Research on blogs where they are used as a writing tool or as a journal for reflective discourse has shown their potential as a learning tool that could enhance one's achievements (Williams & Jacobs, 2004). According to Schreiner, Gaiser, & Schreiner (2009), blog posts contain a huge amount of personal data, and can represent 'easily accessible data for a researcher (p. 84). They advise researchers that it is important to be transparent about the purpose of the blog and in what ways the data from the blog will be used and interpreted.

Joy and Cindy were asked to create and maintain a blog to document their teacher professional development activities, which include their own personal remarks on their lesson plans and how they worked out in the classroom, their reflections on the outcome of the online meeting/web conference with the guest mentor/s, etc. Instructions and guidelines on how to create a blog were given, and constant communications were made either through email correspondences (private messages and blog-comments entries).

3.2.3.7 Online Conference Transcripts

Synchronous voice discussions provide a valuable source of data that voice application brings. According to LaPointe (2007) 'contextual information of tone, enthusiasm, inflection, speed, as well as hesitation and silence provide richer information' are important in gauging the effectiveness of discourse in a synchronous environment (p. 94). Data analysis of synchronous voice discussion using conference transcript is valuable in identifying discourse patterns and cognitive and interactive activities that took place during the online discussion. In this study, synchronous voice conferences were conducted to bring the invited mentors/coach and the case study subjects together. Conference transcripts were analyzed following the methodology of discourse analysis developed by Harasim & Bakardjeva (2002). They posit that participant utterances in online discussions can be classified as cognitive speech acts (clarifying, summarizing, analyzing information, supporting the learning process) and/or interactive speech acts (acknowledging, giving personal information to establish harmonious relationship between participants). The process of gathering qualitative data, collection and analysis, and how the synchronous voice discussions were conducted as part of the online TPD activity for this study will be discussed in the following section.

3.3 Planning the Online Teacher Development

Below are the steps involved in the planning and implementation of the online teacher professional development that included the integration of ICT and Web 2.0 tools.

3.3.1 Defining the Need

The major aims of this study were to assess Taiwanese teachers' needs, how online technologies can be integrated in collaborative professional development activities, what and how learning took place, and whether or not their teaching practices have changed in the process. It was necessary to start the process from the teachers' own teaching context- that is finding out what their immediate concerns and problems or issues they were facing in their own particular classrooms. For the Taiwanese teachers in the YG list-serv, I posted a message to the list asking them what particular issue/s or teaching needs that they wished to discuss or resolve. For Joy and Cindy, I sent them a private email message asking them what teaching skill/s or knowledge they wished to learn or enhance. These issues or needs could be related to pedagogical skills or knowledge that somehow has a direct or indirect impact on the way they perform as language teachers. In order to determine what these needs are, teachers have to be first aware of what was going on in their own classroom. Self-awareness of what they think they need to learn or enhance helps in establishing short-term goals for themselves. The

level of self-awareness could also affect their determination to pursue or achieve their laid-out

goals whether or not to participate in oTPD activities. They also have to be open and express

what their professional needs are; this was done by writing i.e. writing email, posting

messages to group list, etc. (see Chapter 5). In this way, people who may be inclined to help

would know exactly what and how to offer help.

3.3.2 Providing Teachers Access to oTPD

Prior to the planning of the core and structural design of the TPD activities that

Taiwanese EFL teachers would participate in, it was imperative to have the online group

(CoP), ICT connectivity tools, i.e. email, instant messages accounts, and Web 2.0 accounts

already set-up and working, since they would be the means of communicating with these

teachers. Back in 2003-2004, the means of connecting to EFL teachers were emails, Instant

messages, blog, and the Yahoo! Group; Facebook social network was later added in 2007. As

mentioned in Chapter 1, many Taiwanese teachers in buxibans do not have appropriate

teacher training, and opportunities for professional development are scarce. The teachers who

participated in this study gained access by voluntarily signing up to participate in the oTPD.

3.3.3 Designing the Structural and Core Features of oTPD

The next step was to design the structure and to determine the core features of the professional development activity; these features served as the backbone that supported the entire process.

3.3.3.1 Structural Feature: Form

Online forms of TPD would be used in this study. Thus, these could be synchronous and/or asynchronous modes. For the focus group in YG, the activities were limited to mentoring or coaching via asynchronous discussions. Experts were invited to join the Taiwanese EFL Teachers' YG (see Section 5.1) and participate in the discussions and offer suggestions and advice (Appendix 4 & 5). Joy and Cindy participated in synchronous and asynchronous modes of online workshops and reform type, i.e., mentoring or coaching that include online sessions (also known as webinar/webconference/online meetings), creation of blogs, discussions via email, blog entries, social network, and conducted classroom-based research, which involved video recording their classes before and after online session with the experts. Experts and/or well-experienced teachers were invited to participate in a synchronous online session with the teacher/s and share their experiences, suggestions, advice, etc. They were also invited to visit the Taiwanese EFL teachers' blogs and continue the

discussion/communication if they wished to do so.

The synchronous platform used in Joy's online meeting with the webheads expert-teachers was the voice presentation room provided by Alado.net[8] courtesy of Andy Pincon, Chairman of the Inner City Computing Society, a technology infrastructure provisioning non-profit, providing design/build, turn-key infrastructure services to US Computer Training Centers (CTC) and the Chairman of the Digital Workforce Education Society (Alado.net). The Alado.net portal allows audio (voice over) and text chat online; the chat platform also allows Webpage sharing and PowerPoint presentation. Technical requirements and speed test guidelines are available on site. The online chats/discussions via Alado can be recorded and downloaded for archive purposes.

The synchronous platform used in Cindy's online meeting with an expert-teacher was the Elluminate vClass at Learning Times'Webheads virtual office [9] courtesy of Jonathan Finkelstein, founder and executive producer of LearningTimes, provider of open professional development communities and online conferences for educators. The webheads' virtual office is the virtual meeting place for Webheads within the LearningTimes community. To avoid clash over timing or schedule of meetings, Webheads are advised to put their events on the Webheads' online events calendar[10]. The Elluminate vClass is a Web conferencing software

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[8] http://www.alado.net/webheads
[9] http://home.learningtimes.net/learningtimes?go=273662
[10] http://my.calendars.net/eslhome_conferen/

that provides two-way VoIP, interactive whiteboard, web application sharing, file transfer,

synchronized web tour, and multipoint video which make a powerful web collaboration

environment for teachers and students alike[11]. Online events can also be recorded and

archived online. Teachers only need to have a computer with Internet access to participate in

an Elluminate session; a microphone is needed if they wish to speak during audio discussions

and the use of headset or earphones could also be helpful in reducing echo or noise generated

usually when there are multiple speakers.

3.3.3.2 Structural Feature: Duration

Experts in teacher education and learning argue that professional development is a

long-term process which involves a range of related events or experiences to allow teachers to

integrate newly learned experiences (Cohen, 1990). Thus, the online professional

development activities for Joy and Cindy lasted for five months, while the

focused-discussions on various topics in the online group for Taiwanese EFL teachers lasted

four months, from January and April 2005.

3.3.3.3 Structural Feature: Collective Participation

The online professional development activities would not be possible without the

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[11] http://www.elluminate.com/

collaborative efforts of the experts and experienced teachers who were invited to participate in

my study to act as online mentors or coach/es. A call for participation was sent out to the

Webheads Online Community of Practice in January 2005 and March 2009. In the call for

participation sent out in January 2005, prospective experts/mentors were told that they would

only be participating in asynchronous discussions, posting/responding to teaching-related

questions, offering suggestions and help regarding teaching strategies and methodologies.

Three webheads-teachers expressed their interest: Arnold (retired teacher trainer from

Netherlands), Elizabeth (teacher trainer, retired professor from the US), and Michael (British

EFL teacher in Shanghai, China)[12]. Below are snippets of the email message they had sent me

(Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5: Screenshot of Email Messages from Webheads

Comment from Michael B.: I am very interested in how bu-shi-ban teachers can better both their careers and their teaching with or without encouragement and help from those in a position of control.

Comment from Arnold: Hi Aiden, I will gladly accept your invitation to this Yahoo group. TPD has always had my interest and reflective practice is close to my heart.

Comment from Elizabeth H-S: ...anything I can do for you with the TPD YG? I am really interested in your project and hope to start something like this in the future.

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[12] Arnold, Elizabeth, and Michael are real names of the invited Webheads. Permission was granted to use their real names for the purposes of this study.

A. Invited expert-teachers for Joy

A message was sent out to the Webheads' online group calling for experts or teachers with extensive experience in teaching writing to young learners (see Appendix 5). In a matter of days, teachers who are members of this online group had responded to my posting offering to help and share their knowledge. Figure 3.6 is a snapshot of the discussion thread that took place at the Webheads' Yahoo! Group discussion board.

Figure 3.6: Screenshot of the Discussion Thread on Webheads' YG

Four teachers had agreed to participate in the live discussion/webconference: Dafne from Venezuela, Teresa from Portugal, Gladys and Alejandra from Argentina[13]. Prior to the web conference, I scheduled a trial run with Joy and some of the invited teacher-experts to double-check technical requirements i.e. downloading the required software (Java, etc.), to

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[13] Dafne, Teresa, Gladys, and Alejandra are real names of the invited Webheads. Permission was granted to use their real names for the purposes of this study.

run the chat platform. It was held on June 17, 2005, Friday, 15 GMT at Alado. Dafne, one of

the invited guests, posted a comment on my personal blog which was used as a research

notepad for my study. She wrote:

> Well, Aiden the trial-session has been great. Here we are in Alado (Aiden, Teresa, Joy and myself) and we have been discussing how difficult it is to find the time to keep up with our activities, including blogging. We have also discussed some strategies to do so. I am glad to have attended this trial-session : -)
> This is the URL for the Young Learners Yahoo Group:
> http://groups.yahoo.com/group/younglearners/

B. Invited expert-teacher for Cindy

The same process was performed in inviting guest experts/mentors/coach for the second

case study, Cindy. An invitation message was posted on the Webheads online group and also

on the NNEST Electronic Village Online (EVO) 2009 session's YG on March 7, 2009. Since

the topic of interest to Cindy concerns teaching speaking to seniors, the open invitation

included a brief description of what was needed for this web conference (see Appendix 5).

Terry Doyle, a participant of the NNEST EVO 2009 session, responded to my posting and

expressed interest in participating in the web conference and was very keen on sharing his

experience in teaching seniors. A screenshot of his message is found in Figure 3.7:

Figure 3.7: Screenshot of Terry's Message in Response to Call for Expert

"Hi, Aiden and anyone else reading this. I read with great interest your post
about your second case study involving the teacher, Cindy Shih, who is teaching senior students. I am
very interested in this project first because participation in the NNEST EVO really opened up a whole
new world about the possibilities of using new technologies like the EVO. Second, I teach in a school
which is really quite similar to the Taiwanese buxiban. I teach non-credit classes in my college.
Although we do not have particular classes for seniors, we do have many seniors in our classes. In
particular, in my "Video ESL" class, which I have taught the past years, the seniors comprise the core
of the class...I'm looking forward to hearing more about this, and if I am available (snip), I would like
to participate in the live voice conference in April."

Message# 786, available at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nnest_evo2009/message/786

Terry sent me a private email message confirming his participation in the study where he also

expressed his concerns about his role, and the fact that this would be his first web conference,

see Figure 3.8:

Figure 3:8: Screenshot of Terry's Private Email Message Sent to Author (March 09, 2009)

"Thanks for your invitation to talk about teaching oral and conversation skills to
senior citizens. I'm not sure that I am qualified to be an "invited speaker/mentor", but it
is a challenge, and I will do my best. I plan to do a little research with my students to see
which activities that have found most useful. Then I will discuss the activities I have used.
I may also talk to other teachers. There are some classes with only seniors in my college.
It's an interesting topic." Email message sent on March 09, 2009

After consecutive email exchanges, a time, place, and date for the web conference was finally

put in place; it was held on April 8, 2009 at 5 am GMT (or 13:00 Taipei time and 22:00 San

Francisco time) at Webheads' virtual office provided by Learning Times[14].

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14   URL: http://tinyurl.com/y3eh

3.3.3.4 Core Features: Content, Active Learning, Coherence

The content/s or subject matter of the online discussions for the focus-group in YG, Joy's and Cindy's online sessions with the experts/mentors were all based on their personal preference which was highly influenced by their professional need. Some of the topics that were raised in the focus group were: being a good teacher, motivating students, etc. Joy wanted to learn more about teaching strategies that she could apply when teaching young learners English writing. Cindy's main concern was how to provide opportunities for her senior-citizen students to speak English; she felt that learning instructional strategies in teaching speaking would be more appropriate. Defining what they needed early on in the planning stage was helpful in designing the online TPD activities that they would find meaningful in their own teaching context. The oTPD activities required active participation from the participants; the outcome greatly depended on their effort and willingness to engage in active learning. Online activities must be geared towards the active participation of teachers which allowed the exploration of cognitive apprenticeship where they learn from the outcomes of modeling, coaching, and scaffolding with experts, mentors, and experienced colleagues, and from the outcomes of implementing the change in their classroom practices and from the changes in students' learning. Aligning the oTPD activities to what their needs are made the process coherent with their teaching goals.

3.4 Seeing the Change in Teacher's Classroom Practices

In this step, the invited teacher-experts participated in collaborative discussions where they explored and shared ideas with the Taiwanese EFL teachers. The Taiwanese EFL teachers tried out new ideas, made changes in class instructions or teaching methodology depending on what they deemed necessary or helpful in their teaching context. For the two case studies, an online/web conference (or webinar) was conducted where synchronous discussions were held. There were no further webinars after the teachers tried out new ideas. Nonetheless, blog entries, exchanged email messages, recording of online/web conferences (or webinars), were used to analyze and see if their classroom practices had changed. Documenting the process of teacher exploration was done using a digital video camera; the recorded class observations were also used in the self/peer-evaluation.

3.5 Seeing the Change in Students' Learning

Teachers' instructional practices are one of the many factors that can have an effect on students' learning and the implications can either be positive or negative. The digital video recording was useful in gauging the impact of the change/s in instruction on students' learning i.e. How active were (what was the level of participation of) the students during the implementation of the lesson or activity? Students' activity sheets, test papers, projects, and

other learning artifacts also provide evidence of learning. The video recording can be shared

with peers, mentors, coach, etc. to validate the effectiveness of the implementation of a new

instructional approach. The students' class performance and the various learning activities

shown on the video recording were analyzed using Bloom's three domains of learning:

Knowledge, Skills, and Attitude (Bloom, 1956 in Rada, 2001), discussed in Chapter 2.

3.6 Seeing Change in the Teacher's Attitudes and Behavior

The process of learning and development was documented using blogs as online journal

and email correspondences either sent via blog-post, group-posted messages, and one-to-one

or one-to-many email messages. Blog entries allowed the articulation of ideas either from the

teacher (who owns the blog) and the blog readers (mentors, experts, experienced colleagues)

leaving comments and/or feedback. Writing emails, blog entries, and messages posted to an

online group or social network helped teachers articulate their ideas. Writing their reflections

on the process of their own professional development and its impact on their teaching and on

the students helped them evaluate its effectiveness or lack thereof.

Smith, Hofer, Gillespie, Solomon, & Rowe (2006) argue that professional development

needs to take place over a period of time and concentrate on aiding teachers to acquire new

behaviors and change their thinking and assumptions toward teaching through reflection (p.

20). Professional development experts believe that this cannot be achieved in the traditional teacher professional development approach, but requires alternative or reform types of professional development, such as mentoring, practitioner inquiry, or collaborative problem-solving groups (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Guskey, 1999). This paradigm shift calls for teachers to change the way they view themselves as teachers by looking at their own beliefs and practices and through constant communication and collaboration with other practitioners; this should enable them to adopt change as they learn and grow in the process of teaching and learning (Richardson, 1994).

3.7 Approaches to Qualitative Analysis

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) define qualitative data analysis as "working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (p. 145). One of the identifying characteristics of qualitative research is the inductive approach to data analysis wherein data related to the focus of inquiry are collected and analyzed (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). The qualitative data are usually text-based on the outcomes of observation, interviews, or documents, and the data collection activities, and according to Miles & Huberman (1994), are normally "carried out in close proximity to a

local setting for a sustained period of time" (p. 9). The raw data needs to be processed where the researcher corrects, edits, types up, and transcribes audio and video recordings. The whole process allows the researcher to interact with and reconstruct the collected data, thus generating some form of meaning, explanation or interpretation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The researcher first prepares the collected data and reads the texts multiple times to examine and establish the meaningful thematic and symbolic content of the data (Ryan & Bernard, 2000); this is what Strauss & Corbin (1990) refer to as open coding. It is then followed by devising an audit trail where the researcher identifies chunks of data based on what the participant (speaker) said and why he said it (context of speech); these chunks of data are used a quotable materials that illustrates the theme/s being described in the study (Brown, 1996). The next step is coding where categories identified during the open coding are compared, combined, and linked together; the coding not only describes the categories and how they relate with one another, but as Strauss & Corbin (1998) posit, "the actual linking takes place not descriptively but rather at a conceptual level" (p. 125). In other words, the researcher acquires a new understanding of the situation or phenomenon being investigated and constructs a conceptual model, or what Strauss & Corbin (1998) call, a 'paradigm', which according to them is 'nothing more than a perspective taken toward data' (p. 128), and finally determines whether there is sufficient data to support his/her interpretation. The last stage of

the process is when the researcher translates the findings and interpretations in a report format that "closely approximates the reality it represents" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 57). The constant comparative method, developed by Glaser & Strauss (1967) and later refined by Lincoln & Guba (1985), is used in this study. The process is similar to what was stated above where I first identified and described patterns and themes based on the participants' perspectives. Analysis of data (observations, blog entries, email exchanges, etc.) involved a continuous comparison of data either from the same set of data or in another set (Merriam, 1998), in this case, data from the two case study subjects, Joy and Cindy, and the teachers in the Taiwanese EFL teachers' Yahoo! Group. I first created a database by editing the texts generated from transcripts of video-recording of class observations, blogs as a reflective journal, analysis of email exchanges, online discussions that took place in the Taiwanese EFL teachers' YG, and other relevant artifacts used in the study. By analyzing these data, I was able to establish emerging patterns and themes, categorized, interpreted, and finally worked on interpreting the results. The categories are based on three foci concerning Taiwanese EFL teachers in buxiban/supplementary schools as they: 1) undergo cognitive apprenticeship (modeling, coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection, and exploration) and e-mentoring as they take place in online environments, 2) gain new knowledge, and 3) experience change in their attitudes, behavior, and practices. There were five categories that were used in looking at

the main findings from the class observations; they were: 1) materials (what and how they were used), 2) language/s used in the classroom, 3) class management, 4) student participation, 5) teaching methods and strategies used in class. Students' learning, students' class performance and the various learning activities shown/heard on the video recording will be analyzed using Bloom's domains of learning: Knowledge, Skills, and Attitude (Bloom, 1956 in Rada, 2001). Lastly, using Wenger's (1998) three criteria for CoP I will analyze whether the Taiwanese EFL Teachers' Yahoo! Group meet these criteria and whether teacher learning ever took place (see Chapter 2 regarding the importance of CoP in teacher learning and development).

In this chapter I have explained the research methodology, design, data collection process, and method of analysis used in this study; quantitative findings are presented in Chapter 4 and qualitative findings are presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4: SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the results of the survey questionnaire (Appendix 1) that I conducted. The survey results provide a descriptive summary of the demographic profile (Section 4.1) of the Taiwanese EFL and their attitudes, behavior, and practices. The questionnaire has four sections: 1) Background information, 2) Attitude towards the language used in the classroom, teaching methodology, teacher quality, and their willingness to participate in teacher education and training program (Section 4.2), 3) Classroom practices-this section looks into their teaching goals, their instructional methods used in teaching Reading/Writing and Listening/Speaking, class assessment and frequency of assessment, materials used in their classroom, and their language of instruction (Section 4.3), 4) Employment history (Section 4.4)- their employment status, employing institution and the number of months/years they have been working there, number of classes and students they have, distribution of foreign/native speaker teachers and Taiwanese teachers in the school where they teach, and how important and how satisfied (Section 4.5) are they with the school's ability to 1) communicate educational goals and strategies, 2) provide incentives for teaching staff, 3) offer compensation package and benefits, and 4) provide teacher training (Section 4.4). Analysis of data concerning the teachers' willingness to participate in teacher

professional development is discussed in Section 4.6. Finally, the summary of this section is

presented in Section 6.7. The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) program was

utilized to tabulate data and compute the statistical tests.

4.1. Demographic Profile

The first question in the survey looked at the demographic profile of the teachers (Table

4.1). 200 questionnaires were given out both in 2004-2005 (Survey 1 or S1) and 2008-2009

(Survey 2 or S2). Out of the 200 questionnaires, there were 136 valid questionnaires (or 68%

response rate) received for the first round, and 154 (77%) for the second survey. However,

because of the limitations in terms of the unequal number of teachers in each group, the

sample used in this study may not be truly representative of the population of all

buxiban/supplementary school English teachers in Taiwan as a whole.

Looking at the gender of the teachers who took part in the survey, the high number of

female teachers in both survey results (about 85%) signifies that the population of EFL

teachers working in buxiban and supplementary schools was highly dominated by women.

Table 4.1 Teachers' Demographic Profile

Survey	2004-2005		2008-2009	
	N=136	Percent	N= 154	Percent
Male	**20**	**14.7%**	**22**	**14.3%**
Female	**116**	**85.3%**	**132**	**85.7%**
Age 20-29 y/o	92	67.6%	119	77.3%
Bachelor's Degree	42	30.9%	45	29.2%

The education level attained by these teachers who possessed a Bachelor's degree is quite low at 30.9% (S1) and 29.2% (S2). The age level of the teachers was concentrated in the 20-29 age bracket, which signifies that many of them were still in college or just freshly graduated from college when they started teaching. In Figure 4.1, the results from S1 shows that there were 40 teachers out of 136 who have been teaching for less than a year, while the results in S2 show teachers in the same age bracket had considerable teaching experience.

Figure 4.1: Cross-Tabulation of Teachers' Age and Number of Years Teaching

Part 1. Q5. How long have you been teaching English? * Part 1. Q2. What is your age group? Crosstabulation

2004-2005

Count

		Part 1. Q2. What is your age group?				Total
		Under 20 years old	20-29 years old	30-39 years old	40 years above	
Part 1. Q5. How long have you been teaching English?	Less than one year	2	40	2	0	44
	1-2 years	0	28	2	0	30
	2-3 years	0	10	0	0	10
	3-4 years	0	10	12	2	24
	Others, 4 years above	0	4	20	4	28
Total		2	92	36	6	136

2008-2009

Count

		Part 1. Q2. What is your age group?				Total
		Under 20 years old	20-29 years old	30-39 years old	40 years above	
Part 1. Q5. How long have you been teaching English?	Less than one year	0	26	0	0	26
	1-2 years	0	17	0	0	17
	2-3 years	0	44	7	0	51
	3-4 years	0	29	0	0	29
	Others, 4 years above	0	3	28	0	31
Total		0	119	35	0	154

Both the survey results from S1 and S2 show that a majority of these teachers have not taken language proficiency tests that would measure their English language ability. The most common language proficiency tests taken were GEPT, TOEFL, and TOIEC (see Figure 4.2). Grades achieved were not provided by the respondents.

Figure 4.2 Language Proficiency Tests Taken

Language Proficiency Tests	Survey 1 N=136		Survey 2 N=154	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
IELTS	5.9%	94.1%	9.7%	90.3%
GEPT	13.2%	86.8%	29.9%	70.1%
TOEFL	16.2%	83.8%	21.4%	78.6%
TOIEC	14.7%	85.3%	39.0%	61.0%
Others	19.1%	80.9%	19.5%	80.5%

4.2 Teachers' Attitude

Part 2 of the survey questionnaire looks into the Taiwanese teachers' attitude towards the language used in the classroom (question 7), teaching methodology (question 8), teacher quality (question 9), and the level of willingness to attend or participate in (free or paid) teacher education or training program (question 10). A five-point likert scale was used in questions 7 to 9 to measure the teachers' attitudes ranging from strongly agree, agree, neither agree/disagree, disagree, strongly disagree. I computed the Cronbach alpha (cf. Cronbach, 1951) to measure the internal consistency or reliability of the scales. The higher the score, the more reliable the generated scale is. 0.6 is a lenient cutoff rate for exploratory research and 0.7 is said to be an acceptable reliability coefficient (Nunnaly, 1978). Combining the items in questions 7, 8 and 9, there were sixteen items in total. The Cronbach alpha result for S1 is 0.65 and .62 for S2 (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Question 7, 8, 9: Reliability Analysis- Scale (Alpha)

2004-2005	2008-2009
Questions 7, 8, and 9	**Questions 7, 8, and 9**
Reliability Coefficients	Reliability Coefficients
N of Cases = 136.0	N of Cases = 154.0
N of Items = 16	N of Items = 16
Alpha = 0.65	Alpha = .6239

Researchers believe that Cronbach alpha measures a single unidimensional latent construct, hence if there are several items that are considered unrelated latent constructs or

when data has multidimensional structure, Cronbach's alpha will usually be low (Cortina, 1993). I used the Factor analysis to check the dimensionality of the data, and based on the output, the data are not unidimensional, that is the items in question 7, 8, and 9 do not measure the same latent construct and therefore should not be combined to create one single scale. Another factor for the low alpha result is the low number of items for each question; if the average inter-item correlation is low, alpha tends to be low, too (Zinbarg, Yovel, Revelle, & McDonald, 2006). Therefore, the survey results for these questions were treated separately as they address different issues. However, the results are still relevant since they provided me a descriptive account of the teachers' level of agreement; each degree of agreement is given a numerical score which is then all summed up, thus revealing the respondents' opinion.

Question 7 looks at the teachers' attitude towards language use in the classroom. The results show the total summed scores for S1 at 548 and 558 for S2 (see Figure 4.5). This means that these teachers prefer to use the English language as the language of instruction. However, when it comes to teaching grammar, the result seemed to show a break from their initial preference.

Figure 4.3: Question 7 Descriptive Statistics (see Survey, Appendix 1)

Survey 1

Statistics		Part 2. Q7A. Use English only in class.	Part 2. Q7B. Use Mandarin/Taiwanese when giving classroom instructions	Part 2. Q7C. Use Mandarin/Taiwanese when teaching grammar
N	Valid	136	136	136
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		4.03	2.10	3.59
Median		4.00	2.00	4.00
Mode		4	2	4
Std. Deviation		.958	.976	.946
Sum		548	286	488

Survey 2

Statistics		Part 2. Q7A. Use English only in class.	Part 2. Q7B. Use Mandarin/Taiwanese when giving classroom instructions	Part 2. Q7C. Use Mandarin/Taiwanese when teaching grammar
N	Valid	154	154	154
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		3.62	2.16	3.71
Median		4.00	2.00	4.00
Mode		4	2	4
Std. Deviation		1.144	1.000	.790
Sum		558	333	572

Teachers' opinion, however, does not correlate with their own practice. Looking at the responses given to Question 16 concerning the language they use in the classroom, it is striking to see that most of them make use of both Mandarin/Taiwanese and English in the classroom (see Table 4.3). In other words, despite strong preference for the use of English as the language of instruction, the respondents admit to using their mother tongue as well.

Table 4.3 Language in the Classroom: % Survey Results

Language Use	Survey 1		Survey 2	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
I use English all throughout the class	44	32.4	27	17.5
I use mostly English during the lecture but use Mandarin/Taiwanese when giving instructions [commands]	52	38.2	54	35.1
I use both English and Mandarin/Taiwanese equally	32	23.5	62	40.3
I use mostly/usually Mandarin/Taiwanese but occasionally English	8	5.9	11	7.1
Total	N: 136		N:154	

Question 8 asked respondents what their attitudes are toward general instructional methodology. The results were highly positive mostly agreeing to all the items, which include following and memorizing conversation patterns in course books (S1=41%, S2= 38%), the practice of repetitive writing to enhance spelling skills (S1=52%, S2=44%), providing students more time to speak English in class (S1=57%, S2=63%), and that lessons should be fun (S1=72%, S2=62%). The teachers strongly agreed to the need for class preparation, starting the class on time, and communicating their expectations or class objectives to students, which garnered 75%, 66%, and 50% for S1, and 75%, 74%, 55% for S2 approval rates.

Question 9 looked at their attitude towards teacher qualifications that EFL teachers should possess. With a reliability coefficient of a=.6971 for Survey 1 and a=.7072 for Survey, both were within the lenient acceptable level of .70 (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Question 9 Results: Reliability Analysis- Scale (Alpha)

Reliability Coefficients	
Survey 1	**Survey 2**
N of Cases = 136.0	N= 154
N of Items = 6	N of Items = 6
Alpha = .6971	Alpha= .7072

In both surveys, teachers (98.5% and 95.5%) feel that teachers with weak English proficiency should take remedial courses to enhance their own English language skills (see

Table 4.5). They also strongly agree that teachers should undergo training (92.7% and 91.5%), particularly if their teaching skills need enhancement (95.6% and 86.3%). However, these teachers do not feel so strongly about the need to join Teacher associations such as the Taiwan's English Teachers' Association (38.2% and 46.2%).

Table 4.5: Attitude towards Teacher Quality: % Survey Results

Q9 A teacher in supplementary schools...	Survey 1 % Agree	Survey 2 % Agree
must hold a bachelor's degree in order to be considered highly qualified	61.8	70.8
must obtain full certification or pass the National licensure exam	73.5	60.4
must undergo teacher training	92.7	91.5
must join Teacher Associations such as Taiwan's English Teachers' Association [ETA] for professional development	38.2	46.1
should attend remedial courses if their English proficiency is weak	98.5	95.5
should undergo teacher training if their teaching skills are below par	95.6	86.3

Before I discuss the classroom practices of these teachers, I will look at what classroom goals are important to them (Question 11). This should give us an idea of what sort of learning activities most Taiwanese EFL classrooms focus on. To help students pass (English) examination is considered important at 66% (S1) and 73% (S2); 71% (S1) and 79% (S2) of them feel the same about helping students to communicate orally in English; 78% (S1) and 67% (S2) feel the need to work on the students' reading and writing skills. Overall, S1 and S2 respondents felt that it was very important (60%) to focus on learning activities that would enhance all four language skills.

4.3 Teachers' Classroom Practices

Questions 12 and 13 looked at teachers' instructional approaches used in teaching listening/speaking and reading/writing. With Cronbach A reliability of .80 (rounded from .7973) for S1 and .75 (rounded from .7539) for S2, the validity rates are valid and acceptable. Using Likert-type item scales, Always=1, Often=2, Sometimes=3, Rarely = 4, and Never=5, the respondents were asked to tick an item that corresponds to the frequency of doing an activity.   Based on the median and mode results for both S1 and S2, there were some activities that teachers do most of the time and only in some occasions. Below are the results for S1 (see Table 4.6). It shows that teachers in S2 rarely made use of videos as part of the learning activity and they also rarely depended on audio tapes to emulate native speaker speech or pronunciation.

Table 4.6: Median and Mode Results for Teaching Listening/Speaking Activities

Q12. Teaching Listening/Speaking Please tick one 教導會話。請選一 [✔]	S1 N= 136		S2 N= 154	
	Med	Mode	Med	Mode
I allow students to watch videos of graded difficulty 分級困難時我允許學生看影片	3	4	3	4
Students play language games 學生玩語言遊戲	2	2	2	2
Students sing songs in English 學生唱英語歌	2	2	2	3
Students act out dialogues (role-play) 學生表達對話(用角色扮演)	2	2	2	1
I use recordings (tapes) to emulate native-speaker speech 我使用錄音(帶子)來模仿講英語的外國人	3	3	3	4
Students follow conversation patterns from textbook學生從教科書中聽從談話形式	2	2	2	2
I provide discussion activities我提供討論活動	2	3	2	2

Code: Always=1, Often=2, Sometimes=3, Rarely = 4, and Never=5

For Q13, Teaching Reading and Writing activities, the results for S1 and S2 are almost consistent with each other. Vocabulary exercises were often given and students had opportunities to read story books. Giving students writing homework was also done on a regular basis, however writing weekly journals or diaries was not a common writing activity.

Table 4.7 Median and Mode Results for Teaching Reading and Writing

Q13. Teaching Reading/Writing. Please tick one 教導讀與寫。請選一 [✓]	S1 N= 136		S2 N= 154	
	Med	Mode	Med	Mode
I use vocabulary exercises　　我使用詞彙鍛鍊	2	2	2	2
I give them writing homework 我給他們寫家庭作業	2	1	1	1
I give them a spelling notebook for spelling practice 我給他們一個拼寫的筆記本來拼寫練習	2	1	3	1
Students write weekly journals or diaries 學生寫周記或者日記	3	4	4	4
Students read books and stories 學生讀書和故事書	2	1	2	2

Code: Always=1, Often=2, Sometimes=3, Rarely = 4, and Never=5

Q14 looked at the types of assessment tools which teachers use and the frequency of use. In a matrix type item, teachers were asked to tick a box that indicates how often they give a particular assessment for Reading and Writing (Q14A) and Listening and Speaking (Q14B). They were given a choice from daily=1, weekly=2, every month=3, end of semester evaluation=4, others=5 (Table 4.7). Figure 4.4 shows a snapshot of the results for the multiple responses analysis for question 14A (S1), Reading and Writing, where the majority of the

responses point to the most common form of assessment teachers use was 'quizzes' with 34

counts; the cell percentages were based on cases (or respondents) and on responses

(respondents' answers) The total number of responses (100) does not necessarily equal the

sample size because the respondents could answer each and every item or none at all

Figure 4.4: Multiple Response Analysis for Q14 Reading and Writing


```
Multiple Response      Survey1


Group $Q14S1  Multiple response for q14s1
     (Value tabulated = 1)

                                                 Pct of  Pct of
Dichotomy label                    Name    Count Responses Cases

Q14A. Reading and Writing. Formal Assess Q14RWA    6      6.0     8.8
Q14B. Reading and Writing. Quizzes     Q14RWB    34     34.0    50.0
Q14C. Reading and Writing. Performance A Q14RWC   12     12.0    17.6
Q14D. Observation checklist            Q14RWD    20     20.0    29.4
Q14E. Student portfolios               Q14RWE    10     10.0    14.7
Q14F. Assessment rubric                Q14RWF    18     18.0    26.5
                                               -------   -----   -----
                         Total responses        100    100.0   147.1

68 missing cases;   68 valid cases
```

Looking at the individual frequency count that determines how often they administer such

assessment, in Figure 4.5 shows that 42.6% of the teachers gave their students quizzes on a

weekly basis.

Figure 4.5 Frequency Count for Reading/Writing Quizzes (S1)

Survey 1, Q14A
Reading and Writing. Quizzes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	34	25.0	26.2	26.2
	Weekly	58	42.6	44.6	70.8
	Monthly	26	19.1	20.0	90.8
	End of Semester Evaluation	6	4.4	4.6	95.4
	Other, please specify	6	4.4	4.6	100.0
	Total	130	95.6	100.0	
Missing	0	6	4.4		
Total		136	100.0		

For the multiple response results for survey 2 (Q14A), there were 47 counts (from a total of

159 responses) for quizzes as their choice of assessment, and 54.5% of them give reading and

writing quizzes weekly (Figure 4.6)

Figure 4.6: Frequency Count for Reading/Writing Quizzes (S2)

Survey 2, Q14A
Reading and Writing. Quizzes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	47	30.5	32.0	32.0
	Weekly	84	54.5	57.1	89.1
	Monthly	6	3.9	4.1	93.2
	End of Semester Evaluation	5	3.2	3.4	96.6
	Other, please specify	5	3.2	3.4	100.0
	Total	147	95.5	100.0	
Missing	0	7	4.5		
Total		154	100.0		

For Listening and Speaking (Q14B), the responses for S1 generated 28 counts or 25.5% from

a total of 110 counts, with 39.7% of these teachers give out quizzes on a weekly basis. For S2,

the responses also point to 'quizzes' as the teachers' choice for assessment with 42 counts or

29.2% from a total of 144 counts; 50.6% of these teachers also admit giving quizzes weekly.

Q15 asked teachers the kind of materials they use in the classroom, whether they use textbooks and supplementary materials published by the employing institution, materials published by other publishers, self-made materials, etc. For survey 1, teachers who used textbooks (published by the employing institution and/or other publishers) provided by the school and also used their own supplementary materials garnered 52 counts or 38.2%, this was followed by 26.5% for those teachers who mainly used textbooks published and provided by the school. The responses highly correlate with the results from survey 2, with 88 counts or 57.1% and 16.9% for the latter (Figure 4.7). Since this question contained multiple dichotomy sets (where the results were presented as a set of variables with a Yes or No response), the number of responses is equal to the number of counted values across cases.

Figure 4.7: Multiple Response, Q15, S1 and S2. (See Appendix 1 to view complete survey response categories)

Multiple Response Survey 1

Group $S1Q15 Multiple Response s1q15
      (Value tabulated = 1)

Dichotomy label	Name	Count	Pct of Responses	Pct of Cases
Q15A. I mainly use the textbook and supp	Q15A	36	26.5	26.5
Q15B. I mainly use the textbook and suppl	Q15B	22	16.2	16.2
Q15C. I mainly use the textbook (publish	Q15C	52	38.2	38.2
Q15D. I use my own chosen textbook and a	Q15D	22	16.2	16.2
Q15E. I use almost all authentic (newspa	Q15E	4	2.9	2.9
	Total responses	136	100.0	100.0

0 missing cases; 136 valid cases

Multiple Response Survey 2

Group $S2Q15 Multiple Response s2q15
      (Value tabulated = 1)

Dichotomy label	Name	Count	Pct of Responses	Pct of Cases
Q15A. I mainly use the textbook and supp	Q15A	26	16.9	16.9
Q15B. I mainly use the textbook and suppl	Q15B	16	10.4	10.4
Q15C. I mainly use the textbook (publish	Q15C	88	57.1	57.1
Q15D. I use my own chosen textbook and a	Q15D	16	10.4	10.4
Q15E. I use almost all authentic (newspa	Q15E	8	5.2	5.2
	Total responses	154	100.0	100.0

0 missing cases; 154 valid cases

4.4 Employment History

Q17 asked teachers about their employment status whether they work part-time (hourly pay) or full-time (monthly pay). The results for both surveys (60.3% for S1, n=136; 74% for S2, n=154) indicate that teachers were employed as part-time teachers, which means that remuneration they received was computed based on an hourly rate (NT\$/hr). 36.8% (S1) and 26% (S2) of the respondents served as full-time teachers receiving a regular monthly-salary. Buxiban and/or supplementary schools either fall into one of the following categories: family-owned/individually-owned school or chain/franchised school. The name of school was an optional item, for both S1 and S2, there were eighteen listed names. For survey 1, 60.3% of the teachers were hired by chain/franchised school, while 36.8% were employed by family/individually-owned school. The result for survey 2 was somewhat similar; the majority (59.7%) of teachers worked for chain/franchised school, while 40.3% were employed by family/individually-owned schools.

Q19 asked teachers how long they have worked for the employing institution. The results indicate that 42.6% for S1 and 35.7% for S2 of the teachers had less than a year of employment (Figure 4.8).

Figure 4.8: Number of Years Employed

Q22 looks at the number of Taiwanese and Foreign teachers employed (Table 4.8). For both S1 and S2, the number of Taiwanese teachers hired was greater compared to the number of foreign teachers; there would be 3-5 Taiwanese teachers (36.8% and 47.4%) while only 1-2 foreign teachers were hired (52.9% and 46.1%).

Table 4.8: Q22 % Taiwanese/Foreign Teachers Hired

How many Taiwanese English teachers are teaching at your school now?	Survey 1 N=136	Survey 2 N=154
1-2 Taiwanese teachers	22.1%	10.4%
3-5 Taiwanese teachers	36.8%	47.4%
6-10 Taiwanese teachers	27.9%	28.6%
11 or above, please specify	13.2%	13.6%
How many foreign teachers are teaching at your school now?		
1-2 foreign teachers	52.9%	46.1%
3-5 foreign teachers	20.6%	20.1%
6-10 foreign teachers	16.2%	3.9%
11 or above, please specify	4.4%	0%
None	5.9%	29.9%

Q24 and Q25 are open-ended questions which asked teachers to write down at least two advantages that a Taiwanese English teacher brings to the classroom; below is a list of advantages that were gathered from both surveys 1 and 2. Based on these results, these

teachers believed that their best advantage was their ability to easily communicate with students and parents since they both share the same native language (43% for S1 and 37% for S2). This was followed by their ability to understand or relate to students' learning difficulties and attitude since as non-native speakers of English they had experienced/met the same challenges. Since they have the same native language, these teachers resorted to using it in explaining difficult grammatical concepts and they could also teach the Kenyon and Knott (KK) phonetic transcription which was being taught in mainstream schools. With 15% (S1) and 9% (S2), few teachers believed that having the same ethnic and cultural background was also an advantage in the classroom. Garnering the fifth place on this list is their organizational skills which include lesson preparation and being prepared for class; they believed that these skills were akin to having a sense of responsibility. Although items 9 and 10 (lower rate of teacher turn-over and cheaper than foreign teachers, and can be assigned with more job responsibilities) garnered only small figures (3-5%), the fact that they were even mentioned can signify two things: 1) since they received lesser pay compared to the foreign teachers, they felt that this can be a financial advantage to their employers, and 2) despite the low remuneration, Taiwanese teachers were the one who always stayed behind to do the work (see Table 4.9).

Table 4.9: Q24 Advantages of Taiwanese English Teachers % Survey Results

Advantages	% Survey 1 Total: 182= 100%	% Survey 2 436=100%
1. Can easily communicate with students and parents since they share the same mother tongue	43%	37%
2. Can understand/relate to Ss' learning difficulties, attitude, environment	15%	22%
3. Can explain grammatical concepts better using their native language, teach KK phonics	15%	15%
4. Share the same cultural background	15%	9%
5. Prepares for class lessons, organized, sense of responsibility	5%	7%
6. Use appropriate teaching methods	1%	2%
7. Can help Ss better prepare for examinations	0%	2%
8. Serve as role-models in learning English; Ss see that learning is a gradual process	0%	2%
9. Lower teacher-turnover rate, cheaper than FTs	1%	5%
10. Can be assigned with more job responsibilities, assist FTs	3%	0%

Q25 asked teachers what they think were the reasons why their school (or school administrators) employed foreign teachers. Similar to Q24, this open-ended question asked teachers to provide at least two reasons. Some respondents provided more than two reasons, while there were some who wrote only one answer or none at all. After the responses were coded, a total of nine categories were listed. The major reason these teachers believe that their school hire foreign teachers was their native speaker accent and pronunciation (26% and 31%). This was followed by parent's demand and/or market trend which garnered 26% for S1 and 19% for S2. These teachers also believe that foreign teachers' presence in the classroom also

provides students an authentic learning environment which forces them to speak the target language (21% and 18%). Foreign teachers also served as language model that could enhance students' communication skills (6% and 15%). With only 6% and 4%, teachers believe that foreign teachers can also provide students knowledge about the target culture. Some respondents also noted that having foreign teachers could help promote the school and served as a competitive advantage (6% and 3%), while 4% and 5% felt that foreign teachers have lively and entertaining teaching styles (see Table 4.10).

Table 4.10: Reasons for Hiring Foreign Teachers

Advantages	% Survey 1 Total: 160= 100%	% Survey 2 226=100%
1. Pronunciation & native speaker accent	26%	31%
2. Parents' demand, market trend	26%	19%
3. Authentic English environment which forces Ss to speak English	21%	18%
4. Model native-speaker speech and enhance Ss' communication skills	9%	15%
5. Provide Ss exposure to and knowledge about the target culture	6%	4%
6. Good for school promotion, gives school competitive edge	6%	3%
7. Vivid, energized, and entertaining teaching styles	4%	5%
8. Enhance Ss' listening comprehension	1%	3%
9. Worship anything foreign	0%	2%

4.5 Level of Importance and Satisfaction

Q26 is a type of Side-By-Side Matrix question where there are two matrix dimensions that will be measured: Importance and Satisfaction. There are four attributes or factors that apply to all the dimensions that need to be measured, they are: a) employing institution's communication of educational goals and objectives, b) employing institution's job performance incentives, c) employee benefits and compensation package, and d) institution's teacher training programs. The interval rating scale consists of five points from 1 (low) to 5 (high); the respondents were asked to rate the importance and their satisfaction with the four matrix dimensions. Cronbach Alpha analysis was utilized to look at the internal consistency of the scales. There are 4 items in the scale that measures level of importance and another 4 items for satisfaction level. For survey 1, alpha level for importance is at α =.8792 while α=.8626 for satisfaction. For survey 2, reliability coefficient for importance scale is at α=.8662 and α=.8353 for satisfaction scale. The alpha levels are all above the .70 level for adequate scale. The standard deviations (SD) for answers given by the respondents suggest a relatively high dispersion levels ranging from .787 to 1.336 (for survey 1). The SD levels for the answers to questions S1Q26a-d (importance) suggest a relatively dispersed responses but not as heterogeneous as the responses given to indicate their level of satisfaction to the given items, SD 1.126 to 1.336 (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9: Q26, Descriptive Statistics for S1

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
s1Q26A. Importance. Your school administration communicated educational goals and strategies (how to achieve goals) effectively.	136	3	5	4.13	.787
s1Q26B. Importance. Your school provide incentives for a job well done.	136	1	5	3.96	.851
s1Q26C. Importance. Your school's overall benefits and compensation package is competitive within the industry	136	2	5	3.78	.786
s1Q26D. Importance. Your school provides teacher training.	136	2	5	3.99	.834
s1Q26A. Satisfaction. Your school administration communicates educational goals and strategies (how to achieve goals) effectively.	136	1	5	3.35	1.126
s1Q26B. Satisfaction. Your school provide incentives for a job well done.	136	1	5	2.85	1.132
s1Q26C. Satisfaction. Your school's overall benefits and compensation package is competitive within the industry.	136	1	5	2.68	1.148
s1Q26D. Satisfaction. Your school provides teacher training.	136	1	5	2.81	1.336
Valid N (listwise)	136				

The dispersion results for survey 2 (Figure 4.10) also indicate a high level of dispersion,

particularly on answers given to indicate their satisfaction levels (SD 1.190-1.381).

Figure 4.10: Q26 Descriptive Statistics for S2

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
s2Q26A. Importance. Your school administration communicated educational goals and strategies (how to achieve goals) effectively.	154	3	5	4.27	.741
s2Q26B. Importance. Your school provide incentives for a job well done.	154	1	5	4.10	.810
s2Q26C. Importance. Your school's overall benefits and compensation package is competitive within the industry	154	3	5	3.97	.787
s2Q26D. Importance. Your school provides teacher training.	154	3	5	4.05	.866
s2Q26A. Satisfaction. Your school administration communicates educational goals and strategies (how to achieve goals) effectively.	154	1	5	3.50	.998
s2Q26B. Satisfaction. Your school provide incentives for a job well done.	154	1	5	3.05	1.190
s2Q26C. Satisfaction. Your school's overall benefits and compensation package is competitive within the industry.	154	1	5	2.71	1.303
s2Q26D. Satisfaction. Your school provides teacher training.	154	1	5	2.79	1.381
Valid N (listwise)	154				

Most of respondents in both survey 1 and 2 (39.7% and 44.2%) feel that it is important that their employing institution provides incentives for good job performance. High response rates (39.7% and 38.3%) were also given to the importance of the school's overall compensation and benefits package being competitive in the industry. The same level of response was given to the importance of providing teacher training with 35.3% and 39.6%. All items were considered important by the respondents with their answers ranging from mid to high (Figure 4.11).

Figure 4.11 Q26B. Frequency. Importance. Job Incentives

Q26B. Importance. Your school provide incentives for a job well done.

Survey 1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely low	2	1.5	1.5	1.5
	mid	40	29.4	29.4	30.9
	high	54	39.7	39.7	70.6
	extremely high	40	29.4	29.4	100.0
	Total	136	100.0	100.0	

Survey 2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	mid	27	17.5	17.5	17.5
	high	59	38.3	38.3	55.8
	extremely high	68	44.2	44.2	100.0
	Total	154	100.0	100.0	

Looking at how satisfied they were at their employing institutions with regards to providing benefits and teacher training, the responses took the opposite direction. Although majority (50% and 35.1%) of the respondents felt that they were quite satisfied with job incentives given, many were divided among extremely low (16.2% for S1 and 22.1% for S2) to mid satisfaction level (33.8% and 29.2%) when it comes to the compensation and benefits package that they were actually receiving. The satisfaction level with regards to the teacher training programs their school provided (if there were any) received about a quarter of the total percentage while dissatisfaction was loudly expressed with 20.6% for extremely low and 23.5% for low in survey 1 and 22.1% and 24% low level of satisfaction for survey 2 (Figure 4.12).

Figure 4.12: Q26D Frequency. Satisfaction. Teacher Training

Q26D. Satisfaction. Your school provides teacher training.

Survey 1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	extremely low	28	20.6	20.6	20.6
	low	32	23.5	23.5	44.1
	mid	34	25.0	25.0	69.1
	high	22	16.2	16.2	85.3
	extremely high	20	14.7	14.7	100.0
	Total	136	100.0	100.0	

Survey 2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Extremely low	34	22.1	22.1	22.1
	Low	37	24.0	24.0	46.1
	Mid	38	24.7	24.7	70.8
	High	18	11.7	11.7	82.5
	Extremely high	27	17.5	17.5	100.0
	Total	154	100.0	100.0	

4.5.1 Gap Analysis

I conducted a gap analysis to analyze the interaction of the two scales in question 26. The respondents rate the given matrix attributes using two scales, importance and satisfaction. Each rating scale starts at 1 (Very Low) and goes to 5 for Very high. The interaction between these two scales provide critical information as it clearly shows which attributes are the most important and how satisfied are the teachers with that particular attribute. Gap analysis was performed by comparing the Mean results for importance and satisfaction levels, thus allowing the easy identification of priorities for improvement or solution. The bar graph below shows where the gaps are located and how big are those gaps. The gap is the mean score for the satisfaction rating subtracted from the mean score for the importance rating, e.g.

Q26a-Importance minus Q26a-Satisfaction. If the mean score of a service is positive (above zero), it indicates that the teachers rate the attribute as very important but they are not satisfied with what they are actually receiving. In a business sense, when this particular situation arises, action is normally required to ease the gap. If the gap is below zero or negative, this indicates that the respondents rate an attribute relatively low yet have very high satisfaction level. In this instance no action/improvement is required. The closer the gap is to zero the better balance there is between importance and satisfaction (Hernon & Whitman, 2001). Gap Analysis for Survey 1 shows a 0.7 difference for Q26A, which means that the teachers find the attribute, communication of educational goals and strategy very important and at the same time, they were quite satisfied with their employing institution's performance (m=3.4). For Q26B, C, and D, the results range from 1.1 to 1.2 which signifies a high level of importance but the rate of satisfaction level was very low (Figure 4.13).

Figure 4.13: Gap Analysis Results S1
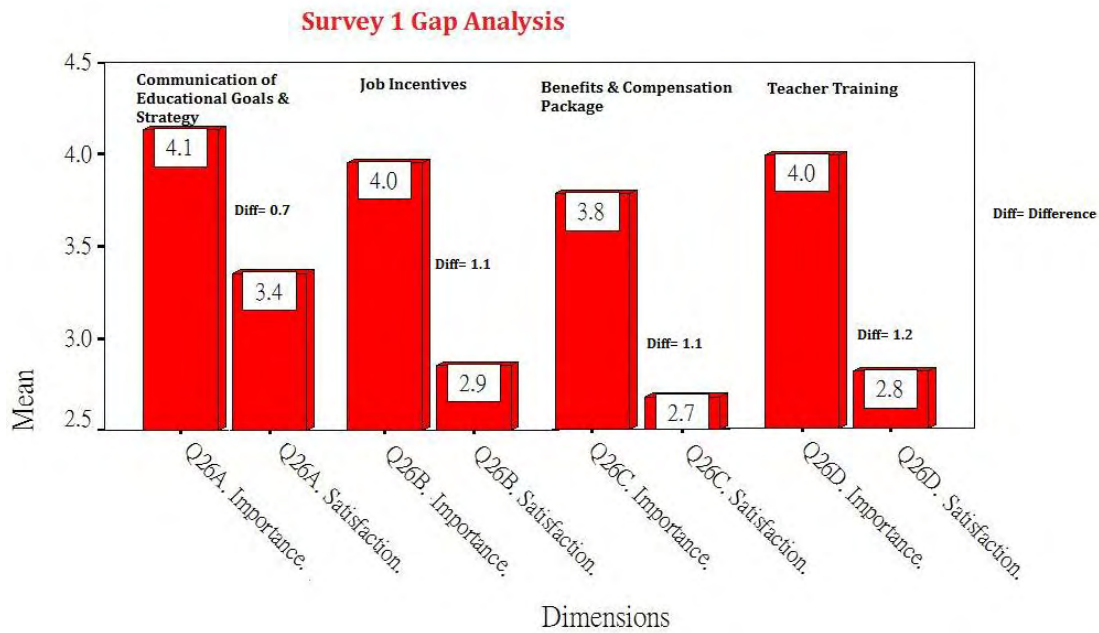
The results for survey 2 also show almost the same gap levels in all four attributes (Figure 4.14). Mean scores for Q26A also garnered positive results indicating a difference of only 0.8. Scores of job incentives, benefits & compensation package, and teacher training were also deemed very important but the teachers were not relatively satisfied with what they were getting from their schools/employers (Diff= 1.1, 1.3, and 1.2).

Figure 4.14: Gap Analysis Results S2
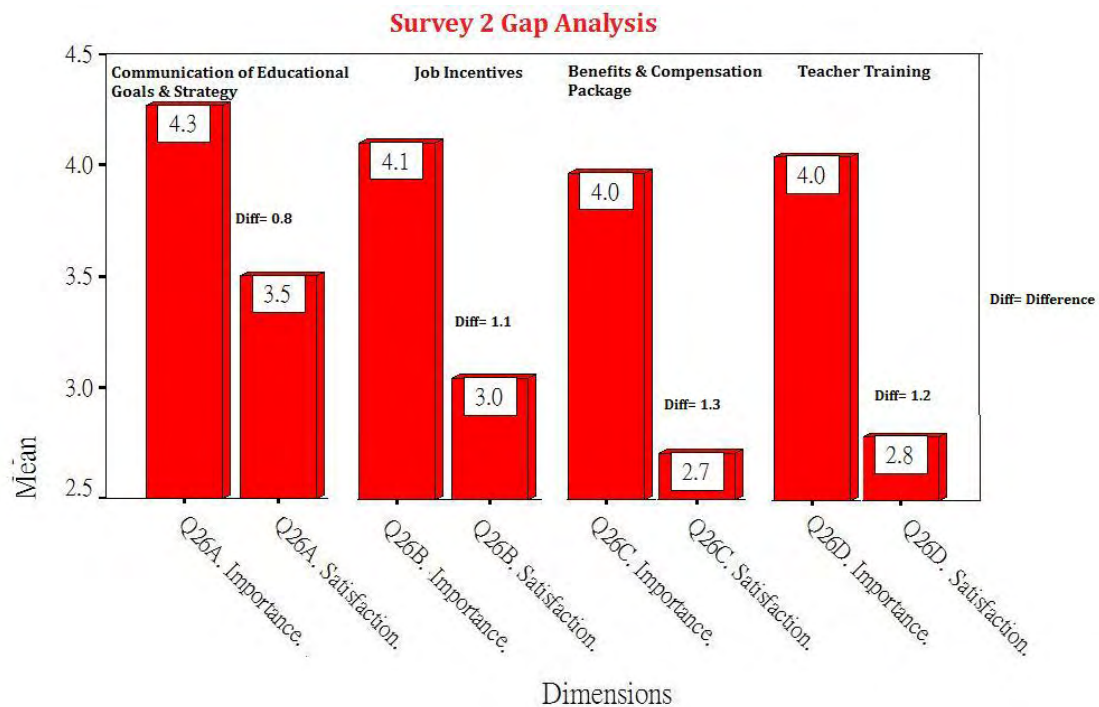
4.5.2 Cross-tabulation: Employment Status and Satisfaction with Job Incentives (Q26B)

In looking at the association of the teachers' state of employment (at the time the survey was conducted) and their level of satisfaction with job incentives being received (Q26B: Your school provide incentives for a job well done), I first recoded the satisfaction values before conducting the cross tabulation, thus, narrowing the five values to three: Low, Mid, and High. Extremely low results were pooled into the Low value and extremely high into High value; mid value was retained. The cross tabulation results for survey 1 below show that there were fewer full-time teachers compared to part-time teachers. A majority (n=42) of the part-time teachers who receive an hourly pay were somewhat satisfied with the job benefits that they were receiving, but still a number of them (n=30) gave a low satisfaction level (Figure 4.15).

Figure 4.15: Cross Tabulation Employment Status * Satisfaction Level (S1)

Q17. What is the current status of your employment? * S1Q26BNE Crosstabulation

Survey 1

Count

		S1Q26BNE			Total
		2.00	3.00	4.00	
Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	14	22	14	50
	Part-time (Hourly)	30	42	10	82
	Other, Monthly plus hourly pay	0	4	0	4
Total		44	68	24	136

For Survey 2, there were more part-time teachers (n=114) compared to full-time teachers

(n=40), and majority (n=45) of these part-time teachers had relatively mid-satisfaction level,

while 42 of them were unsatisfied (Figure 4.16).

Figure 4.16: Cross Tabulation Employment Status * Satisfaction Level (S2)

Q17. What is the current status of your employment? * S2Q26BNE Crosstabulation

Survey 2

Count

		S2Q26BNE			Total
		2.00	3.00	4.00	
Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	8	9	23	40
	Part-time (Hourly)	42	45	27	114
Total		50	54	50	154

The two-sided asymptotic significance of the chi-square is both lower than 0.10 (*p<.01)*

and 0.05 (*p<.05)*, which means that the probability results (p=.049, S1) and (p=.000, S2) are

statistically significant at the different levels (Figure 4.17).

193

Figure 4.17: Chi-square Test Results

Survey 1
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.549ᵃ	4	.049
Likelihood Ratio	10.810	4	.029
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.470	1	.116
N of Valid Cases	136		

a. 3 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .71.

Survey 2
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.449ᵃ	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	14.796	2	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.626	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	154		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.99.

The computations above were further cross-classified by adding the type of school (employing institution) to clearly see how many of these satisfied/unsatisfied teachers actually worked at family-owned/individual owned schools or franchised schools. In both surveys, the number (n=86 for s1 and n=92 for s2) of teachers working as part-time teachers in franchised schools is greater than those working in family/individually owned schools (n=50 and n=62). The high number of dissatisfied teachers correlates to their status of employment as part-time teachers in franchised schools (Figure 4.18).

Figure 4.18: Cross-Classification

Q17. What is the current status of your employment? * S1Q26BNE * Q18. What type of school is your employing institution? Crosstabulation

Survey 1

Count

Q18. What type of school is your employing institution?			S1Q26BNE			
			2.00	3.00	4.00	Total
family/individually-owned school	Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	2	6	2	10
		Part-time (Hourly)	14	20	4	38
		Other, Monthly plus hourly pay	0	2	0	2
	Total		16	28	6	50
chain or franchised school	Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	12	16	12	40
		Part-time (Hourly)	16	22	6	44
		Other, Monthly plus hourly pay	0	2	0	2
	Total		28	40	18	86

Survey 2

Count

Q18. What type of school is your employing institution?			S2Q26BNE			
			2.00	3.00	4.00	Total
family/individually-owned school	Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	0	0	9	9
		Part-time (Hourly)	10	29	14	53
	Total		10	29	23	62
chain/franchised school	Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	8	9	14	31
		Part-time (Hourly)	32	16	13	61
	Total		40	25	27	92

A chi-square test was again conducted to test whether these differences are real or due to chance variation. The two-sided asymptotic significance of the chi-square for survey 1 represents a contrast from the outcome in the first chi-square test. The inclusion of the type of school has affected the result; thus making the significance level at p=.557 for teachers who worked in family/individually owned schools and p=.219 for those employed in franchised schools, both higher than 0.10 (*p<.01*) and 0.05 (*p<.05*) which means that the probability results are not statistically significant and that these differences are due to chance. On the other hand, the two-sided asymptotic significance of the chi-square for survey 2 remained strongly consistent with the first chi-square test even with the addition of the third variable (type of school). With the significance value of the test both below 0.10 (*p<.01*) and 0.05 (*p<.05*) at p=.000 for teachers who work family/individually-owned schools and p=.025 for those employed in franchised schools indicate that the probability of having these differences could not be due to chance variations (Figure 4.19).

Figure 4.19: Chi-square Test of Variations

Chi-Square Tests

Survey 1

Q18. What type of school is your employing institution?		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
family/individually-owned school	Pearson Chi-Square	3.008[a]	4	.557
	Likelihood Ratio	3.726	4	.444
	Linear-by-Linear Association	.585	1	.444
	N of Valid Cases	50		
chain or franchised school	Pearson Chi-Square	5.746[b]	4	.219
	Likelihood Ratio	6.490	4	.165
	Linear-by-Linear Association	1.468	1	.226
	N of Valid Cases	86		

a. 6 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .24.

b. 3 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .42.

Survey 2

Q18. What type of school is your employing institution?		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
family/individually-owned school	Pearson Chi-Square	17.852[a]	2	.000
	Likelihood Ratio	20.575	2	.000
	Linear-by-Linear Association	13.250	1	.000
	N of Valid Cases	62		
chain/franchised school	Pearson Chi-Square	7.401[b]	2	.025
	Likelihood Ratio	7.479	2	.024
	Linear-by-Linear Association	7.321	1	.007
	N of Valid Cases	92		

a. 3 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.45.

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.42.

To test the strength of the relationship of this correlation between the three variables, symmetric measures were conducted based on the above chi-square statistics. The significance values of all three measures (Phi, Cramer's V, and Contingency Coefficient) for survey 1 are .557 and .219 indicating a weak relationship (Figure 4.20).

196

Figure 4.20: Symmetric Measures (S1)

Symmetric Measures Survey 1

Q18. What type of school is your employing institution?			Value	Approx. Sig.
family/individually-owned school	Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.245	.557
		Cramer's V	.173	.557
		Contingency Coefficient	.238	.557
	N of Valid Cases		50	
chain or franchised school	Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.258	.219
		Cramer's V	.183	.219
		Contingency Coefficient	.250	.219
	N of Valid Cases		86	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on normal approximation.

The symmetric measures for survey 2 show values below .10 and .05, which suggest that the differences are not due to chance; however, looking at how strong this relationship is, the significance values of all three measures (Phi, Cramer's V, and Contingency Coefficient) are under 0.3 at .537 and lowest at .273 so although the relationship is not due to chance, it is also not very strong (Figure 4.21).

Figure 4.21: Symmetric Measure S2

Symmetric Measures Survey 2

Q18. What type of school is your employing institution?			Value	Approx. Sig
family/individually-owned school	Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.537	.000
		Cramer's V	.537	.000
		Contingency Coefficient	.473	.000
	N of Valid Cases		62	
chain/franchised school	Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.284	.025
		Cramer's V	.284	.025
		Contingency Coefficient	.273	.025
	N of Valid Cases		92	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on normal approximation.

4.5.3 Cross-tabulation: Benefits and Compensation Package (Q26C)

Cross-tabulation procedure was conducted to test the hypothesis that the levels of teacher satisfaction on benefits and compensation package (Q26C: Your school's overall benefits and compensation package is competitive within the industry) are constant across the attributes that define their employment status. Similar to the above cross tabulation results, the part-time teachers were the most dissatisfied (n=38 for S1 and n=62 for S2) with the benefits and compensation package that they were receiving (Figure 4.22).

Figure 4.22: Cross tabulation Benefits * Compensation package

Survey 1

Q17. What is the current status of your employment? * S1Q26C Crosstabulation

Count

		S1Q26C			Total
		2.00	3.00	4.00	
Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	23	16	11	50
	Part-time (Hourly)	38	27	17	82
	Other, Monthly plus hourly pay	1	3	0	4
Total		62	46	28	136

Survey 2

Q17. What is the current status of your employment? * S2Q26C Crosstabulation

Count

		S2Q26C			Total
		2.00	3.00	4.00	
Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	8	12	20	40
	Part-time (Hourly)	62	34	18	114
Total		70	46	38	154

These results were further cross-classified by adding the type of institution that employs them. The figure below shows that part-time teachers in franchised schools are more dissatisfied compared to those working in family or individually-owned schools (Figure 4.23).

Figure 4.23: Cross-Classification. Status of Employment*employing institution*satisfaction

Survey 1

Q17. What is the current status of your employment? * S1Q26C * Q18. What type of school is your employing institution? Crosstabulation

Count

Q18. What type of school is your employing institution?			S1Q26C			
			2.00	3.00	4.00	Total
family/individually-owned school	Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	4	3	3	10
		Part-time (Hourly)	16	14	8	38
		Other, Monthly plus hourly pay	1	1	0	2
	Total		21	18	11	50
chain or franchised school	Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	19	13	8	40
		Part-time (Hourly)	22	13	9	44
		Other, Monthly plus hourly pay	0	2	0	2
	Total		41	28	17	86

Survey 2

Q17. What is the current status of your employment? * S2Q26C * Q18. What type of school is your employing institution? Crosstabulation

Count

Q18. What type of school is your employing institution?			S2Q26C			
			2.00	3.00	4.00	Total
family/individually-owned school	Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	3	0	6	9
		Part-time (Hourly)	25	20	8	53
	Total		28	20	14	62
chain/franchised school	Q17. What is the current status of your employment?	Full-time (Monthly Salary)	5	12	14	31
		Part-time (Hourly)	37	14	10	61
	Total		42	26	24	92

A chi-square test was conducted to check whether these results are real or due to chance variation. The two-sided asymptotic significance of the chi-square shows discrepancy in the result for S1; the probability result of .504 means that the result could be due to chance. The result for S2 reveals a probability result of .000 which is statistically significant (see Table 4.11).

Table 4.11 Chi-Square Test Results

	S1	S2
Chi-square Value	3.330	21.747
df	4	2
Assymp. Sig.	.504	.000

Symmetric measures were conducted based on the above chi-square statistics to test the strength of the relationship of this correlation. The significance values of all three measures

(Phi, Cramer's V, and Contingency Coefficient) for survey 1 are .504 indicating the results are

due to chance. This is then supported with the values of Phi= 1.56, Cramer's V= .111, and

Contingency Coefficient at .155, which are all below 0.3 suggesting a weak relationship. The

Approx. Sig. values for all three measures for S2 are consistent at .000, suggesting that the

strong relationship of the correlations is not due to chance. With the values of the three

measures showing slightly higher than 0.3 could indicate a stronger relationship. However,

since there is only a slight difference in the values (Phi=.376 and Contingency

Coefficient= .352), the relationship is slightly weak to be considered totally significant (see

Table 4.12).

Table 4.12 Symmetric Measures

	S1		S2	
	Value	Approx. Sig.	Value	Approx. Sig.
Phi	.156	.504	.376	.000
Cramer's V	.111	.504	.376	.000
Contingency Coefficient	.155	.504	.352	.000

4.5.4 Satisfaction with Teacher Training

The bar graph below clearly shows a striking similarity with the results above that part-time

teachers are the ones most dissatisfied with teacher training that their schools provide (2=low

satisfaction) (Figure 4.24).

Figure 4.24: Bar Graph. Satisfaction* Status of Employment
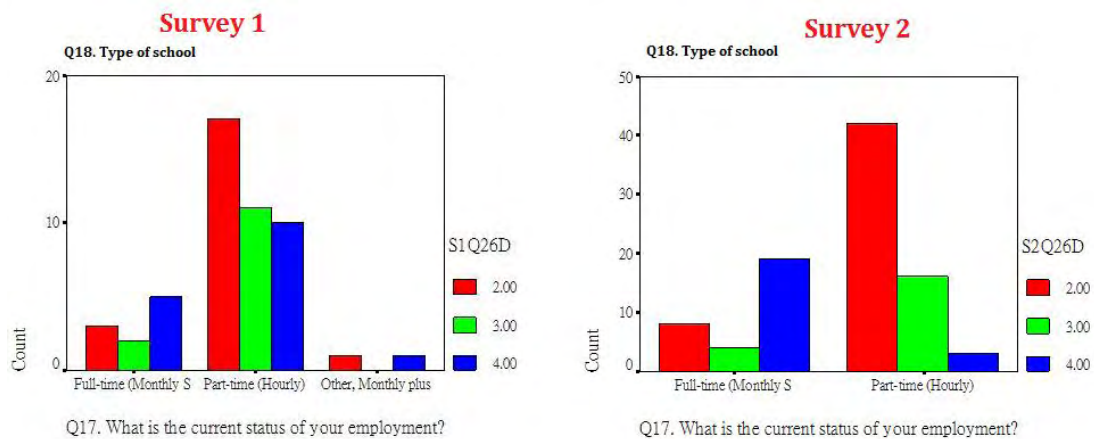
The correlation between status of employment and level of satisfaction with the teacher training the schools provide (if there were any) was also significant at .000 for Survey 2, but the correlation for Survey 1 seemed to be a result due to chance (Assymp. Sig=.698, see Table 4.13).

Table 4.13: Correlation: status of employment and level of satisfaction with the teacher training

	S1	S2
Chi-square Value	2.207	43.454
df	4	2
Assymp. Sig.	.698	.000

I used Independent-Samples T-Test to compare the satisfaction levels of the two groups (Survey 1 and 2). Teachers from Survey 1 were slightly more satisfied compared with the teachers from Survey 2. However, the difference in average is very little (Mean= 2.81 and 2.79, see Table 4.14).

Table 4.14: T-Test Group Statistics

	S1 and S2	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
S1q26D.Satisfaction. Your school provides teacher training	S1	136	2.81	1.336	.115
	S2	154	2.79	1.381	.111

The Levene statistic test was used to test the assumption that the variances of the two groups are equal. Because the Sig. value is .634 which is greater than 0.10, the groups have equal variances. Since the significance value of the test (.885) is greater than 0.05, this means that the results could be due to chance alone (Figure 4.25).

Figure 4.25: Independent Samples Test. S1Q26D

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
s1Q26D. Satisfaction. Your school provides teacher training. Equal variances assumed	.227	.634	.144	288	.885	.02	.160		-.292	.338

4.6 Willingness to Participate in Teacher professional development

Q10 of the survey asks teachers to indicate the likelihood of participating in teacher professional development activity (further teacher education or training program). In a scale of 1-5 (most likely-will not), teachers were asked to tick their choice that reflects their attitude on the matter. The table below shows the reliability coefficients of the 5 items in the scale

for both surveys 1 and 2. Results indicate an acceptable reliability coefficients of .8797 (S1) and .8382 (S2), both higher than the .7 acceptability level (Table 4.15).

Table 4.15: Reliability Coefficients

Reliability Coefficients 5-items	Survey 1 N=136	Survey 2 N=154
Alpha	.8797	.8382
Standardized Item Alpha	.8802	.8367

With 1(most likely) as minimum and 5 (will not) as maximum, the responses for survey 1 all had relatively high dispersion while results for Q10D in survey 2 fell lower at .790 SD. Nonetheless, these dispersion results indicate that the answers were spread out. Looking at S1 mean (2.97 and 2.81) and mode scores (3) for questions Q10a and Q10b suggest that teachers are not exactly sure in participating in paid teacher courses. Whereas the responses for Q10c, Q10d, and Q10e indicate that teachers are more likely to participate in free programs or activities. The answers to survey 2 also reflect the same attitude towards non-paid TPD, but the mode scores generated in Q10a and Q10b suggest a slight shift to a more positive outlook towards paid courses. However, the S2 mean scores 2.55 and 2.53 could also reflect the respondents' uncertain attitude towards paid courses or programs (Table 4.16).

Table 4.16: Descriptive Statistics. Participate in Teacher Development

		Part 2. Q10A. Participate in TESOL's Online Education Programs (with course fee)	Part 2. Q10B. Participate in paid teacher education/training program by private companies such as Caves, Oxford Taiwan, Longman, etc.	Part 2. Q10C. Participate in free teacher education/training program by private companies such as Caves, Oxford Taiwan, Longman, etc.	Part 2. Q10D. Participate in Taiwan's Ministry of Education English teacher training program	Part 2. Q10E. Participate in free online education/ training program
Survey 1 N Valid		136	136	136	136	136
Mean		2.97	2.81	2.35	2.35	2.43
Mode		3	3	1	2	2
Std. Deviation		1.180	1.158	1.214	1.164	1.257
Sum		404	382	320	320	330
Survey 2 N Valid		154	154	154	154	154
Mean		2.55	2.53	1.94	1.81	1.96
Mode		2	2	1	2	2
Std. Deviation		1.150	.944	.978	.790	.870
Sum		392	390	299	279	302

The Independent Samples T-test was used to see if the two means (S1 and S2) are different from each other since the samples that the means are based on were taken from different individuals who have not been matched.   For item a (Q10a), the significance (p value) of Levene's test is .269 which is greater than the α level for the test (.05); thus it is assumed that the variances are equal. The p value of the Sig. (2-tailed) test is .002; A *t* test

therefore reveals a statistically reliable difference between the mean number of teachers'

responses for Q10a that S1 has (M = 2.97, s = 1.180) and that S2 has (M = 2.55, s = 1.150),

$t(288) = 3.104$, $p = .002$, α = .05 (Figure 4.26).

Figure 4.26: Independent Samples T-test Q10A

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
S1.Part 2. Q10A. Participate in TESOL's Online Education Programs (with course fee)	Equal variances assumed	1.224	.269	3.104	288	.002	.43	.137	.156	.695
	Equal variances not assumed			3.099	281.611	.002	.43	.137	.155	.695

For item Q10b, Levene's test for equality of variances is .195, which is also greater than

the .05α level. The p value of the Sig. (2-tailed) test is .026; A *t* test therefore reveals a

statistically reliable difference between the mean number of teachers' responses for Q10b that

S1 has (M = 2.81, s = 1.158) and that S2 has (M = 2.53, s = .944), $t(288) = 2.237$, $p = .026$, α

= .05. Although .026 is higher than the p value of .002 (for Q10a), it is .03 below the α = .05

level (Figure 4.27).

Figure 4.27: Q10B, Levene's test

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Part 2. Q10B. Participate in paid teacher education/training program by private companies such as Caves, Oxford Taiwan, Longman, etc.	Equal variances assumed	1.688	.195	2.237	288	.026	.2764	.12352	.03323	.51948
	Equal variances not assumed			2.209	260.717	.028	.2764	.12509	.03005	.52266

For items Q10c, d, and e, the p value .002 and .000 (Q10d and Q10e) is lower than the .05

alpha level (*p<.05*). These results strongly reject the hypothesis that there is a difference in

the mean scores for S1 and S2. In other words, these teachers are more likely to participate in

non-paid teacher professional development activities (Figure 4.28).

Figure 4.28: Q10c, d, e Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Part 2. Q10C. Participate in free teacher education/training program by private companies such as Caves, Oxford Taiwan, Longman, etc.	Equal variances assumed	9.791	.002	3.192	288	.002	.4114	.12889	.15770	.66507
	Equal variances not assumed			3.150	259.049	.002	.4114	.13061	.15419	.66857
Part 2. Q10D. Participate in Taiwan's Ministry of Education English teacher training program	Equal variances assumed	17.293	.000	4.677	288	.000	.5413	.11573	.31346	.76905
	Equal variances not assumed			4.570	233.112	.000	.5413	.11843	.30793	.77458
Part 2. Q10E. Participate in free online education/training program	Equal variances assumed	20.212	.000	3.701	288	.000	.4654	.12577	.21788	.71298
	Equal variances not assumed			3.620	236.089	.000	.4654	.12857	.21215	.71871

4.7 Summary

In this chapter, I presented the results of the survey questionnaire that I administered in

2004 and 2008. The survey results provided a descriptive summary of the demographic

profile of the teachers and their attitudes toward language use in the classroom, teacher

qualifications and abilities, professional development, their perceptions toward the hiring of

local and foreign teachers. The responses to the survey questions also allowed me to look into

their behavior and practices in the classroom. This made it possible for me to cross-check

their answers and see whether their presumed attitudes can be reflected in what they do in the

classroom. One of the interesting findings was the language used in the classroom. The high frequency score revealed preference towards the use of the target language but the actual practice revealed that they use both Chinese and English in class instructions and mostly Chinese when teaching grammar. The survey results also showed that teachers knew the importance of being proficient in the target language and they also disclosed their attitudes toward the need to enhance language proficiency. The teachers' responses regarding what they believed the reasons for employing foreign teachers and local teachers were clearly revealed an awareness of their working conditions. A majority of them regarded the employment of local teachers as a financial leverage for the schools since they could actually get two-three Taiwanese teachers for the price/salary of one foreign teacher and that employing Taiwanese teachers also meant having someone do the extra class work. They also had a clear understanding what foreign teachers could bring into the classroom that they felt could not or lacked. They knew that foreign teachers possessed the kind of accent and look that the market (students and parents) demanded which provided the schools a certain competitive advantage, and that having them in the classroom was the closest thing to having an authentic learning environment. Regarding the satisfaction levels in connection with their employment status may suggest that a consistent trend of attitudes existed and the fact that there was a high level of dissatisfaction in the gap analysis should be a point of concern. The teachers' attitudes

toward professional development indicated that they were willing to participate in non-paid forms of TPD and this should also be taken consideration by all stakeholders i.e. school administrators and teachers themselves, to come up with innovative ways and means of providing and engaging in TPD.

In the following chapter, I will discuss the results of the qualitative research conducted in this study.

CHAPTER 5: QUALITATIVE DATA RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the data gathered from the various qualitative research methods used in this study. As mentioned in Chapter 2, research questions two to five required an in-depth look into ICT and Web 2.0 tools and how they were integrated in buxiban/supplementary school teachers' TPD and whether or not the online teacher professional development (oTPD) activities played an instrumental role in the transfer of knowledge (learning) and in affecting change in the their behavior and their students' learning. I begin by discussing the outcomes of using Yahoo! Groups as an online community of practice (CoP) where Taiwanese EFL teachers in supplementary schools could have the opportunity to discuss and share knowledge and experiences (Section 5.1), followed by a discussion of the communications that took place on Facebook with Joy and other Taiwanese teachers (Section 5.2) which also provided invaluable data for this study. Finally, a discussion of the two case study subjects, Joy and Cindy (Section 5.3 to 5.14) and how they participated in various oTPD which included online meetings/chats with invited experts and pre-and post-online meeting class observation and creating and maintaining blog for reflective purposes was also covered in this chapter.

5.1 Main Findings from Using Yahoo! Group

Using Yahoo! Group provided the means to facilitate online teacher professional development for Taiwanese EFL teachers in buxiban and supplementary schools in the form of asynchronous discussions with guest teacher-experts (mentors). This group also provided an online platform where discussions could be held on topics related to their job as EFL teachers in the private sector. This form of online communication allowed an in-depth look at their attitudes and perceptions toward their work, their relationship with their students and so forth. Most of the messages were filled with sentiments, anxiety, and frustrations toward their teaching environment- these were the issues that mattered to them. The messages posted on the online group gave them the opportunity to share their experiences while they also learned what other teachers' experiences were. They also gained insights by reflecting on their own situation and applying new things i.e. learning activities, etc.

Inviting guest teacher-experts who could give meaningful suggestions that address the core issues also gave these teachers the chance to not only to work with experienced teacher-mentors but also provided them the opportunity articulate their ideas, opinions, doubts and present issues that were important to them. They had the chance to ask questions pertaining to their current situations that needed remedy and elicit courses of actions that would help them alleviate their stress or anxiety due to job-(teaching)-related circumstances. Questions posted by teacher-experts and other group members requesting clarifications or

information that would aid in better understanding their situation gave the Taiwanese EFL teachers the opportunity to respond to these questions in an appropriate manner. In doing so, they engaged in a process of give and take where they learned how to 'listen' attentively to what was being discussed in the list and respond after thinking or reflecting on the questions they were asked. When teachers asked for help, they received direct advice and sometimes even words of comfort. Engaging in meaningful conversations allowed these teachers to work or think things through as they established and gain insights from various suggestions/advice given. They learned to sift through the messages as they sought answers within themselves. The choices they made regarding which advice to follow also show that these teachers have a sense of self-awareness as they were able to identify, select, and adopt what they felt would work for them.

The Yahoo! Group played an important role in serving as a potential online environment where learning and intellectual stimulation could take place and be nourished as teachers engage in professional development via distance with teacher-experts. Such oTPD would not have been possible due to lack of support they receive from their employing institutions. The YG also provided these teachers access to both free and fee-charging online and traditional professional development as members of the group posted links and information about workshops or conferences that they could participate in. As the moderator of the group, my

roles include moderating and facilitating discussions among others (see Table 5.1, cf.

Feenberg & Xin, 2002; Berge, 1995).

Table 5.1: Roles of a Group Moderator

Roles of a Group Moderator
1. to moderate and facilitate discussions
2. set the group norms i.e. netiquette, etc.,
3. enable group participation using teachers' experiences as a frame of reference or topic raiser for discussions
4. acknowledge teachers' posted messages to make them feel that their contributions are valuable by providing immediate feedback
5. respond to teachers' comments in a way that would weave what other teacher-participants have said in response to the same discussion thread
6. guide discussions without taking control of the floor by using open-ended remarks, examples, weaving comments, providing/soliciting suggestions
7. provide useful links to teacher resources and learning activities

I created the group in late 2003 but did not open it for membership until 2004 when my

pilot survey was ready to be administered. That year there were about 50 teachers who joined

the group and participated in the pilot survey; they also helped in the revisions and translation

of the survey from English to Mandarin Chinese. There were also informal discussions about

their teaching situation that took place around that time. In December 2004, the group list was

informed that focus discussions were going to be held; new participants would be joining the

YG and guest teacher-experts were invited to participate in the discussions and provide online

mentoring for those EFL teachers who may have work-related issues that they wish to discuss

or resolved. The 'old' members were told that they could stay and participate or lurk, and

those who wanted to leave the group may freely do so. In January 2005, the membership was

reduced to 20 teachers and 10 new members joined; there were a total of 30 teachers by the

first quarter of 2005, around the time discussions also gained peak levels. All of the teachers

were teaching at the time they participated in this study. About 80% of the teachers who

joined the group taught in buxibans that also offered after-school services i.e. help with

homework (from mainstream elementary school program). The remaining 20% taught in

mainstream elementary schools. To date, a total of 322 messages have been posted; 236 or

73% were posted between the periods of October 2004 to November 2005. Conversations that

took place in 2004 were primarily carried out as part of the pilot study where the early drafts

of the questionnaire were shared with the members of this group for review. Only the

focused-discussions with guest mentors that took place between January and April 2005 were

included in the qualitative data analysis; during this period six participants posted messages

(51 messages), while the invited guest teacher-experts "Webheads" posted 12 messages from

February to April 2005 (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Taiwanese EFL Teachers' Yahoo! Group Message History

PARTICIPANTS (YG username)	Number of Messages Posted January-April 2005	Online Guest Teacher-Mentors	Number of Messages Posted February-April 2005
April	10	Michael B.	2
Joy/CJ/Josefina	12	Arnold M.	6
Amei	10	Elizabeth H.S.	4
Chouchou1589	5		
Judy	4		
Anna	9		
Agnes	1		
TOTAL	51	TOTAL	12

Prior to sending out invitation to prospective experts, I posted a message to the Taiwanese YG list asking them about the teaching skill or other related topics that they wish to learn or enhance. This followed Brooks (2006) approach in selecting/scouting mentors based on a skilled matching process. The teachers were invited to share their ideas and participate in the discussion on various topics (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3: YG Group Discussion Topics

YG Group Discussion Topics
1. How to teach English and enhance the students' language skills: reading, listening, speaking and writing
2. How to teach higher grade students
3. How to improve teachers' language skills and to learn how to teach these to my students
4. How to improve teaching style
5. How to integrate technology into the classroom
6. How to make my low level students interested in learning EFL

In the following sections, I will present examples of discourse that took place in the Taiwanese Teachers' Yahoo! Group showing the various characteristics of mentoring (cf. Section 2.2.6) and cognitive apprenticeship (cf. Section 2.3) that came out from the

interaction between the Taiwanese teachers and the invited guest teacher-experts.

5.1.1 On Being a Good Teacher and Motivating Students

On February 20, 2005 (Message 128), April, one of the Taiwanese teachers in the group posted a message sharing her work situation and what she was going through. Her new teaching post assigned to her by employer gave her a lot of pressure since she was filling in for a teacher who at that time got fired. In this example, April was raising an issue and at the same time asking for suggestions or answers to overcome her dilemma- regarding pace of teaching and on whether she should pattern her teaching style to that of her previous colleague or find her own (see Figure 5.1). This is an example of self-directed learning where the teacher asked questions about her own teaching practices and was keen on finding some answers.

Figure 5.1: Screenshot of April's Message (#128) on February 20, 2005

"I am teaching one class in my cram school now. The students are about 2~3 grade students who have been learning English for 2 years. Because their first teacher who has 10 years experience was fired by my boss so I replace her position. I have pressure when I teach English because the students get used to their first teacher's style already (very fast teaching style). Including my boss, they think the tempo of teaching English should be as fast as possible. Do you agree or not? They think when teacher's tempo of teaching is fast, the students can pay much attention to the class and also they can learn more ... Should I be like her or just be myself?"

This thread received two responses; one from me acknowledging the effort she made in posting her message and giving a few comments regarding her situation. Another Taiwanese teacher, Joy (who was also my case study subject), responded and offered her some advice (see Figure 5.2):

Figure 5.2: Joy's Response to April (Message #132)

> "… I think it is more important for you to make sure that your students comprehend and learn well in the class. Whether you teach fast or slowly is less important. If the ex-teacher was a good teacher, and your boss liked her way of teaching, how can she got fired? So maybe you want to find out what went wrong in the teacher's class that made her loose this job and try to avoid making the same mistakes. I do not agree that when you teach fast, then the students pay more attention. Actually, if you teach faster than the students can follow, they will get lost in your lessons easily and sooner or later they will stop listening to you because they can't understand what you are saying…" (Message 132)

In Joy's comment above, she tried to lessen April's stress and insecurity because of the thought that her employers prefer her ex-colleague's way of teaching by bringing to April's attention the fact that her ex-colleague was fired. She then offered a suggestion to look into the reasons why the teacher got fired and to avoid committing the same mistakes. She also provided her opinion about the pace or speed in which a lesson should be delivered; she also told her what she thinks is more important than the pace of teaching, "I think it is more important for you to make sure that your students comprehend and learn well in the class." In

this particular example, it clearly shows how mentoring support could come from other people who are not connected to the workplace (Paré & Le Maistre, 2006). Joy and April would not have had the chance to meet or exchange opinions/feedback if they had not joined the Taiwanese EFL teachers' YG; the YG then provided the opportunity for these teachers to expand their network of friends and colleagues who could provide support and advice.

On February 26, 2005 (Message 139) April sent a response explaining more about her teaching environment, her students, and her worries about making this new class more interesting for the students (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3: April's Response Posted on February 26, 2005 (Message 139)

"Next week is a new and challenging week to teach English at my cram school. Because the former teacher got fired, I will take over her classes from next week. Two of the classes are older students (5~7 grade students), and I can feel they don't really like me. (I am their new teacher from next week) It took me two weeks to observe the students when they were learning English in the classroom. I could not only felt (sic) they were uncomfortable to get used to me but also didn't response (sic) me when I said hi to them. I want to create something different in the first class from next week in order to motivate their interests in learning English. My purpose is that I don't want to teach too much but I want to know each of the students' thoughts and their feeling about learning English and me. Do you think it can work or if you were me, what would you do?"

Seven responses were gathered on this particular thread. Below is a message from guest teacher-expert Arnold where he assured April that what she was experiencing was a common problem and could happen in any teaching context (Message 140). He advised her not to

worry about it and to focus more on her students' learning needs. Weaving in April's

comments to easily connect the contents of his posting to the main idea of this thread, Arnold

gave some suggestions on how she could make use of the situation and turn it into an

interesting learning activity while at the same time an opportunity to get to know her students

(Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4 Analysis of Arnold's Message to April [1], (Message 140)

The first two lines in Arnold's message "The problem you're facing is universal. Taking

over a colleague's classes like this is always a challenge" automatically lowers down the

April's stress level and make her feel that her situation could happen to anyone and anywhere. By saying, "Don't worry too much about it and just get started" he voices support and encouragement to what April was intending do. Words of praise, "This is an excellent strategy", could also motivate April to try and manage this class effectively. By writing, "I would be a bit wary…" Arnold was being tactful and careful about his choice of words in expressing his different take or opinion about asking students what they think of the teacher. Using the phrase, "Perhaps it is better to just concentrate on the learning of English" offers April a constructive suggestion without being too forceful; he was being sensitive to how April might take his message. "An approach like this will "tell" the students what kind of teacher you are…" gives a rationale for the suggestion he was making, which validates his point that by doing so could show students the kind of teacher she is- "someone who is willing to listen to them on a points that are crucial…". He concluded his message by offering further suggestions for follow-up activities that integrate language learning tasks; doing so inculcates the idea of being creative and to try things out. Adding "My two euro cents...Good luck!" in his closing remarks gives his message a kind and friendly tone. Arnold's response clearly shows that he had carefully read April's message and this is similar to listening actively to a mentee in a face-to-face environment.

The next response (Message141) came from Elizabeth where she gave April a concrete

example of a learning activity called the 'Name Game'.   She began her message by saying,

"Hi April—", which automatically sets a more personal and friendly tone that would make

April wanting to read more. Before she described the Name Game, she first weaved a few

remarks about the cram school environment that the teachers in the YG had been writing

about (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5: Elizabeth's Response to April (Message 141)

"I think in a cram school setting you have people who may not be very motivated--someone else may want them to learn. So you need some extrinsic motivation, that is, make the class enjoyable and a safe learning experience. That means everyone needs to get to know each other."

By weaving previous comments made in the YG discussion list Elizabeth shows she was

not only following the messages that were posted by the Taiwanese teachers, but it also

affirms her support and understanding of the teachers' context and needs. She focused on

students' learning motivation as this was what most of the teachers raised as an important

issue for them. She also provided clarifications on the concepts that she provided. For

example, she gave a simple and easily understandable definition of how 'extrinsic motivation'

can be done in class and a description of what the activity was about and why it was being

suggested in the first place.

Elizabeth wrote how the Name Game activity can be applied in the classroom and the process in which the students participate. The use of the first person "I" i.e. "I usually go last…I can remember some 40 or so names…" (see Figure 5.6) also personalizes the activity and that she herself had experienced doing it in her own classroom. By sharing her personal experiences (what worked and what did not) embedded in the learning activity that she was suggesting also shows her expertise and credibility. Such form of sharing could also inspire teachers to adopt this activity in their own classroom. She also introduced the idea of pairing up students to get them to practice oral skills, and she also gave suggestions on how to use this activity to low level students. Elizabeth's message does not only provide suggestions but the approach used in writing her message also models how the activity can be applied; the explanation of the process or steps was clear and explicit enough to understand and follow.

Figure 5.6 Analysis of Elizabeth's Response to April [1]

I usually play the "Name Game" in the first class--sit in a circle, and the first person says his/her name. The second person says the name of the first, and his/her own name. The third person repeats, starting with the first name, all the way around the circle. I usually go last, and find I can remember some 40 or so names, backwards or forwards. Then continue around the circle! Students are surprised and pleased that they can do get everyone's name. Of course next time, when they change seats, you'll have to do some brush-up. I ask everyone to look around the room and silently say names--if they can't remember one, they can ask the person directly.

> Provided concrete example of a learning activity

I then pair up students and have them interview each other, and then introduce their partner to the whole class.

> Introduced the idea of 'Pairing' to get students to talk

This gives practice in asking questions, like "What's your name?" and "Where are you from?" and it's a good ice-breaker.

If students are low level, you can put the questions on the board first--ask them to help develop the questions on the board, too--what do you want to find out about the other person? how would you ask that in English? They might come up with names, hobbies, favorite foods, etc. You can suggest some that might make it fun.

> Suggestions for low level students

Even very low level students can do this activity, and it helps you remember everyone. I've found if they introduce themselves, it doesn't work--they have to introduce the other person.

> Suggesting the need for teacher participation

Your non-participants will have to take part, and they may see that you aren't such a bad person after all.

On March 5, 2005 (Message 151), April posted a message to the group where she gave an update of her class. Below is an excerpt from that message (Figure 5.7). She said that she tried the learning activity that Elizabeth suggested with some improvements to suit her students better. She had prepared hand-outs with interview questions for the pair-up activity, and she also added a song and a puzzle activity. She mentioned that those students who once

did not participate in class activities were participating in this one. In the end, she said the

class went smoothly, and that it had a positive effect on how the students treated her during

their second class meeting. Seeing the change in behavior of her students had affected her

perception about herself as an effective teacher; this experience had given her the confidence

that she badly needed. By posting this message to the group affirmed her active participation

in her professional development. Reporting back to the group allowed others, including the

guest teacher-experts to know how their participation in April's teacher professional proved

helpful. It also informed the group about the progress that she has accomplished.

Figure 5.7: Analysis of April's Response to Arnold and Elizabeth
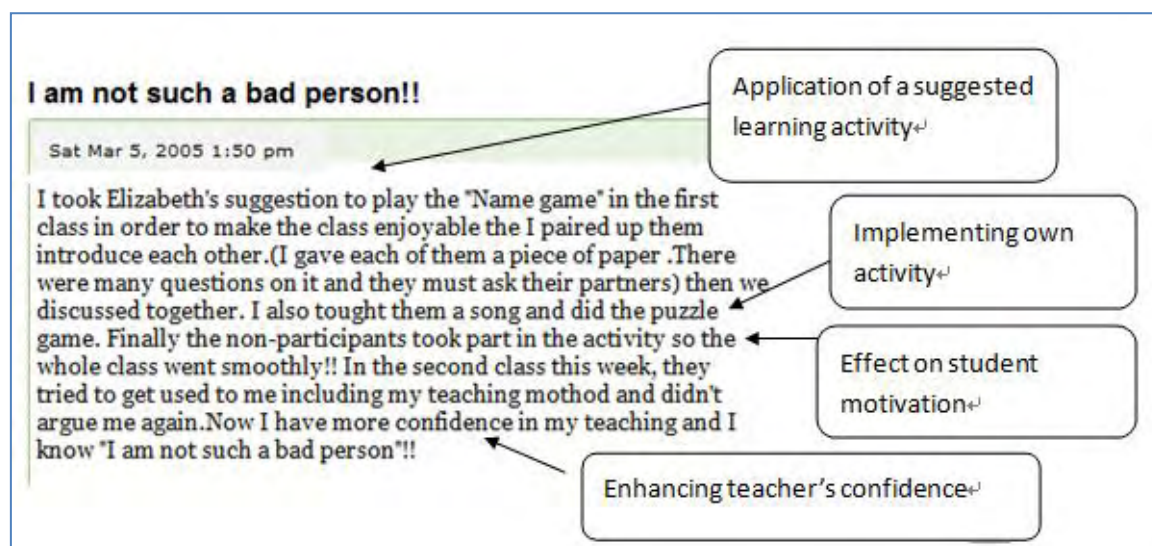
5.1.2 On Students' Homework

One of the major issues that these teachers complained about was the role of parents in their children's EFL learning. As one teacher wrote, "I think the teachers who work in the buxiban or perhaps private schools have a lot harder time with their clients (students and parents, as well as their boss) than the teachers who are in the public sector." She added that it is harder in a way because Taiwanese teachers do more than just teach English; it is also their responsibility to make sure that the students' homework (from regular elementary school program) must be completed before sending them home. They were also expected to give extra English homework for students to take home. And they were treated partly responsible for the students' success or failure both in learning English and in the subjects from their elementary school. As another teacher wrote, "Parents always want to see their kids get higher grade instead of knowing how much or how better their kids learn." On the same note, Amei, a teacher in a buxiban with after-school tutorial services (an-chin ban) wrote her first message to the list (Message 142) asking some suggestions on how to deal with students' lack of motivation in doing their English homework (given by her buxiban school). The following is another example of self-inquiry where the teacher seeks advice and/or answers to the questions raised concerning her own teaching practices. She first introduced herself and apologized for not participating much earlier. She proceeded by giving a background of her teaching context and what her honest views and unbarred comments on the roles of buxiban

schools and teachers, and Taiwanese parents' expectations from them (Figure 5.8).

Figure 5.8: Mei's Introduction Posted to the Taiwanese YG (Message 142)

"I have some students who come from rich family, they do participate in my class and quite enjoy it, but they have huge problem in doing their homework. After every class, I give all students some homework to do at home. But they never do it. Based on the "sweet service" of a cram school, we help those students' parents to finish the students' homework in our cram school because they are too busy to help their own children to do anything. But that becomes our nightmare. I think both of parents and students rely on our "sweet service". Parents think they pay money and that is the part of our service. In students' mind, they think no matter what happens, here always has someone to help them to finish their annoying homework. In fact, we don't have enough teacher and time to keep on this kind of "sweet service"; on the other hand, we have competitive market pressure from other cram schools. We can't say "No" to parents. Under this circumstance, how can I enhance or stimulate those students' will in doing their homework in order to reduce teachers' burden and help those students to take their responsibility for themselves?"

This particular discussion thread received eight responses. As the discussion moderator, I offered my views on dealing with the situation and tried to raise a possible assumption that the students could be simply tired after a long day from school and long hours in buxiban. I also suggested the use of incentives or rewards to motivate students, and that if necessary she could talk to the parents and raise her concerns about their child's issues with English homework (see Figure 5.9).

Figure 5.9: Analysis of Aiden's Response to Amei

By the time these students go to your school they've already spent a day in their regular school. These children are exhausted, they spent their free time doing their homework. I think one of the reasons for not doing their English assignments could be due to the fact that they're tired. This is something that many Taiwanese find normal and acceptable. Everybody is doing the same thing. So, this doesn't surprise them at all.

Giving a possible reason

To solve your problem, have you thought of giving them incentives for completing their English assignments? There are many forms of incentives: stickers, candies, and other rewards. What about putting a poster with the students' photos? What if you negotiate with them, 'do this assignment and I won't give you an assignment tomorrow?'

Suggesting the use of incentives

Do you have to give assignments everyday?

If the parents are the ones requesting for these, then I suggest that you talk to the parents and ask them to at least remind their children to do their assignments.

Suggesting the idea of talking to the parents

Joining in the discussion, Arnold suggested that this situation creates a dilemma for cram school teachers. He wrote, "If the children are exhausted and that is the reason they cannot do this (extra) homework, then would it not be sensible to arrange the cram school syllabus in such a way that homework becomes optional but is not essential?" He also added that "a really tired student will not learn happily and effectively whether they (try to) do the homework task, or not at all..." As a mentor the advice he gave puts the students' best learning interest as a major concern. Unfortunately, the nature of buxiban and after-school tutorial services lies on hammering students with tons of homework. The mentality is the more homework is given the more chances for the students to keep on practicing or using what they have learned. On the same thread, Elizabeth posted a message telling Amei that she had raised 'a really interesting problem', one that covers both the 'economic issue (an external pressure)

as well as the motivation issue' (Message 149). Her response addressed Amei remarks

regarding fierce competition in the buxiban industry that make schools bow down to every

request parents to avoid losing students; after all, private schools are business entities that

need to thrive (Figure 5.10).

Figure 5.10: Elizabeth's Suggestions to Amei (Message 149)

1. You can suggest the school have a "contract" that parents and students sign indicating that homework is the students' responsibility. AND, that you will charge extra for the "sweet service" of homework assistance. It will take a little time to get your clients used to this idea, however. But it will also give more value to the homework. You probably need to be sure your school has a good reputation and offers good results to make this economic solution work.

2. The other solution is just to include homework as part of the course--the cost is then hidden, and the students are happy because they have no "homework." They are doing it in class instead, and paying for it in the hours they contract for. (Posted on March 4, 2005)

Michael responded (Message 150) to this thread as well. His response is an example of a

mentor's input where he provided an open communication in resolving the conflict teachers,

buxiban owners and parents have concerning students' homework. He shared his experience

working with buxibans, and that this experience taught him that assignments were given for

the benefit of the parents to show them what teachers were doing rather than the benefit of the

students. He suggested Amei to welcome this problem as a chance to rethink about her own

position with regards to giving homework. He also gave his opinion about the use of rewards.

He wrote, "Research shows that once you start giving incentives for something that is good (correct or right) people begin expecting incentives over the long run whenever they do that thing again." He added that this could eventually harm students' intrinsic motivation to learn, and thus, must be done carefully.

On March 5, 2005, Amei sent a message (Message 152) thanking the mentors for the advices given. She acknowledged the fact that she gave students assignments after every class and she also felt that giving assignments all the time was unnecessary. However, she admitted having pressures from the parents since they believe that assignments are essential to getting high grades and that they are part of the learning process. She further explained that assignments can help students practice their reading and writing skills. She wrote, "…practice makes perfect…It's what I have learned... I give them the regular English homework after each English class but they have their other regular homework which is assigned from their elementary school teacher…I don't give them many assignments to do after one class." Amei also commented on the students being tired, reacting to Arnold's message. She wrote that the students attend buxiban classes five days a week and attend English classes twice a week. Her students were about 7-11 years old, and they were either picked up by the buxiban school bus from their regular school or their parents bring them to the buxiban (from their regular school) after 12 noon and stay there until 7 to 8 p.m. Teachers like Amei were expected to do some

day-care services as well, since they had to oversee that children had taken their meals, had

taken a nap, etc. (cf. Chapter 1, Table 1.2 Job Description).

Regarding the rewards issue, Amei said that she tried giving her students rewards to

encourage them but she felt that her students have gotten used to them; she wrote, "They don't

really care about the rewards… And most of the time, other teachers don't have enough time

to be so patient with them, and they [students] do lack a sense of responsibility for doing the

assignments." She also added that she asked the parents to remind their children to do their

homework, but the parents were too busy and as long as they pay the school, they feel that

they have the right to pass on the responsibility to teachers or the buxiban/an-chin ban. Arnold

sent another message (Message 154) requesting for more clarification about Amei's students'

learning context (Figure 5.11). This is an example where the mentor expressed interest in

learning more about Amei's teaching context.

Figure 5.11: Arnold's Message Requesting Clarification (Message 154)

> "Hi Mei, I would like to ask you a couple of questions. How many days a week does a
> student visit cram school? What time do they arrive? (I know they leave at 7 or 8 pm)
> How old are they? Is cram school exclusively for English classes? At what times do
> they do their regular school homework? I just want to make sure about this before
> offering more suggestions."

Amei responded answering Arnold's questions hoping to provide more information about

her students' learning schedule and activities (Figure 5.12). Arnold posted a response

(Message 158) to Amei where he wrote "Taiwanese student's school day is very long and

homework seems to feature strongly." He expressed his hopes that when these students arrive at home there is no homework left for them to do. He also shared what it was like in his home country; he wrote "In Holland, by contrast, primary school children have no homework at all until the age of eleven or twelve and even then it is set in modest quantities. The idea then is to prepare the children at the latest possible moment of their primary school life for homework in the secondary school." He then suggested that given this circumstance it would be wise for teachers to analyze the nature of homework tasks and see how they can be set in such a way that they are not the kind of burden often associated with homework. He further recommended Amei to set less homework and strive for quality and adopt a different terminology that can be used in lieu of homework i.e. exercises. He proposed the idea of giving students exercises that are:

- challenging, relevant and interesting to do
- possibly student-initiated (to provide for individualization)
- have a fun element

This particular asynchronous threaded discussion with Amei about students' homework is yet another example where mentors shared possible solutions to a teacher's class-related problem. The examples presented in this section also illustrate an informal or indirect involvement in the school improvement process where the mentors' proposed solutions to Amei's dilemma could help the school (management and teaching staff) better relate to their clients (parents) and raise the issue that affects their children's learning and well-being.

Figure 5.12: Amei's Response to Arnold (Message 155)

Hi Arnold:
Thanks for asking... ^^"

They visit cram school 5 days a week and have English class twice a week.
I give them the regular English homework after each English class but they have their other regular homework which is assigned from their elementary school teacher.
They are about 7 to 11years old. They arrive cram school after 12 PM until 7-8 PM.
We are the English cram school but with day- caring (After -class caring).

> For example: they have English class on Tuesdays and Thursdays. After Tuesday's class, they are supposed to finish the homework before next class, which is on Thursday.
> Thanks again.

Mei

5.1.3 On Mentoring

On March 24, 2005, April sent another post (Message 169) sharing with the group about some issues that bother her the most. Like Amei, she also mentioned about the difficulty of communicating with the parents; however she brought up an interesting issue that concerns having a good relationship with a co-teacher and the issue of mentoring in the work place (Figure 5.13):

Figure 5.13: April's Message dated March 24, 2005 (Message 169)

> **"Should the experienced teacher train the new teacher? I know most of the teachers don't want to share their teaching method with the new teacher because they think if I teach you how to teach the kids, maybe I will be replaced some day. I don't want to share the experience with anybody because "that" is my tool to survive in the area (at the cram school). I think those problems are happening to me in the past one month."**

On April 10, 2005 (Message 173) I sent a response to generate discussion on this topic.

In the first paragraph, I called on the attention of the guest teacher-experts to contribute to the

discussion since 'mentoring' they are knowledgeable and experts in this field. In sharing my

viewpoint, I included a truncated message from April's post which clearly indicates the issue

that I was addressing. I then stated what I believed the root of the problem was; that this issue

boils down to teacher's attitude, her/his willingness to share and cooperate with colleagues. I

added that if she has a co-teacher whom she finds a little 'protective' of her own interest, I

advised her to just let her be because that was probably the way she was and focus instead on

doing something that was more productive. I also wrote that in any organization, interpersonal

skills are very important. Teachers who refuse to work together harmoniously make a

manager's job difficult. It is either they undergo a training or workshop on team collaboration

or they get fired in the end. I suggested that she focus on improving herself. I wrote "'A

teacher who keeps on learning, updating herself with new skills and learning and applying

teaching methods tends to keep the job. If you feel that you are armed with good teaching

skills and interpersonal skills then you will never feel insecure of losing your job." Following

the same thread, Elizabeth posted a message (Message 187) where she gave further

suggestions and advice. She offered using the direct approach where teachers who are in need

simply go and ask questions. In giving a sample scenario where an experienced teacher

responded 'I don't know' to the question the newbie teacher asked, Elizabeth was implicitly

saying to take the situation lightly and not jump into conclusion. As Elizabeth wrote, "at least

wait a little--it may not be a brush-off, but just surprise that you asked, and it may take a little

time for those good tips to emerge." (Figure 5.14).

Figure 5.14: Analysis of Elizabeth's Response to April [2]

How to get a mentor

Reply | Delete

Aiden wrote some good advice to April recently, and I agree mostly with it--here at the YG our group can help each other without worrying about "competition."

However, sometimes it might help to directly ask a person, "How do you teach XYZ?"

Suggestion: Use a more direct approach

Sometimes you will be surprised that they were just waiting for someone to notice that they are good at teaching XYZ, and they will help you.

Mentoring often starts with the newbie--they ask for advice. The old-hand may hesitate to give advice unasked for, or they are too busy to notice that someone needs help. But once the newbie asks, the old-hand is pleased and flattered and eager to help.

Suggestion: Just ask for help

I had this situation in my university program. When a new hire asked for help, I wound up visiting their classes and eventually even co-teaching a class with them--and we both learned a lot.

Sharing successful personal experience

So if you ask, and the old-hand says "I don't know," at least wait a little--it may not be a brush-off, but just surprise that you asked, and it may take a little time for those good tips to emerge. After all, a good teacher doesn't often think consciously about what she does.

Advice: Be understanding and don't jump into conclusions

Cheers--
--Elizabeth

233

5.1.4 On Teacher Training and Workshops

In addition to sharing teaching resources, links and information to both face-to-face and/or online teacher training and workshops were also shared on the list. For example, I posted a message informing the teachers about a teachers' workshop, Cambridge 2005. This was also cross-posted on my personal blog and on the Taiwanese online group. Three teachers from this group attended the workshop. Another free workshop was posted on January 26, Building Spelling and Pronunciation through Games and Activities sponsored by Peggy Bookstore in Kaoshiung, Taiwan. Peggy (the Bookstore owner) wrote a personal invitation to the online group. She gave information about the location of the workshop and who the guest speaker would be. She said that most of her customers are buxiban and private kindergarten schools in Kaohsiung, and that the workshop could be a place to meet other teachers. Two teachers from the list, Joy and April, participated in this workshop. She wrote,

> *"The purpose I would like to have this conference is to give my client schools and the English teachers to have free training lessons. So, don't be shy, just come and join us. You can go to my website to print out the registration form and fax to me or just drop me a line to let me know you want to join us that day."*

The example above shows that the use of YG as a CoP could provide access to TPD that could help promote work-related skills or pedagogical knowledge. Joy's blog entry on March 19, 2005, validates the potential application of the YG as a tool for providing access to TPD. She wrote, "…those (notes) I took for (sic) the Todd Hess' workshop are already up. Todd had

234

some brilliant ideas as well, so take a look at them and you might find them come handy

while teaching…I have learnt a couple new concepts from this workshop, and many useful

techniques and activities. I have applied some of them in my teaching, and I found there were

games more suitable for elder kids that didn't work as well for younger kids (or vice versa)."

5.1.5 On Working scenario of EFL Teachers in Buxiban/Supplementary School Progams

In understanding the Taiwanese EFL teachers' working scenario in buxibans, I asked the

teachers in the YG to share and briefly describe their teaching context. April responded to this

thread (see Appendix 6). Based on what she wrote, she co-taught with a foreign teacher who

did most of the teaching. She was given one hour to teach but she was also required to be

present in the classroom all the time to deal with class management issues. Her experience

collaborating with a foreign teacher was also positive since he was professional enough to

prepare his lessons and she was able to learn a few teaching strategies as she observed his

co-teacher. However, despite this positive experience, she left and worked for another private

language school. In addition to teaching strategies, she also felt that she needed to enhance her

own language skills to become a more effective teacher. Another student-teacher,

Chouchou1589, posted a message to the group about her blog post regarding her experiences

teaching in a small-sized English buxiban prior to landing a teaching post as an English

teacher in an elementary school in southern Taiwan (Figure 5.15).

Figure 5.15: Chouchou1589 Response

I worked in buxiban before. This is my experiences. We are the ordinary buxiban not big chain language buxiban. before i work in buxiban. The English teacher are part time job. they don't need to stay in office. then class may be 2-4 classes every week. we don't have native teacher. the text books are rely on the teacher to decide. The teacher responsible for 1-5 grades. when I take over this work. my boss ask me to edit the text book . he hope we can use the book we edit by using copy machines. I tell him according to my experiences I don't have enough ability to edit our own textbook. We didn't jujst copy other's textbook. what a shame work. I suggested to buy the color textbook for low level students. he doesn't care. he just want to save money. he doesn't realize the situation. For the low level student the colofurl textbook are attractive than the black-white one.Buxiban didn't hold or let you attend activities. the classes are tied for teaching. of course, if you are willing to improve teaching skill you will a lot of way to know the information. but too busy,and exhausted are the reason to lose opportunities. And who can make up for your class when you are attend the activities.

Chouchou1589's experience provides an appalling description of the working/teaching

conditions in a small-sized language school. Local English teachers were hired on a part-time

basis, which means that they were paid on an hourly-basis; the fact that there were no foreign

teachers hired and only part-time local teachers on the pay-roll, this set-up right away puts

down the costs incurrred in salary and benefits to a minimum. In addition, the school did not

provide any textbook and teaching resources were reproduced using a photocopying machine.

The school owner obviously wanted to keep his operational costs down but in doing so also

increased the possibility of 1) losing students due to poor learning conditions and 2) losing

teachers due to poor working standards, which in turn could result in high teacher turn-over.

The only thing that he could gain was a bad reputation, which could have long-lasting

detrimental effects to the survival of his school. In Chouchou1589's blog post, although

descriptive and insightful, her writing reflects a poor command of the English language.

Given the fact that she was a student-teacher when she joined the YG, there was room for

self-improvement. Nonetheless, despite the lack of proficiency in the target language, she still

got hired not only as a private English tutor or a part-time teacher in buxibans, she was able to

land a teaching post in a mainstream Elementary school. Her situation was a classic example

of the lack of hiring standards both in buxibans and mainstream schools (see Chapter 1).

I interviewed Peggy, the Bookstore owner, and asked her a few questions via email (sent

in January 2005) regarding the EFL teachers' working scenario in buxiban and other schools

i.e. kindergarten, etc. that offer supplementary English class or after-school programs. She

provided a different perspective on this issue. Peggy's response was also posted (with her

permission) and shared both on the online group and my TPD blog. I asked Peggy why she

was offering the workshop (Building Spelling and Pronunciation through Games) to buxiban

and kindergarten English teachers. She replied:

> "…For the teachers working in buxiban, they are like working in the private company.
> The boss seldom gave them (teachers) training lessons, especially they like to hire the
> native speakers to teach (students)."

I asked whether buxiban or supplementary school teachers receive training sessions from their

school and how often do they get training sessions? She wrote:

"Most of the teachers in big chain buxiban are from American or Canada. The Chinese

teachers can only assist them. But it doesn't mean they don't have the potential to teach. As I know, most of them major in English or foreign language. But it's the tendency to keep the native speakers to do the main teaching now. I think it's not really a bad thing for them, coz it will push them to improve their listening and oral ability."

On what she thinks about those EFL teachers who were not given any teaching job assignments even if their job description states "English teacher", she responded quite briefly and said, "Some of them left buxiban and started up their own after 3 or 5 years." What Peggy wrote is a classic example of teacher attrition where they simply leave their job; on the other hand it also shows that teachers also find EFL teaching a lucrative opportunity to change their career path from teaching to entrepreneurship. I then asked her to share her insights about the teachers who work in big or small buxiban. She wrote:

"the bigger (the) size (of a) buxiban (they) will have more native speaker teachers. The smaller size buxiban will have more Chinese teachers. But it doesn't mean the bigger one is better than the smaller one. For the small size buxiban, the teacher's personal style is a very important factor to decide the quantity of the students. I found, the small size buxiban, they are more creative and would like to try any new teaching idea. It's a lot of fun to work with them. They usually gave me many new ideas and questions to think about. Most of them would like to learn profession skills in teaching."

She pointed out that the long working hours of EFL teachers make the job even more so difficult. The normal working hours start from 12:00 noon to 10:00 in the evening. For big chain schools, teachers might get 2 days off, but for regular buxibans, they work 6 days a week. She said that when she announced and advertised details about the free workshops, many teachers wanted to participate, but they wanted to ask permission from the school owners and/or managers because the time of the workshop coincides with their working hours.

Peggy wrote, "Luckily, since it's free, so some of the bosses just let them come." I asked

Peggy to briefly describe what kind of teachers Taiwanese EFL teachers in buxibans are, she

wrote: "Frankly speaking, I prefer (to) work with the teachers in buxiban to the teachers in

public schools. It's more fun and they are really more creative."

5.1.6 Summary

In this section I have discussed the outcome of the asynchronous discussions on the

Taiwanese EFL teachers' YG where topics relevant to their work as EFL teachers were shared

with the Webheads who were experts in their own right. The electronic discourse discussed

above provides examples of collaborative online professional development activities where

teacher learning could take place.

In the following section I will discuss the communications that took place on Facebook

(FB) with Joy and other Taiwanese teachers which also provided invaluable data for this study,

in particular how FB can be used in providing teachers access to oTPD.

5.2 Main Findings from Facebook

The aim of using of Facebook (FB) as a social network was to connect with other

Taiwanese teachers working in buxibans and other supplementary schools. I incorporated the

use of FB in this study as a source of data from Taiwanese EFL teachers who were also using this social network. I created an account in FB in 2007 and within three years my network of friends and colleague had increased. Three teachers who joined the Taiwanese EFL teachers' online group found me on FB, and requested to be added on my FB's friends' list. There were 40 other EFL teachers who recently joined my network, and as my network got bigger, there was a possibility of meeting new and/or old connections.

One of the main findings from using Facebook (FB) was that it provided communication access to Taiwanese EFL teachers; those teachers in my social network were able to read and respond to the questions I posted either on my FB wall or message list. Brief or extended discussions could take place in FB, and discussions could be one-on-one or to a group of people. They also could leave comments to every updates or FB postings I made, if they wished to. Based on the communications that took place on FB, it was evident that teachers could gain knowledge about teacher professional development opportunities that are available online, i.e., IATEFL Young Learners Sig Yahoo! Group. Teachers can access real time links to teaching resources, web pages or online events that they could participate in. FB could serve similar networking connections as YG since it allows teachers to be connected with other teachers or with people they know e.g. friends, acquaintances, colleagues, etc. However, unlike YG, teachers on FB could personally choose to add a person into their network by

adding them to their friend's list. With YG, the group owner has the privilege to add/delete a

member, and members have no way of blocking a message from a group member unless

he/she leaves the group. In other words, in FB teachers get to control their privacy settings i.e.

allow other people to join their network or post comments to updates (recent posted messages

or pictures). Agnes's and Judy's online presence on FB was surprisingly visible and active

compared to their online activity in the Taiwanese EFL Teachers' YG. Agnes made several

postings and FB wall updates which included news about the Teaching Mandarin certificate

course that she took and successfully finished, about her most recent trips to other countries,

and her migration to Canada, etc. Judy, also continuously updates her FB wall with personal

ramblings and sometimes even posting pictures of herself with her colleagues.

5.2.1 On MOE sponsored TPD for Buxiban Teachers

From this network of EFL teachers, I asked them the same question I asked back in 2004.

For the same reason, I wanted to find out if they were aware of any MOE sponsored teacher

training programs or workshops for buxiban/supplementary school teachers. On October 23,

2009, Joy (case study subject) sent me a message on FB (Figure 5.16).

Figure 5.16: Joy's Message on FB

> "I know that to work for the public schools (elementary schools and junior high schools), one is required to take certain courses and get the credits provided within the university system. it's called 教育學程..."Education program" or some sort. But for teachers who only work in buxibans, I don't think there is any training provided by the government available. I just checked again on Yahoo TW, and didn't find anything. I could be wrong though."

What Joy wrote was based on the recent changes in the MOE's teacher training policies that allowed certified universities and colleges to offer courses that could be credited towards gaining teacher training certificate (see Chapter 1). Regarding teacher training for buxiban English teachers, based on her understanding there was none, and she did not find anything on the Internet search that she conducted. On October 24, 2009, Agnes another Taiwanese EFL teacher who joined the YG group, but was not very active, responded to my FB posting. She forwarded to me a URL link[15] of a website that provides English training courses for people who graduated from 2006 to 2008 and have no jobs or lost jobs. She wrote, "If they could get the proof from the Labor Department they could go to the courses for free." Such training, however, was not intended for EFL language teachers working in buxibans; they were more of English language courses rather than English language teaching courses.

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[15] http://cell.moe.edu.tw/search.asp?c1=175

5.2.2 On Teacher Training provided by Employing Institutions

In another FB posting, I asked my network of teachers about the kind of training buxibans give to their newly hired teachers (native speakers and/or local teachers) before they start teaching, and whether such training is enough to prepare teachers to carry on with their teaching responsibilities. I also asked whether they got on-the-job training like skills improvement. I received a FB message from Agnes, where she described to me basically what she knows (Figure 5.17).

Figure 5.17: Agnes's Message Posted on FB

"Most schools don't provide any training. Those who give trainings are also pretty basic. Teachers have to be smart enough to be able to teach or they get lots of trouble from schools, students and parents. First, they give teachers a basic presentation about the school, classes and text books. Then, send teachers to observe classes. After few observations, teachers would be sent to classes to teach. That's all for both Chinese and Foreign teachers. It's not enough for both Chinese and foreign teachers but teachers do learn from mistakes they make. Some schools might have workshops"

I sent my response also through FB, thanking her for sharing this information with me and also asked her reason for staying or continuing in teaching EFL. I wrote "What made you stick to teaching in buxiban?" On October 27, 2009, Agnes responded saying,

"That's the question I ask myself several times. I was a business major but I hated office work. After a few years of English studying, I've changed my career once from offices to classes. I love to see students enjoying the lessons and learn. It is a tiring job indeed. Also I feel I'm too old to do any changes. I'm taking 90 hours of Chinese Teaching courses at Sun Yat Sen University on Saturdays. Maybe I would need it in the future."

On the same day, I received another FB message from another EFL teacher, Judy, who like

Agnes joined the Taiwanese EFL Teachers YG but was also pretty inactive (Figure 5.18).

Figure 5.18: Judy's Message Posted on FB

"Hi Aiden! well buxiban (at least local chain ones) usually work like the same way, more or less. When I first graduated from Wenzao my boss told me to start working right away without giving me an intensive teaching program. She thought I already learn the theory of teaching at school, and have 2-month experience working for them. She gave me classes after I worked there 1 month. On-the-job training are provided every week or every other week. At least we've got 1 per month. Usually 2-hour workshop. Newly hired teachers would be required to watch video tapes/observe classes etc etc. yeah Aiden is there a way to teach outside buxiban? I don't have a teacher certificate so I can't really teach in public/private elementary schools. :(and it seems like I need to get a Ph.D to be able to work in colleges. (and there are less and less babies born each year.....) 4 years of teaching, I felt that my feelings change from time to time (about teaching). How do you let go of your pressure and think about the fact that some students just don't like English?! (buxiban we can't just tell the parents that "look ur kids don't like it" and ask them to drop out....it's really frustrating somehow when kiddies don't do homework, don't review what they learnt, come into the classroom with an empty mind, etc etc and some kiddies have mental problems or they can't really control their emotions etc . i think we need more trainings on that instead of language teaching training!"

I sensed Judy's passion in teaching from what she wrote above. In response to her

message I told her that she gave me a different view of 'training' and that she has raised a

valid point especially regarding 'student motivation'. I suggested that she spends/invests in

gaining a BA in Education (as she already received her BA but from a different major), get the

required pre-service training from MOE certified schools and teach in Elementary or high

school. To teach in colleges, I advised her that she needed to have at least a Master's degree. I also sent the URL link to IATEFL's Young Learners & Teenagers Special Interest Group (YLTSIG) Yahoo! Group website and suggested she join the group and check out their teaching resources.

5.2.3 Providing oTPD Access

After sending Judy the information on online teacher training and professional development resource, she sent me another FB message thanking me for the help. She also expressed her frustration and commented on her students' learning motivation, which was similar to April's and Amei's experiences (see Section 5.1). The students' lack of motivation in learning English could be attributed to the long hours they spend in studying and doing homework for their academic subjects (Figure 5.19).

Figure 5.19: Judy's Comments on Students' Learning Motivation

"I realized that if I can persuade kiddies how English should be learnt and what skills they could use/take, they could learn better. But often kiddies can't really understand or they don't really want to try it and they often have a lot of homework to do from school. So it's very frustrating sometimes. Also I found kiddies aren't really rational enough. If they have a bad day, they'd have a bad mood and feel not willing to learn after school. And I felt sorry for them because they don't really have time to play and have fun. EVERYDAY is just study study study study. So I really wish that I could make the lesson meaningful and fun for them. AND especially learn how to help them control their emotions and stuff."

I also encouraged her to join this list so she can gain access to teachers' resources and learn from other teachers as well. In the same message, I pasted a brief message sent by a teacher to the Young Learners Sig. group (which I am a member of) talking about her suggestions on how to motivate young learners in learning English. I also gave her the web link to Alison Wood's workshop as published on the British Council's English Online Teachers' website[16] where teachers can download the materials used in the workshop and other teaching resources that Judy herself could find very useful.

5.2.4 On Sharing Teaching Resources via Networking

Another good example of oTPD access and connectivity was a message I received from the IATEFL's YLTSIG via Yahoo! Groups. The discussion moderator of the YLTSIG group[17] forwarded a message to the list about Smories, a website that features videos of children reading their own stories (see Figure 5.20). Thinking about how this site could be of use to the EFL teachers in my own personal learning network, I posted the weblink and a brief message on Twitter (which was also simultaneously posted on my FB wall). Joy, the EFL teacher who participated in the first case study saw the link on my FB, replied to my post and expressed her excitement about using it in her class. Being a member of such groups provided me with access to various oTPD events that I could easily share to EFL teachers in my

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16 http://www.englishonline.org.cn/en/teachers/workshops/motivating-young-learners#tabs-175520-1
17 http://groups.yahoo.com/group/younglearners/message/13348

network and so they could benefit from them as well.

Figure 5.20: A Facebook Message on Smories

5.2.5 Summary of Findings from Facebook

The teachers' responses to the questions I asked regarding the teacher training opportunities

provided by the MOE and their employing institutions have great resemblance to the

background information presented in Chapter 1 and to the data gathered from the survey and

discussion results in the Taiwanese teachers' YG that they received limited professional

development support and opportunities from the very institutions that should be providing it

for them. The teachers' views expressed in the messages they sent via FB not only reflect their

frustrations in the working environment, but they also indicate areas where the system fails.

These should be not be viewed as cynicisms, but rather a call for a better contingent strategy

that enforces the integration of professional development opportunities that teachers can avail

themselves of on a regular basis.

From the messages sent to me, it was clear that these teachers possessed a strong drive in teaching. They experienced joy and sense of accomplishment when they see their students having fun in learning, as Agnes wrote, "I love to see students enjoying the lessons and learn." Motivation to improve their teaching skills and their positive attitude towards their own learning was also evident in their messages. But in addition to learning English instructional strategies, Judy expressed the need to learn class management strategies that deal with students' behavior and attitude in the classroom. Judy verbally expressing what she felt she needed to undertake so she could be in a better position to deal with the issue allowed me to find out that teachers like Judy would benefit from a discussion or workshop that addresses issues that she pointed out. In their messages, these teachers have given signals (see list below) that raise alarms, and if not carefully attended could lead to further de-motivation and disillusionment (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4: Signs of Potential Teacher De-motivation and Disillusion

Signs of Potential Teacher De-motivation and Disillusion
● It is a tiring job indeed. Also I feel I'm too old to do any changes.   ● 4 years of teaching, I felt that my feelings change from time to time (about teaching).   ● How do you let go of your pressure and think about the fact that some students just don't like English?   ● It's really frustrating somehow when kiddies don't do homework

If their school administration would only provide them with the opportunity to raise their concerns and express what they need, then the school management or advisory body could provide a viable resolution. Through discussions and workshops with experts and mentors, and other forms of teacher professional development, teachers would be able to deal with class-related stress, get inspired and renew their motivation towards teaching, and avoid total disengagement and disillusionment.

In the following section, I will discuss the outcome of the oTPD that the case study subjects, Joy and Cindy, participated in which included two classroom observations (pre and post online sessions with experts), synchronous online meeting/discussion with experts and blogging or writing online journals for reflection purposes. Details regarding the selection of case study subjects see Section 3.2.3.1 and 3.2.3.2, and outline of oTPD activities conducted during the duration of the study see Sections 3.3 to 3.6.

5.3 Case Studies: Joy and Cindy

The aim of the case studies was to provide Joy and Cindy with the opportunity to experience oTPD that would go beyond asynchronous discussions. The synchronous online meeting with the experts was conducted to discuss and share teaching ideas and teacher resources that focus on what they needed in their own teaching contexts. The pre-online session class observation was conducted to see what goes on in an EFL classroom. There were

five major categories that were observed in the video recording of the class observation: learning materials, language used in the classroom, instructional methods and strategies, classroom management, and the level of student participation. The post-online session class observation also looked into the five categories but the focus was more on what particular knowledge or skill/s were gained from the online session that Joy and Cindy implemented and how effective they were; in other words, what effect they had on students' learning. Joy's and Cindy's blog entries will also be discussed in this section to show what blog entries were written and how their blogs were used as a reflective tool.

5.3.1 Main Findings from Joy's Pre-Online Class Observation

The pre-online class observation was conducted by video recording their classes which gave me the opportunity to see what goes on in a Taiwanese EFL classroom (for observation framework see Section 3.2.3.3). The recording also provided me with the opportunity to play back the videos and analyze the contexts and situations more carefully. The class was a two-hour class with a ten-minute break in between. There were only four elementary school students. The textbook used was Step to English 6 (STE), and the teaching goal for the particular lesson featured in the video was for students to learn how to use fifteen two-word verbs by creating a short story. The time length of the video is 63 minutes; video clips include lessons on two-word verbs (phrasal verbs), grammar, Wh/H questions and story writing

activity (incorporating the same vocabulary used in the two-word verb lesson).

5.3.2 Materials Used in the Classroom

In addition to whiteboard markers and magnets, the materials Joy used in classroom were textbooks, hand-outs and exercise sheets, paraphernalia used in the class games, etc. Hand-outs and exercise sheets need to be prepared ahead of time; this shows that Joy spent some time to think and plan her lessons before class time. The use of a lesson plan (Figure 5.21) provides evidence that her lessons follow a certain structure that fits the class time frame. The contents of the lesson also show that there was actual language learning content instead of just having games. Although Joy also made use of games in her classroom, they were done in a way that would bridge the contents of the lesson into practice. The games that she implemented also gave students the chance to speak in English and participate in the class activity.

Figure 5.21: June 26, 2005 Joy's Lesson Plan

No.	Stage	Vocabulary/Sentence/Grammar	Activity/Game
1	Present two word verbs	Vocabulary (p. 81): look for, wait for, listen to, look at, get on/in, try on, put on, turn on, go on, burn down, sit down, chop down, put down, throw away, put way	Have Ss taking turns to make sentences by using the 2 word verbs.
2	Introduce grammar rules	Grammar: 1. Verb + preposition+ N = Verb + O. + preposition → O. can be either a noun or a object pronoun (it/them) 2. single noun as an object = it plural nouns as an object = them	Repetition: T says "V. + preposition+ N."; Ss witch it to the other
3	Practice	1. Oral practice: Workbook p. 82 2. Write p. 82	Kill Your Enemies *
		10 minute break	
4	Reinforce the new vocabulary	1. Explain the project 2. Have Ss come out with Wh/H questions to be answered in a story. For example: When did it happen? Where did it happen?	Mini Writing Project: Have students create a story by using as many 2 word verbs as possible. (Team work)

5.3.3 Language Used in the Classroom

The language in the classroom used by Joy is primarily English, but she also used Chinese when translation was needed. This was to help students understand the definition of some words. Nonetheless, classroom instructions were given using the English language. In this class, the students were engaged in an oral exercise where they were supposed to make use of the phrasal verbs into sentences. The teacher (Joy) would begin by saying the phrasal verbs while students threw in nouns that would complete the sentence. In this transcript, Joy wrote Chinese characters on the board and occasionally spoke in Mandarin Chinese to make it easier

for her students to understand the meaning of words and/or grammatical rules. For instance, she wrote the phrases '試穿'(try on) and '穿上' (put on) on the whiteboard. This allowed students to easily associate the Chinese equivalent of the English phrasal verbs 'try on' and 'put on'.

5.3.4 Instructional Methods and Strategies

Joy made use of various instructional strategies that made her class fun and lively. She made use of visuals such as drawings and writings on the whiteboard for easy comprehension of the lesson. She also made use of body movements or gestures, which not only makes it entertaining for students, but also gave them clues to what word or phrase Joy was referring to. For instance, she acted out as if she's putting something (a t-shirt) on herself in such a situation the students had a fun time guessing the answers. Joy also kept track of students' answers and/or level of participation; students get one point for every correct answer. The total number of points was tallied at the end of the class. Students with the highest number of points get a prize. Joy would also write the correct spelling of the word on the whiteboard. Repetition was also something that Joy did particularly when teaching how to pronounce some words. She would either repeat the word and/or ask the students to repeat after her. Recycling of words or phrasal structures and using them in consecutive class activities were also helpful for students to remember what was learned in previous lessons. Variety in class activities was also

evident; for instance, the use of a cluster map to help students create a story was a creative idea; this helped students create a visual outline of the story by identifying the subject/s, plot, and events in the story. For example, during the second-half of the class where Joy had to cover the Wh-questions and introduce the idea of writing a story lesson, the students had to come up with wh-questions, e.g. 'When did it happen?' etc. She began by asking students what wh-question words they knew. Joy called on the students one by one, and when they gave the correct answer, they would get one point. When all the wh-questions were named and written on the whiteboard, Joy told her students, "*Alright, so when you write a story, you need to think about this (points to the 5 Whs and How). So 'what happened'? We have many, many 2-word verbs. You use as many as possible. The more, the better. The more verbs you use, the higher grade I'll give you.*" She then drew a circle on the board, and told students that what they were doing was a kind of brainstorming of ideas for their story. She began by asking students a name or subject of their story (see transcript in Table 5.5 below).

Table 5.5: Joy's Class Observation, 2nd Half of Class Transcript

Participant/Speaker	What was said	Action
Joy	For example, let's just start.	Draws a circle on the board
	We have to do a bit of brainstorming	draws lines on the circle-mind map
	First of all, what's the name of the story?	Faces the students
Simon	A little pig	
Joy	A Little pig	Joy repeats his answer and writes the text in the circle
	This story is called 'A little Pig', Ok so, 'who is in the story'?	Draws another circle that branched out from a stem line
A student	a little pig	
Joy	A little pig! So smart. Only a little pig? Who else?	Joy repeats the answer
Other students	another little pig, and a wolf	Chime in
Joy	a good wolf or a bad wolf?	Joy asks

Students were encouraged to participate in the discussion by giving them the freedom to share their answers in class. The students were also given a short writing assignment where they had to complete a story by using the wh-questions as guide questions.

5.3.5 Classroom Management

Since there were only a handful of students, it was not so difficult to control the class. Smooth transition from one class activity to another could be attributed to how her lesson plan was structured. She knew what she had to do first and what would follow after that. Hence, she was able to cover the lessons that she needed to cover. The classroom lay-out features a typical EFL classroom environment; a huge whiteboard in front of the room (see Figure 5.22)

and the chairs were arranged in a U-shaped sitting arrangement.

Figure 5.22: Joy's Class Arrangement
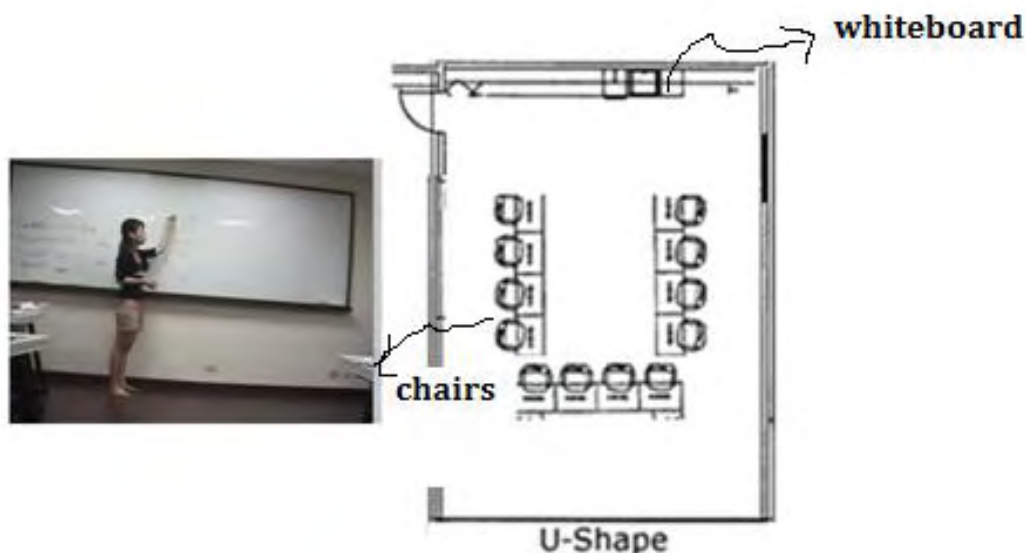
5.3.6 Student Participation

Student participation was high; it was obvious that students were not shy in answering the teacher's questions. There was a time when Joy had to say, "One at a time", when all the students were saying the answer at the same time. Once she said that, the voices lowered down. This shows that students had a sense of respect for the teacher. They were encouraged to try even though they were not sure of the answer. They were also allowed to say the answer in Chinese just in case they did not know how to say it in English. She also made use of rewards to encourage participation among students. The high level of enthusiasm was apparent in Joy's body language and manner of speaking. Her voice was loud enough to be heard; it was lively which also affected the way the lessons were carried out. She also did not

fall short in giving compliments and positive remarks such as 'very good' or 'good job'.

5.3.7 Summary

The video recording of the pre-online session class observation allowed me to gather in-depth information about the language used in the classroom, the learning activities, how the students interacted with one another and with the teacher. The information gathered above would not have been as detailed if only field notes were used.

5.4 Main Findings from Joy's Online Meeting with the Webheads

The online synchronous meeting was held a few days after Joy did her first class observation. The goal of this session was to provide Joy with the opportunity to learn about how to teach writing to young children. She was interested in learning writing activities that would engage students in fun learning. In the following section, selected discourse examples from the synchronous chats with the Webheads show how mentoring (Section 2.3.6) and cognitive apprenticeship (Section 2.4) were conducted during the online interaction between Joy and the invited guest teacher-experts.

The online meeting, which was about an hour long, was recorded and then transcribed for analysis. Back in 2005, online conference (also known as chat, webinar, webconference)

platforms were very limited, and the technology was purely limited to voice and text chat capability (which was already considered a huge advancement at that time compared to simply having the usual text chat). A chat trial session was performed prior to the scheduled online meeting to make sure that all participants had the necessary technical requirements to run Alado, the web conference platform that we were using (see Chapter 3). On the day of the web conference/discussion audio/voice set-up configurations were first tested before proceeding to the discussion proper. However, despite advanced preparations (trial run, see Section 3.3.3.3A), technical difficulties can still arise when least expected. My audio settings were not functioning properly; I could hear what people were saying but they could not hear me. Since four experts that I had invited were all co-members of Webheads in Action (WiA) community of practice and I had collaborated with them on several online class projects, I knew that I would be working with colleagues and friends whom I could rely on for technical assistance. I asked one of the guest speakers, Dafne Gonzales to read aloud what I wrote on the text chat area; in this way, my questions or comments will also be recorded to avoid any confusion when reviewing the audio recording. My audio problem, although it persisted until the very end of the chat session, did not affect the outcome of the meeting. My role in this live, synchronous online discussion was to serve as a discussion moderator; other functions see Table 5.6:

Table 5.6: Moderator's Roles in Synchronous Online Discussion

Moderator's Roles in Synchronous Online Discussion
● to moderate and facilitate discussions,
● to mediate between Joy and the guest teacher-experts
● to clarify any information or messages said during the live chat either through text or audio
● to respond to participating teachers' questions, if any
● to guide discussions without taking control of the floor

In this online meeting with the experts, there were a total of ten creative ideas on how to teach writing in EFL classrooms that were shared, such as controlled communicative writing, mindmap, etc. (see Table 5.7).

Table 5.7: Ten Creative Ideas Shared during Joy's Online Chat

Ten Creative Ideas Shared During Joy's Online Chat
1. Controlled Communicative Writing i.e. controlled activities such as letter writing, or writing close, and then move to storytelling
2. Mindmap, brainstorming for vocabulary build up
3. Writing Class exchange: way of communicating with other people the same age
4. Students create their own learning games such as tic-tac-toe. Students write questions and answers.
5. Picture descriptions. Students include a description and then their partners read it to discover the line; cut out the text in the bubbles and have them come up with the story. Or use cartoons in the different scenes and have the students put them in the right order or in the order they think it goes and then right a caption for each part
6. Collaborative writing. Students work in pairs to write a composition collaboratively
7. Jumbled sentences. Students write the words on big pieces of paper and give one word to each student, and students have to line up and compose the sentence by moving around until they have the right sentence.
8. Making the story lines while they are listening to it (story). Use of recording, flannel board, and put the correct pieces of the story
9. Role-play the story to enhance vocabulary skills, make drawings of a story and write things about the story that they remembered
10. Write (email) messages and collective messages, group messages through email, give students a photocopy of the message you sent, print (email responses received) and take them to class and they can read them, etc.

In the following section, selected discourse examples from the synchronous chats with the Webheads show how e-mentoring (Section 2.3.6) and cognitive apprenticeship (Section 2.4) were conducted during the online interaction between Joy and the invited guest teacher-experts.

5.4.1 Joy's Teaching Context: Background

The synchronous discussion kicked off with questions from the mentors asking some background information from Joy regarding her teaching context. Questions pertaining to students' age, mother tongue (first language), and nature of supplementary or cram school, etc. were raised using either via text or voice chat. This shows that the invited experts were keen on learning more about Joy's teaching context. Glady's question about the number of hours the students spend on average in their regular school before going to cram schools also indicates curiosity and interest in finding out how stressful learning is for many Taiwanese students. Joy explained that her students were all elementary school students who have had English lessons for several years and could be considered as 'advanced students' (see transcript in Table 5.8).

Table 5.8: Joy's Introduction during the Synchronous Chat with Webheads

Speaker	Voice Chat
Joy	The beginners will be the first graders, and sometimes they are even younger than that, so I have a huge kindergarten kids but for writing, I want to focus more on the advanced students, most are elementary students who I have had for more than 3 or 4 years and now they are in the 3rd grade, and some of them are in the 4th grade…. And for most of my students they can already do pre writing. My day time job–just want them to get **used to writing** 'cus most of supplementary schools in Taiwan would focus more on listening and speaking and not many students-their attitude- **they just don't like the idea of having to practice writing, uhm, the- most I can do is to go home and finish their homework and – If can try to have some fun activities in the classroom-- But constantly I'm trying to make them write or practicing- just- maybe through writing I think it would be much more helpful for their future studies."** (00:06:17)
Gladys	Sorry, what's supplementary school?
Aiden (text chat)	supplementary school, Gladys. they (students) study English after their regular school. they study English after their regular school
Gladys	Aha!
Aiden (text chat)	private language school
Gladys	How many hours do they go to school per week, during the day, before they enter the cram school?
Joy	In Taiwan, now the government is trying to push this English proficiency test; all the kids will have to pass the exam, and the exam, including- includes listening, speaking, writing, reading, and I think that's it. But I think writing is too difficult for the students in Taiwan, just, they're really not that trained properly
Joy	For most students I have them for 4 hours a week and sometimes just two cus some we share the class with foreign teachers. For writing I think instead of telling them to write a whole paragraph by themselves, like what I did the other day was I gave them some ideas, I give them a couple of key words and we talked about it in the class. But then I don't tell them exactly what to write when they go home. They just open the direction, then I assign some homework, go home and finish the writing themselves. They go to school every day- for the younger students, 1st and 2nd graders, they stay at school for only a half day, maybe just one day will be for the whole day. They stay in school from the morning till 4 o'clock. But then for older kids they'll stay at school from- I think around 8 o'clock until 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

In Joy's response above, she also referred to the General English Proficiency Test (GEPT)

which the Taiwan's Ministry of Education is recognizing as a valid proof of a student's

English proficiency. Her opinion on Taiwanese students' attitude and the lack of proper writing instruction and classroom practice is a common reaction among EFL teachers in Taiwan (see Background, EFL). Regular school program for English education in the elementary level only involved 1-2 hours per week and mostly concentrated on oral skills activities. For those parents who wish to provide their children more exposure to the English language, they normally opt to send them to cram schools or after-school supplementary schools where they get to learn the four skills at a much faster rate.

5.4.2 Controlled Communicative Writing

After learning a bit more about Joy's students and her teaching context, Gladys asked Joy what sort of writing exercises she gives her students. She asked whether Joy gives controlled or communicative types of writing exercises. Joy admits that she does not know the difference between controlled and communicative writing (see transcript in Table 5.9). This situation provides a good example where the mentee (Joy) exhibited lack of pedagogical content knowledge (cf. Shulman, 1987) or instructional approaches appropriate for her students' level.

Table 5.9: Webheads' Questions Regarding Joy's Writing Class. Chat Transcript

Speaker	Text Chat
Gladys	What do you understand by pre-writing? What kind of writing exercises does the exam include? Controlled, communicative? Is there a gradual introduction to writing in these courses? I mean, words ->sentences->paragraphs... Are they provided with models, or reading tasks they could use for support later?
DafneG	what kind of pre-writing activities do you use to engage them in the writing process?
Joy	I'm sorry but I don't understand exactly what the difference between controlled or communicative writing exercises, but um I will say one of the examples, they have to look at a picture and just write as much as they can, so I really want them to write something related to the picture. It's fun. Is this controlled or communicative writing?

The exchange of answers between Joy and the Webheads is an example of articulation where either the mentee or mentors in a cognitive apprenticeship situation articulates what ideas expressed during the discussion that were unclear to them. Gladys did not waste any time in providing an explanation (see Figure 5.23). This was an example of collaborative discussion where an explanation was summarized or interpreted in a way that help builds understanding of what was said. Learning about communicative and controlled writing exercises increased Joy's knowledge about instructional approaches that she could adopt in her classroom.

Figure 5.23 Q & A in the Synchronous Chat Transcript

TEXT	AUDIO
[alejandra] I find that with young kids it is convenient to get them to do most of the writing in class	[DAF] Sus could you explain to Joy what you meant by controlled or communicative writing-activities?
[sus] yes, please explain, Gladys	00:09:25 [GLADYS] It was me who used communicative writing- it's me, Gladys speaking.
[aiden] can you give us background then on controlled writing? communicative writing?	[DAF] Well yes, sorry, (laughs)
[aiden] yes	[GLADYS] Can you hear me? YEAH. So I was saying that by controlled we understand that the activities where the focus is on using the correct form or some lexical items or structures taught to the learners and the emphasis or the task is presented to the students as writing just to use the English language which they've learned in a communicative activity on the other hand the idea **would be to share a message and the focus would be on getting that message through making use of any resources to students can make.** Am I being clear? [1]
[Joy Chiu] yes	
[DafneG] structural vs communicative approach to writing	
[aiden] yes	
[Gladys Baya] I agree with Ale.	
[Gladys Baya] Do you use a coursebook, Joy?	
[aiden] Mock exams	

On the same subject thread, Alejandra (Ale) also shared her own opinion about how writing exercises can be sometimes difficult for young learners and what her teaching practices were in dealing with the same situation (Table 5.10). In doing so, Ale also made it easier for Joy to understand the concept better by providing practical ways of implementing the activities in real teaching contexts and showing how she could scaffold learning activities that students could work on and improve in due time. This is an example of mentoring and cognitive mentorship being applied in online synchronous environment where effective

264

teaching practices were shared.

Table 5.10: Alejandra's Opinion and Teaching Practices: Text Chat Transcript

Speaker	Text Chat
Alejandra	I was thinking about what Joy said before about starting the task in class and getting the kids to finish them at home. I find it very hard, uhm, I find that at these levels kids are usually require a lot of assistance from the teacher. They usually need vocabulary and they find it better. If I'm walking around and if I can help with vocabulary and help them just marking- perhaps- I just walk in between the desks and tell them if they've made a grammar mistake and uhm- they can put up their hands and ask me when they need vocabulary. I usually prefer to start with activities that are sort of controlled. And most of them are based on units or lessons we are/ we're doing in class. Another thing that I find very useful is to concentrate on certain task types. Like for instance letter writing, or writing close --- writing for a couple of months. And then maybe move to storytelling.
Joy	That is a wonderful idea, cus uhm what I use as the course book is like the mock exams we can get from the –I've government (inaudible). However, sometimes I try to uhm use the grammar book I've been teaching my students with – to try to practice writing. I think it's always much better to start with something that they are already familiar with. So, Uhm I totally agree that I should start with like vocabulary and sentence by sentence, then maybe paragraph by paragraph, and then it will be a complete piece of individual work by the students…But, of course I do some activities in class with my students then I let them go home to finish up. And usually it takes me a lot of time to try to grade their writing, cus uuhm obviously it's not possible for them to make no grammar mistakes but sometimes I kinda wonder whether I should focus more on the students' ideas or am I just trying to make them write perfect English.

In response to what Ale suggested, Joy expressed that she liked the idea of building language learning tasks from simple to complex ones, but she also expressed her doubt on which instructional approach to focus on when she said, "but sometimes I kinda wonder whether I should focus more on the students' ideas or am I just trying to make them write perfect English." This is an example of articulation where Joy gets to speak out her dilemma.

Opening up and truly talking about personal issues can be difficult, but Joy was able to let go of her apprehension and disclose her true feelings. Gladys then asked Joy about her teaching approach, particularly in relation to communication, correction, and accuracy. Joy responded to Gladys' questions and gave her personal opinion that the mother tongue or first language (Chinese) could be a barrier to learning English as a second/foreign language. Joy mentioned a critical and sensitive issue for many Taiwanese EFL teachers in buxibans. She posits that since English is taught as a foreign language in Taiwan, students have difficulty learning it. Joy admitted focusing more on correcting her students' grammar because she believed that once bad habits were formed it would be difficult to mend them.

5.4.3 On Correction and Accuracy

Gladys offered a comment in the text area regarding her teaching contexts. She wrote that her students' native language is Spanish and that English was also taught as a foreign language and that applies to all the guest teacher-experts that were in the web meeting. She reiterated the fact that the focus of teaching in her situation was to encourage students to speak in English and corrections do not happen until much later. The conversation in the text chat area on 'correcting students' writing' right away built up as others followed the lead (see Table 5.11). From the transcript, it was evident that these teacher-experts agreed that correcting

266

students' mistake should be done cautiously since overdoing it could affect their motivation to learn. Teresa mentioned the students feeling less stress when writing or speaking, and to avoid making them feel intimated. In this particular example, the Webheads were acting like Joy's advisors and supporters; they were knowledgeable enough in the topic being discussed about their own personal experiences and their own problem solving strategies in dealing with error corrections. The type of mentoring in this situation is similar to developmental coaching (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005) which boosts Joy's ability to hopefully perform better in handling the same situation in the future. Joy realizing that what Gladys and the experts said was a good piece of advice said, "thanks, Gladys, that's a great suggestion, next time I should know what to do".

Table 5.11: Text-chat Transcript on Correction and Accuracy

Speaker	Text Chat
Gladys Baya	My students speak Spanish, English is a FL for all of us too,...
DafneG	right, Gladys
Gladys Baya	but the focus among teachers here is on communication first, correctness later...
Teresa	that's what i do, Gladys, and i believe it makes them much more comfortable to speak in class or write freely
Gladys Baya	Not necessarily, in my experience this has to do with the type of tasks and feedback we teachers choose to give them...
Teresa	when they are being corrected all the time, they may feel shy about talking and making mistakes in front of others
DafneG	I agree, Teresa
Gladys Baya	what I've found challenging (though I chose to do it) was to learn to accept (as a T) that not all mistakes need be corrected!
Teresa	i have always followed that, Gladys, and i believe it works well in making them feel comfortable
Gladys Baya	Sometimes it's better to write less, but work more deeply on each

	text...
Teresa	i never correct their mistakes in messages for the blog, bec. i'm sure they'd feel intimidated to write in future
Gladys Baya	Perhaps this freedom is rather overwhelming for beginners? I mean, there's no way in which they can avoid making mistakes if they focus on writing creatively...
Teresa	i always insist that mistakes are very normal and they are a way of learning…learning in a significant and fun way for them is having a serious and effective lesson, joy
DafneG	they sure are, Tere
Gladys Baya	Tere has just written something about mistakes being part of their learning and I believe that this is- it's something essential yet at the same time it can be frustrating for the teacher and the learner. I believe that each of us needs to make a decision and moments focused on students being correct and another moment on the students' writing to express themselves and then correct coherently and help to see the difference.

5.4.4 From Mindmap, Storytelling to Writing Exchange

Dafne introduced the idea of mindmap (clustermap) for brainstorming ideas. Alejandra acknowledged what Dafne said, and she wrote in the text chat area what she does in a brainstorming activity. The use of mindmap as a brainstorming activity is something that Joy was already doing in her class. This was evident in the pre-online session class observation recording where she shared her experience in using clustermaps to brainstorm the elements of a story (see Transcript, Table 5.12).

Table 5.12: Text-chat Transcript on Mindmap

Joy's Synchronous Session Transcript 5	
DafneG	something that worked with my students when I was teaching K-12 was to provide some activities- provide oral-writing activities, uhm, like making mind maps and word maps- they would be using in their writing practice- and so they would come up with the vocabulary they already knew and sometimes these words, when you tell other students that this is a brainstorming that would be helpful for them when they start writing- so the vocabulary would come up. And also structures so they have background knowledge when they get to the writing part. Even with my pre-school students.
Alejandra	what has also worked for me is to plan what they are going to write with the whole class…like brainstorm and draw an outline on the whiteboard with all their contributions…
DafneG	right, Ale, that's what I was talking about before… that's a way to activate previous knowledge and learning from each other…
Joy	I tried brainstorming with my students yesterday, and they actually love the idea, cus it was a moment to share what they think instead of uuh listening to the teacher because that's what they do almost every time they come to class.

In the text chat area, the thread of conversation was moving on from mindmap to writing stories. Gladys first commented on what Ale wrote regarding mindmap/brainstorming and used it to bridge another class activity- storytelling. Joy followed the thread of conversation that was taking place in the text chat area started by saying that she actually did something similar. With the mention of 'Storyline', the two conversations that were happening in the text chat area and the voice chat somehow converged into the idea of writing a story. Gladys took the opportunity and asked Joy in the voice chat, "Do you use storytelling with your students Joy?" Joy responded by sharing a storytelling activity that she had done and the sort of materials that she used in this particular activity. Dafne wrote in the text chat area that she had

done storytelling activity for k-12 students, and pasted a web link[18] to an article that she wrote

concerning the activity. The article shared was another learning resource material for Joy and

for the other teacher-experts as well. Below (Figure 5.24) is a snapshot of the conversations

that took place both in the text chat area and voice chat where Gladys was sharing another

writing activity where students write picture description.

Figure 5.24: Screenshot of the Synchronous Chat Transcript on Picture Description

Text Chat Area	Voice Chat
[aiden] picture description, that's good	00:22:22 [Gladys Baya] Something that my
[aiden] use a cartoon and ask them to describe what's on it	students like was sometimes I need them to write paragraph- er- **picture descriptions for**
[aiden] or cartoon	**example as the ones Joy described** so to add
[aiden] some characters that they could relate to	some fun to it I ask them to include one line in their description and then their partners read it
[Joy Chiu] yeah, that's cute.	to discover the line- and they really enjoy that.
[alejandra] yes, I agree some need to do activities that help them focus on chronology, Daf	[6]
	00:22:43 [Daf] Yeah I Aiden, the cartoons are great, and you cut the **cartoons in the different**
[Teresa] cut out the text in the bubbles and have them come up with the story	**scenes and have the students put them in the right order or in the order they** think it goes
[Gladys Baya] I saw an activity like the one Tere describes on a CD; don't know how to create it myself though...	and then right a caption for each part. They love that. [7]
[aiden] ask the students to draw themselves	00:23:01 [Alejandra] Can you hear me? Ok, there. Do you ever get them to work in pairs to
[aiden] yes, ale	write uuhm a **composition collaboratively**- uh
[aiden] pair work	OK, because it that has worked for me as well

The above transcript shows the give and take of opinions regarding the use of picture description activity. Gladys acknowledged that it bears similarities with what Joy had shared previously but added a new twist to the activity. Building on this topic, I suggested the use of cartoons as learning material, which Dafne expanded by suggesting cutting the cartoon illustrations into strips and asking the students to re-organize it and write captions that describe the illustrations. Alejandra backed up Dafne's suggestion and posits that teaching students 'chronology' is just as important. Teresa also offered a different take on the same activity and suggested cutting up the speech bubbles in the cartoon illustrations and ask the students write up their own story. This is an example of how ideas are built and expanded, thus making the discussions even more interesting. It also shows how the teacher-experts were keen on sharing their input and giving plenty of things to ponder.

Teresa suggested to Joy that a writing class exchange could be a creative idea that she could use in her writing class (Table 5.1). Teresa who had done several email writing exchange projects posted in the text chat area the URL link of her blog and suggested that Joy could look at the activities that her students had done. Joy explained in the voice chat that they do not have computers in the classroom. Teresa responded to this and gave a suggestion on how to overcome this problem. This clearly shows a mentor (Teresa) sharing her class

project and how she implemented it. She had also thought of the challenges that teachers face and how she overcame those barriers and tried to address this issue without sounding too 'pushy'. As an experienced mentor, she also offered plenty of examples on how students could be engaged in authentic use of writing where meaningful conversations were exchanged. Alejandra also provided alternative strategy in doing the same project without Internet access in the classroom. Gladys also advised Joy that the email project could be different from what she needs for her class and should think about it carefully. The transcript below also demonstrates examples of positive mentor input where the mentors exercised constructive coaching and counseling. Practical ideas given by the mentors also revealed how creativity can be generated via group discussion such as those mentioned in Table 5.13 As a mentee, Joy clearly articulated that asking students to use the computers at home also seems impossible and mentioned the obstacles that she may encounter in using this activity in class. This was a typical comment from Taiwanese EFL teachers that they need more time to prepare for their lessons. Joy expressed how she liked the idea of doing an email writing project, but also raised her concerns about how Taiwanese parents' may react to this. Nonetheless, she also gave alternative strategies in implementing this project given the teaching context that she had. This is a good example that illustrates the teacher's self-appraisal where she assessed her own teaching context. It also showed Joy's ability to critically reflect on the suggestions provided

and how they could take place in her particular situation.

Table 5.13: Text/Voice Chat Transcript on Writing Class Exchange

Joy's Text/Voice Chat Session Transcript	
Teresa	As I said awhile ago in the text I think that if you don't have computer in the classroom that shouldn't prevent you from doing some sort of an exchange with kids in another school, another class in the same school whatever because they can always do it through your email so they **can write messages and collective messages, group messages, whatever and you can send them through your email give them a photocopy of the message you sent or messages, and then when you get the answers you can print them and take them to class and they can read them, etc. I have done this sort of thing and it really works well. So this is a suggestion I would leave here**.
Alejandra	sure, I used to work in a public school and students wrote their messages in Word. I would copy them and send them to students in The Netherlands from my account
Teresa (in voice chat)	Ale that's how I worked for at least a year in an email exchange but we had problems at school, we could not send email. I didn't get an account, they didn't get an account either. What they would do is they would write the messages in Word (doc) and put them in a copy disc. I would bring it home copy it to my computer the whole shebang and send it, then the following week the other kids will write back and this was part of the formal project that really worked on the internet. So if you're interested Joy I can give you the URL later and this is a way to get them writing. Maybe you can start with a small group and uhm it's writing for a real audience and that's completely different from writing for the teacher. OK, so I think this may work.

Gladys (Text chat)	Anyway, I think the aim of email exchange is different from having kids "write a paragraph describing a picture", even the language is different, and Joy will need to consider which helps her better...
Joy	I really like the idea of exchanging emails, cus I didn't see, I have limited myself cus uhm I I didn't think that I could use anything –even the computers or the internet cus not many children- at school they may have computers, at home their parents they simply just do not allow them to use the computers, but then it's a very good idea especially also a new idea with many many supplementary schools in Taiwan…Instead of writing to students from other countries, maybe I can start with local students; and I will admit I haven't planned well enough for this writing project cus I just always feel it's important so I will teach my student whenever I have extra time, extra hours after I'm done teaching them what I'm supposed to teach for this section or semester but I will say it's really important to have a plan actually to have a curriculum although it's not a real course in our school yet. If I want to make this work efficiently I think should sit down and then write down a syllabus for this, just for this writing or pre-writing practice course.
Alejandra	but on what I see, Joy, is that probably you need to think first about how much time you want to devote to writing; getting students to improve their writing skills does take time
Teresa	i did 3 emails exchanges over 3 years and it was great. in my case, i had a well-laid out plan, but it can be something of a freer nature
Alejandra	I agree, Tere, if you set tasks it works better

5.4.5 Summary of the Findings from Joy's Online Chat Session with the Webheads

In the voice chat, Joy expressed what she had learned in the discussions that took place.

She indicated that she needed to increase her students' motivation towards writing; she also

admitted that through the discussions she realized that writing would be more meaningful if it

was used primarily as a tool to communicate with others. In the text chat, Teresa wrote in

response to what Joy was saying that learning is a lifelong process. The use of 'We' in 'we're

always learning how to teach better' refers to all the participants in the synchronous chat

which includes Joy. Joy is treated as a colleague and/or a co-teacher who like the experienced

guest-experts who were present have had experienced learning something that would make

them better teachers. Gladys, on the other hand, was responding to what Teresa said

concerning the need to have a plan that would give a learning task some formative structure to

facilitate the lesson in an orderly manner (Table 5.14).

Table 5.14: Text/Voice Chat Transcript- Wrapping Up

Table : Joy's Synchronous Text/Voice Chat Session Transcript 8	
Joy (Voice)	I think I have a conclusion for tonight, that is maybe before I try to train my students to do serious writing I can have them interesting- *to be interested in the writing classes and I believe before I was not, before all I did was to ask my students to write to- about other people or other situations. I think writing is really more a way to communicate with people besides speaking. I totally forgot about this. I'm really happy that today's discussion I realize this* and I hope it's not too late.
Teresa (Text)	we're always learning how to teach better, Joy! it's a lifelong process
Gladys Baya (Text)	I like the idea of a "well-laid time", Tere, I believe it helps set learning aims for the project!
Teresa (Text)	in this case it had to be so. we had a topic and different phases. they also need a lot of guidance, but it works and it motivates them
Dafne (Text)	right, Joy

Joy verbally expressed her gratitude to everyone who participated in the discussions and

took their time to meet her and share with her their teaching strategies and learning activities.

She admitted that it would take some time to be able to apply what she had learned that day.

This is an explicit example that Joy had gained knowledge as an outcome of the synchronous web meeting and the impact it had on her.

> "Thank you everybody for time and suggestion and I will try to apply all these in my teaching (inaudible). What you said is going to take time but I will put it on the blog and I will record what I do and little by little and Aiden I think I should be able to uhm upload the pictures on the blog. I think we should call it a day. Thank you everybody."

For novice participants who are not used to multitasking (reading and following the audio conversation at the same time) could find the experience overwhelming (Evans, 2008). As Joy expressed in the voice chat, "I'm getting a lot of ideas here and I want to thank you all and I have to apologize cus uhm as although it is difficult for me to speaking and reading at the same time- so I might be a little bit slow in responding to all your questions and suggestions." In the email Joy sent me on July 9, 2005, she wrote about the difficulties she encountered during the web conference:

> To be honest, I found it difficult to follow up the "conversation" happened in Alado. It wasn't because I didn't understand what was said, but the audio and text "conversation" took place simultaneously, and I was not able to "read" and "listen" and "respond" at the same time. (My English is not that good after all…shame.) I even copied the whole text (of the conference) and read afterward, yet still couldn't help to feel confused. It's like watching a moving (sic/ movie) with different scenes jumping from one to another. Of course, I think a major reason for me to feel this way is because it was only my second time in Alado, and the first time attending a conference with so many participants that I have never met before. I had to be putting what a person said together with the name and the person's background to see why the message was said/written that way or what exactly the person was saying without mistaking the meaning.

Nonetheless, Joy disclosed that she had learned something from this online session. And at the end of the session, Joy expressed her intentions to apply what she had learned in her teaching, but also admitted that doing so may actually take some time to accomplish, "Thank you everybody for time and suggestion and I will try to apply all these in my teaching (inaudible). What you said is going to take time but I will put it on the blog and I will record what I do and little by little and Aiden I think I should be able to uhm upload the pictures on the blog." There were many suggestions that were given and like what everybody else who was online said- it would take time to be able to practice everything that was discussed tonight. But what is important is that the experts were able to encourage Joy to start thinking about other activities that could make writing more fun for her students. Like any other meetings or conferences, time is always not enough to discuss everything that the experts wanted to share, but the goals of this session were successfully achieved. Unfortunately, her blog was not updated, and my only recourse in finding out was through email. On June 29, 2005, I sent an email to Joy asking her a few questions about the outcomes of the online session. Joy responded to my email and she wrote:

> "Yes, I will try to apply some ideas on Friday… I have to go back to read the copy of the on-line discussion (sic) because I was lost many times during the section.) Yes, I will let you know what I think about it. (I enjoyed it but there were a few moments of confusion...will give you the details later.)… "In the end, despite of the "difficulties" I've encountered personally, I enjoyed the conference, and was very honored and grateful to have been offered this opportunity…The "spirit" I have learned from this group that will continually help me to push myself to becoming a better teacher, a better-organized course planner, and a more responsible/caring educator."

277

One of the positive gains achieved in the synchronous chat was that Joy was able to meet teacher-experts online, to talk to them and engage in an extended synchronous discussion, and gain additional knowledge i.e. teaching strategies and learning activities. In conversing with the teacher-experts in English, Joy was also able to actively use the target language without resorting to Chinese; this was a rare teacher professional development opportunity where she could actually 'talk' with the teacher-experts. The invited guests did not take over the discussion floor. As a matter of fact, there were plenty of instances where they were taking turns in talking, expressing their opinions, sharing ideas, and describing various learning activities. Through this online web conference meeting, Joy did not have to spend anything on travel expenses or conference fees. This learning opportunity was free and voluntary, and was made possible by a group of enthusiastic teachers who were active members of the Webheads online community of practice. The synchronous web conference/discussion gave Joy the chance to interact with other EFL teachers; she was given the chance to ask questions and answer/respond to any questions posed to her. The participants were able to send/receive immediate responses, which would not have been possible in email-based asynchronous discussions. The flow and content of the discussion that took place also show evidence of brainstorming at work, where there were plenty of ideas given by a small group of people in a relaxed environment.

5.5 Main Findings from the Joy's Post-online Session Class Observation

The same five categories used in the reporting of findings for the pre-online session class observation were used to look at the main findings from the post-online session class observation: class materials, language used in the classroom, classroom management, instructional methods and strategies, and student participation. The main objective was to observe what particular knowledge or skill/s gained from the online session with Webheads that Joy practiced or carried out in her classroom and how effective they were in terms of their impact on students' learning. The post-online session class observation was conducted on July 1, 2005. The goals of the lesson were:

1) Review the usages of the 15 two word verbs.
(2) Review the article "A True Mystery Story".
(3) Introduce the structure for a writing piece.

After the class 'warm-up', the students reviewed the two-word verbs (lesson from pre-online session class observation) they learned in previous class lessons. Joy made use of Q & A found in the textbook (TE (Step to English 6) to help students practice. Using the Snakes and Ladder game, students took turns in answering 'wh' questions and 'yes/no' questions making use of different tenses. The next part of the lesson was to review the story on Amelia Earhart which the students read two weeks ago. Students read aloud/skimmed through the (English) article. After students had read the English version, Joy read out the translated version in Chinese (see Figure 5.25).

Figure 5.25: English and Chinese Reading Material

A True Mystery Story	A True Mystery Story 一個極為神秘的故事
One day two farmers were working in their field in Ireland. They saw a plane stop in the middle of the field. The pilot, Amelia Earhart, stood up and smiled at them. She was the first woman to cross the Atlantic Ocean alone. Soon everyone heard the news and rushed to meet the Famous pilot. Amelia also flew alone across the United States and back again. She was twenty-two when she took her first lesson. In 1937, Amelia began a flight around the world. She and her navigator flew from California to South America, and then to Africa. From there they flew to Asia and Australia. The next step was Howland Island in Pacific, but the plan never reached Howland. People around the world were sad when they heard the terrible news. Many people have tired to find the answer to the mystery. Nobody really knows what happened. Perhaps some day we will know.	某天在愛爾蘭有兩個正在田地上工作的農夫 看到一架發飛機在田地中央停了下來 飛行員由站起來並對他們微笑 她是愛蜜莉亞‧依爾哈特--世界上第一個獨自飛越大西洋的女性 很快人們聽到這消息便趕去見她一面 愛蜜莉亞也曾獨自來回飛越美國 而她上第一堂飛行課是在 20 歲的時候 在 1937 年愛蜜莉亞開始一趟環球的飛行 她和她的領航員從加洲飛到南美洲再飛到非洲 由那他們飛去亞洲再去到了澳洲 下一步是要去太平洋的郝蘭島但他們的飛機卻沒有抵達那裡 世上的人們聽到這可怕的消息後都非常難過 很多人試著為這神秘事件找出解答 沒有人真正知道發生了什麼是事 也許某天我們將會知道

As a reading comprehension activity, Joy asked the students to match the correct translation of the sentences between Chinese and English (Figure 5.26).

Figure 5.26: Matching-type Activity

A. 她是愛蜜莉亞‧依爾哈特--世界上第一個獨自飛越大西洋的女性 (___) B. 飛行員站起來並對他們微笑(___) C. 看到一架發飛機在田地中央停了下來 (___) D. 某天在愛爾蘭有兩個正在田地上工作的農夫 (___) E. 很快人們聽到這消息便趕去見她一面 (___) F. 而她上第一堂飛行課是在 20 歲的時候 (___) G. 她和她的領航員從加洲飛到南美洲再飛到非洲 (___) H. 愛蜜莉亞也曾獨自來回飛越美國 (___) I. 在 1937 年愛蜜莉亞開始一趟環球的飛行 (___) J. 下一步是要去太平洋的郝蘭島但他們的飛機卻沒有抵達那裡 (___) K. 由那他們飛去亞洲再到了澳洲 (___) L. 很多人試著為這神秘事件找出解答(___) M. 世上的人們聽到這可怕的消息後都非常難過(___) N. 也許某天我們將會知道(___) O. 沒有人真正知道發生了什麼事(___) K. 由那他們飛去亞洲再到了澳洲 (___) L. 很多人試著為這神秘事件找出解答(___) M. 世上的人們聽到這可怕的消息後都非常難過(___) N. 也許某天我們將會知道(___) O. 沒有人真正知道發生了什麼事(___)	A. Many people have tired to find the answer to the mystery. B. One day two farmers were working in their field in Ireland. C. The next step was Howland Island in Pacific, but the plan never reached Howland. D. They saw a plane stop in the middle of the field. E. The pilot, Amelia Earhart, stood up and smiled at them. She was the first woman to cross the Atlantic Ocean alone. F. From there they flew to Asia and Australia. G. Soon everyone heard the news and rushed to meet the Famous pilot. H. Amelia also flew alone across the United States and back again. She was twenty-two when she took her first lesson. In 1937, I. People around the world were sad when they heard the terrible news. J. Nobody really knows what happened. Perhaps some day we will know. K. Amelia began a flight around the world. She and her navigator flew from California to South America, and then to Africa.

The English sentences in Figure 5.26 are jumbled sentences from the summary of the story. Students had to cut the paper along the lines; using the strips of paper, the students had to re-order the summary of the story. To provide ample space for students to work on, Joy asked them to make use of the floor. The 'Walk the Stairs' game was also used in this activity to encourage students to participate in sharing their work/answers in class (Figure 5.27)

Figure 5.27: Walk the Stairs Game
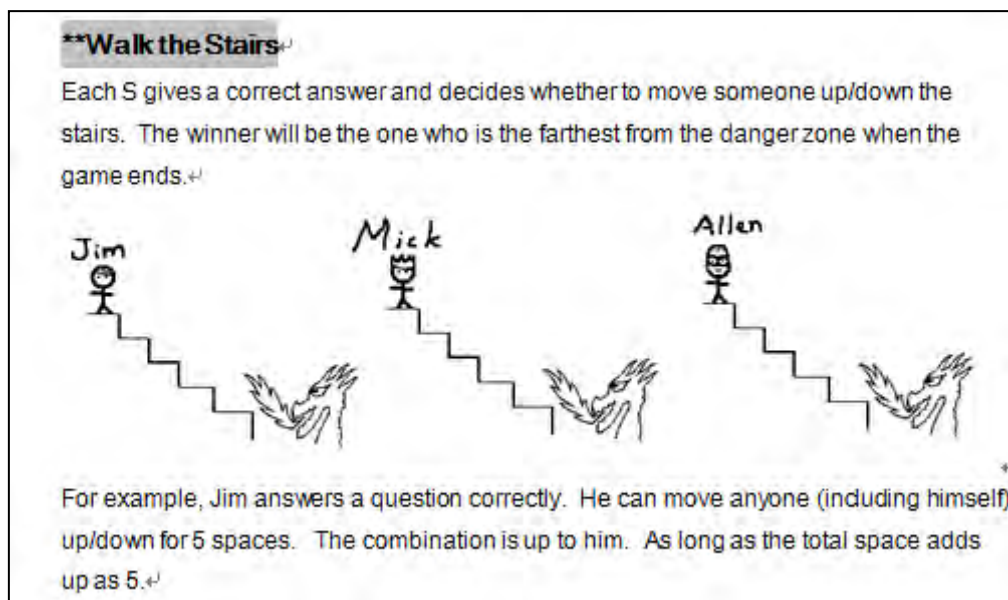
Similar to the first class observation, Joy made use of hand-outs, worksheets, class games paraphernalia, etc. However, in this case, she assumed that students had brought scissors with them. So when it was time for the 'Walk the stairs' activity where students had to cut their hand-out into strips of paper, which they would use for completing the story, some students exclaimed that they did not have any pair of scissors with them. This cause a little bit

of commotion in the classroom. In this example, a prepared teacher can never be prepared enough. She should have anticipated that scissors would be used in this activity, and therefore should have prepared for them ahead of time. The 'Walk the Stairs' game which was done after the students did the sentences-ordering activity was fun in the beginning, but brought chaos in the class when some students started to lose some points. In the video recording of the class observation, the students were seen/heard speaking in Chinese, but mostly during class activities that require working with other students. For instance, in the situation above those students who did not bring any scissors were alarmed that they would not be able to cut their paper into strips, so they had to resort to borrowing from other classmates. Hence, such conversations were made using their first language. Another situation where a student was heard speaking Chinese was when his reward scores or points were deducted. He complained about it by saying something in Chinese. These two examples show that in times of trouble, frustrations, or simple conversations with their classmates, students still resort to using their first native language.

In teaching reading, she made use of the read-aloud and skimming strategies. English and Chinese translation skills were also tapped in the reading comprehension activity. One of the effective instructional strategies that Joy used was the recycling or repetitive use of class materials. For instance, in teaching the elements of a story, she made use of the same story

that the students used in the Reading comprehension activity. In this way, students were already familiar with the text and plot of the story, thus making it easier for them to identify the parts of the story. In explaining the parts of the story, she made use of the terms "opening, body, and ending' instead of 'introduction, body, and conclusion'. Joy thought that it was easier for her students to comprehend the concept that way. She also translated them into Chinese. Another strategy that Joy had was the use of drawings and visuals to aid her students to understand the lesson. And similar to the first class observation, Joy often said positive comments and complimentary remarks to deserving students. Students were actively involved in all the task activities that Joy had planned and implemented in her classroom. Rewards were also heavily used in the games and practically in all the tasks. Students were encouraged to participate to earn points, and if they were earning points, then everything was fine. However, you take away the points and that could make students feel a sense of unfairness, and if not controlled well, could lead to student demotivation and lower participation level.

5.5.1 Summary of the Findings from Joy's Class Observation

In this class observation, Joy made use of the storytelling activity that she learned from the online session with the experts. She also learned to make her lessons or language used in the classroom easier for her students to understand. Thus, although she liked the cartoon with

dialogue box idea and the fill-in-blank activity she learned from the chat session, she adapted

them and made changes in her class activities that would be more suitable for her students

(see screenshot of email message in Figure 5.28).

Figure 5.28: Screenshot of Joy's Email Message

"I got many ideas from the conference, but there it probably two ideas that I tired (sic, tried) to apply in the 2nd class:

    1) Posting the articles/stories Ss write on a website to get feedback from learners around the world. (Which I am still working on—typing up their work and creating a writing blog)

    2) Providing task-based activities. I was going to moving on to the next writing project after my first lesson, but after the conference, I decided I should spend more time on one task. This allowed Ss to create a writing piece by a less "structural" and more "communicative" approach to writing.

There are many ideas that "inspired" me to come up with the activities in the second lesson, though they are not exaltedly (sic) the same thing we talked about. For example, instead of giving Ss cartoons with blank dialogue box, I created a matching activity for Ss to match English with its translation. Instead of having Ss complete a fill-in blank worksheet, I made them do a "reorder the sentences" activity."

A few days after Joy conducted the post-online session class observation, I wrote her

another email asking her how everything went. On July 9, 2005, I received an email from Joy

where she provided me copies of her lesson plans that she used during the class observations.

In her email she commented on her own teaching styles as she watched her video recording.

She wrote,

> "I watched the tape after I recorded the two classes, and found there are many things I can improve: I said too many "ok, all right, now", I've got a hunchback, and I make mistakes when speaking English too…"

What Joy wrote illustrates the advantages of using video recording in the classroom as it gave her the opportunity to watch herself teaching and her actions, mannerisms, language skills, and discover the aspects of her teaching that needs improvement (cf. Davis, 2009).

5.6 Main Findings from Joy's Blog

Joy's blog was created in 2005 and she made her first blog post in February of the same year. She wrote blog posts from February till June 2005, and one entry in January 2007. During the period of study (January-July 2005), she posted a total of thirteen blog entries on various topics on teacher training and methods of instruction (see Table 5.15).

Table 5.15: Joy's Blog Entries

February 2005 8 entries	Reach Higher Never too tired for professional advancement Models of teacher learning Buxiban teachers Mei's Observation & Diary Approaches to classroom investigation in teaching My "Perfect" Student and Her "Helpful" Parents Re: I don't know how to teach
March 2005 2 entries	How to Teach Phonics How to Teach Phonics (2)
April 2005 2 entries	For better or worse? CAVES 2005 (1): Reading about the world
June 2005 1 entry	Trial-Run with Aiden

The usage of blog as reflective tool discussed in Section 2.6.3.2 and Section 3.2.3.6 was applied in devising the following categories to look at how Joy utilized her blog as an

instrument in reflecting on the various TPD and oTPD activities that she participated in. The following table was created using the examples made in the previous section and all blog entries that she published on her blog (Table 5.16).

Table 5.16: Joy's Blog as Reflective Tool

Categories	Usage	Blog Entry Content Sample	
Express thoughts and opinions	✔	All entries contained reflective feedback	
Write about process of learning e.g. planning & implementation of lessons	✔	A few entries; most entries contained 'what' was learned rather than the 'how'	
Other than text, blog entries contain:			
photos	**X**		
links	**X**		
videos	**X**		
audio	**X**		
Post questions and ideas that trigger open conversations	✔	**2/21 If the ex-teacher was a good teacher, and your boss liked her way of teaching, how can she got fired? So maybe you want to find out what went wrong in the teacher's class that made her loose this job and try to avoid making the same mistakes.** **2/20 It is usually a great thing that the parents will remind/help their children to review after class. However, when the parents "fix all the problems" in the homework for the kids before class, they will leave no trace for the teachers to discover the students' problems.**	
Readers' comments in response to questions or ideas posted	✔	2/20 Helpful parents (57 words)	
Habitual postings	✔	Month	Number of Postings
		2/2005	[8]
		3/2005	[2]
		4/2005	[2]
		5/2005	[0]
		6/2005	[1]

Joy's blog entries contained reflective feedback on the issues that were also raised in the Taiwanese teachers' YG. There was only one blog comment from a reader (Chouchou1589) about the 'helpful parents' blog entry that Joy wrote. I did not count the comments that I left on her blog to provide a more accurate and unbiased results on the level of generated conversations from blog posts. Based on what was written and the almost 'nil' level of conversation or response received from blog readers, this blog was merely used as a 'journal' that houses personal insights and reflections. However, since some of her blog entries were also posted to the YG, the responses to what she wrote were generated on the YG and not on the blog; and this affected the level of response rate.

The second entry, published on February 6, 2005, titled "Never too late for professional development" was a response to one of the questions I posted on the Taiwanese teachers' Yahoo! Group, which was part of the threaded discussion on Taiwanese EFL teachers' working scenario. Below is a snippet of that message (#109[19]) where Peggy (Bookstore owner/TPD provider) wrote an interesting remark on teachers' workload and time availability for TPD.

> "Most of them would like to learn profession skills in teaching. But there is a difficulty for them, their working time is too long. Almost from 12:00pm to 10:00pm. For the bigger size ones, they might have 2 days off. But for most of the buxiban, they work 6 days a week. If I were them, I would feel exhausted after work."

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[19] http://groups.yahoo.com/group/taiwanese_efl_teachers/message/109

I wrote on the YG that Peggy's comment was similar to one that a Taiwanese teacher (Aaron) posted message on YG that 'Buxiban teachers are too busy, too exhausted, over-worked yet underpaid'. I then asked the teachers from the YG the question: "Should any of these be a stumbling block for your learning and professional advancement?" Joy published her response to this question on her blog as she reflected on what and how this question related to her. On the same date, she wrote a message to YG list informing the members about her blog entry, she wrote:

> I created my blog (url deleted) this morning and also posted my feedback on the two questions... It was an enjoyable process…though I have left school for two years and it hurts when I try to use my brain too much…I have asked Peggy to sign me up for the seminar on Feb 23th. Hope you can all make it there too. (Message # 116, February 6, 2005).

She pasted the question on her blog entry to make quick reference to what her posting was about. She argued that not all Chinese/Taiwanese teachers in buxiban are over-worked and underpaid, but many are forced into that situation because of 1) lack of confidence and 2) lack of experience. She admitted that she used to be in that situation when she first started her teaching career (see Figure 5.29).

Figure 5.29: Joy's Blog Entry, February 06-A

S U N D A Y ,   F E B R U A R Y   0 6 ,   2 0 0 5

Never too tired for professional advancement

Question to answer: Buxiban teachers are too busy, too exhausted, over-worked yet underpaid? Should any of these be a stumbling block for your learning and professional advancement? Should you give yourselves a little nudge and say, 'It's darn hard, but I've gotta do it for myself'

First, I would like to point out the not ALL Chinese teachers in Buxiban are over-worked and underpaid, yet I agree that MANY teachers are put in that situation. I feel they choose to accept such unfair deals mainly because they lack confidence in themselves. They might think that they do not have much teaching experience and therefore it's ok to start with lower pay when having to a lot of work that should not have been listed down on their job description as a "teacher".

She also added that despite her busy schedule and physical exhaustion from a long day's work, she invested in improving herself to become a better teacher. With experience and good skills, she felt that she had earned a bargaining power to demand for a higher pay. She also acknowledged that achieving a 'higher salary/better treatment' in the workplace should not only be the chief motivator to enhance one's skills. She deemed that as an English teacher, having the right skills both in teaching and target language skills does not only benefit herself but her students as well; she believed that continuous development helps students learn effectively as teachers become more effective.

On a similar discussion thread, Joy responded to Chouchou1589's blog entry (shared via the YG) and left a message in the comments' area of Chouchou1589's blog (see Figure 5.30), which she also published on her own blog. In Joy's well-written comment, she agreed to what

Chouchou1589 wrote about the busy schedules of Taiwanese EFL teachers as an impediment to investing time and effort in gaining professional development, but she also acknowledged the 'long-term benefits' that it could provide not only to the teacher but to the school as well. She also mentioned an important factor that could influence teachers' motivation to engage in self-improvement and continuous learning: school administration's support. Private language schools should possess a learning-for-improvement culture that if practiced could help produce quality teachers that would in turn produce happy and motivated students.

Figure 5.30: Joy's Comments on Chouchou1589

Sunday, February 06, 2005
buxiban teachers
teaching journal

"...of course, if you are willing to improve teaching skill you will a lot of way to know the information. but too busy, and exhausted are the reason to lose opportunities. And who can make up for your class when you are attend the activities..."

posted by Chou @ *7:43 PM*

COMMENTS:

At *February 19, 2005 7:36 AM,* *CJ/Joy aka Fina said...*
I agree that being too busy at work sometimes takes away the opportunities for teachers to achieve improvement in their profession. For example, many buxiban owners in Taiwan are not willing to see their teachers taking time off from work to attend workshops—even when the workshops can actually bring long-term benefits to the buxiban. It's unfortunate to see some teachers have to work 40 hours a week and still have to find time on the weekend to attend workshops. Without the owners' support, the desire and passion of buxiban teachers to improve their teaching/languages skills will eventually burn out.

Another example of teaching-related reflection that Joy posted on her blog was an entry published on February 20, 2005 regarding an incidence in a beginner's class where she failed to recognize the signs that her student was actually having some learning difficulties. She always felt that her student performed well since she paid attention, responded to her

questions, and submitted assigned homework and always received high marks on her

homework. It was not until she received a phone call from the student's father and told her

that his wife actually helped in polishing (i.e. correcting errors) their daughter's homework.

She did a quick check with her student after class to see in which area she was having

problems in, and she found that without her assistance she got 70% of the items correctly.

> I have checked Mimi's Phonics skills and she got only maybe 2 or 3 of them confused sometimes. She was able to point out the words I read to her, but obviously had more difficulty in read some longer vocabulary by herself (eg. Water bottle)

She further wrote that she was rather upset with herself for failing to see the problem

ahead of time, and in the end she had learned two things:

> 1. It is usually a great thing that the parents will remind/help their children to review after class. However, when the parents "fix all the problems" in the homework for the kids before class, they will leave no trace for the teachers to discover the students' problems.

> 2. A good student in class can also be a problem student (sic, learning problems) under the surface. As a result, checking the students' progress by giving quizzes is necessary—even with young beginners who don't have to memorize the spellings yet.

The next two blog entries were notes and reflections from the Phonics workshop that she

had attended. Similar to previous blog entry on workshop outcomes, she posted what she had

learned from it. She also wrote some practical teaching strategies and activities that she had

learned and adapted in class, and based on the outcomes figured out that students' age is a

factor that could influence the effectiveness of using games in the classroom. She analyzed

the effectiveness of the activity based on how the students performed them. For instance, she commented on her students' behavior during the activity. The first time the activity was carried out, her students were conscious of making mistakes, thus they tend to look up and check what other students were doing. Joy wrote that the second time they performed the activity, the students did better. An advantage of doing this activity was that it helped her determine who among her students were having trouble with the distinction of the phonetic sounds, "I think the advantage about this game is that I can see clearly which students can really tell the different sounds, and which ones still have trouble doing it."

"Trial run with Aiden" published on June 18, 2005 was written after the technical run-through we did in Alado to make sure that technical requirements needed to run the webconference platform were downloaded and working prior to the scheduled web meeting with the invited guest teacher-experts (Webheads). Although it was an informal online synchronous meeting, the Webheads who were present at that time had the chance to know more about Joy's teaching context. Figure 5.31 is an example of what Joy wrote about that experience and what she thought of the informal conversations that took place. The words/adjectives she used to describe what she felt toward the trial session were highlighted in red for emphasis. She felt that it was a wonderful experience since she never had the chance to engage in conversations with teachers from different countries; she was quite

relieved to know that there several Webheads who were interested in helping her in providing what she refers to as 'solutions (Figure 5.31)'.

Figure 5.31: Joy's Blog Entry on Trial-run Session with Webheads

SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 2005

Trial-Run with Aiden

Time: June 17, Friday, 15 GMT at Alado.

It was absolutely wondeful (sic). I never had any oppotunities (sic) like this to dicuss (sic) teaching matters with teachers from other countries. It was surprising that we were all facing the same difficulties: teachers lacking the joyful spirit, students lacking the agressieve (sic) attitude, parents lacking the responsibility and time.
Now I know the problems do not only exist in Taiwan, and there are many people in Webheads who can help me find solutions to them. This helps ease my mind.

5.6.1 Summary

Joy's blog entries exhibit her thoughts and reflections toward her role as a teacher, her professional development experience and how she was able to apply what she had learned in her own teaching context. The overall tone of her entries also reveal her feelings toward her job; the more she looked at her own situation vis a vis what she learned during traditional TPD and oTPD workshops i.e. learning materials, activities, etc. the more she felt the discrepancy in the quality of teaching learning environment that the school she was working at provides their students. She also wrote that she was impressed with the overall experience as the workshops generated 'positive influence'. She also explained that since her school was a franchise school, they were limited to using the resources provided by the head office,

which she felt was inadequate and do not aid in the progression of language skills. Statements (see below) such as 'a job I didn't think I cared', I feel trapped', 'much too late', 'predict parents complaining', and 'keep recycling' reveal self-professed sentiments that with close examination could be viewed as warning signs of demotivation (c.f. LeRoy & Bresoux, 2007; Kiziltepe, 2006). The sharing of personal revelations toward her profession would not have been possible if she had not posted them on her blog.

5.7 Case Study 2: Cindy

Cindy teaches Taiwanese senior citizens at a private supplementary language school for senior citizens in Southern Taiwan. On her blog entry published on February 22, 2009[20] titled 'Teaching the Elderly', she wrote that her classes were usually in the day time. There were three levels of English classes in that program. Cindy was teaching the third level which was also the advanced class but according to her the students' actual learning level is somewhere in between basic to intermediate levels. Class activities range from oral practice such as discussions, sharing experiences, reading, learning songs, to grammar enhancement activities. There were no tests or quizzes, so students' learning was assessed using performance-based assessment such as role-plays, discussions, and other activities where students get the chance to show their skills. Most of Cindy's students were retired, as she wrote on her blog, "…a few

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[20] http://supplementaryschool.blogspot.com/2009/02/teaching-elderly.html

of them are retired teachers, one is a retired pharmacist, one is a retired sailor, one is a

half-retired business owner, and the rest of them are homemakers."

5.7.1 Main Findings from Pre-Online Session Class Observation

The findings from Cindy's pre-online session class observation were analyzed using the

same five categories: materials, language used in the classroom, teaching methods and

strategies, class management, and student participation. Cindy made use of the following

materials in class: hand-outs and worksheets, audio cassette and player.

5.7.1.1 Language used in the Classroom

The students spoke in English when they were asked to share experiences while using

the vocabulary or grammar structure that they have learned, but almost all of them had to

resort back to speaking in Chinese and sometimes they would utter some Taiwanese words

and expressions with a heavy Taiwanese-English accent e.g. bee-zi (busy) and end-dah (and).

Cindy's language was a combination of both English and Chinese, but spoke Chinese most of

the time since she often translated what she was saying in English. The following transcript of

the video shows how Cindy called on her students to participate. A student was asked to share

her experiences or activities that she did or does during the holiday season. Table 5.17

provides an example where a student was having a slight difficulty in expressing herself in English. Nonetheless, she was able to communicate in a manner that was mutually intelligible to her teacher and classmates. She did resort to speaking in Chinese in the end to explain clearly how her family celebrates Chinese New Year.

Table 5.17: Cindy's Class Observation 1 Transcript 1

Cindy's Class Observation 1 Transcript 1	
Student 9	during winter vacation
Cindy	during your winter vacation
Student 9	during winter vacation my, with my daughter-in-law, who was (inaudible) and-ah more than (inaudible) almost ah Chinese New Year stay home cooking, care for my family and grandmother- eh grandson and daughter, every day, every day so bee-zi (busy) (laughs)
Cindy	Everyday was so busy
Student 9	Sometimes we go to Ka nan nian (inaudible), heh- every new year home to Ka nan nian becos-sah (because)… [Student 9 continued to speak and sharing her experiences in Chinese] (inaudible) for the Zǔxiān (ancestors). 是,過年的時候 Heh (Taiwanese word for 是 (yes), guònián de shíhou (during Chinese New Year)
Cindy	You've got very busy, but also very happy. Okay thank you for sharing.

5.7.1.2 Teaching Materials, Methods, and Strategies

Aside from the basic conversation activity, her lessons were focused on grammar, from simple present to present perfect tense based on the textbook provided by the school. Her lesson would end with a 'singing' activity where the students would learn the song, "Put your

hands on my shoulders". A day after recording the class observation, she posted an entry on

her blog dated March 9, 2009 titled "Conversation practice[21]" where she tried to look back at

what she did in class (see Figure 5.32). This blog entry revealed that she also made use of

handouts as supplementary learning materials; she also asked her students to do some

pair-work activities. From the class observation video, Cindy was seen walking around from

one pair to another; she would listen and engage in their conversation, and would often attend

to students' questions. And before the class ended, she reviewed all the major topics that were

covered, which meant re-writing the same sentences on the board. In doing so, she reinforced

the things learned in class. After going through all the dialogues, Cindy asked her students to

work in pairs and practice reading them.

Figure 5.32 Cindy's Blog Entry Dated March 9, 2009

"Yesterday, March 9, there were a couple of students sharing about their stories during the winter vacation or Chinese New Year or Lantern Festival. We also used the handout which I gave them last time to practice conversation in pair. There were some groups of vocabulary regarding places, spots and festivals that they could apply to useful sentences. They could pick words like: Lantern Festival, Love River to make up dialogues.
For example, student 1: What do you do at Lantern Festival?
Student: I watch lanterns and fireworks by Love River with my family."

Cindy also covered grammar lessons. As she wrote on her blog dated March 9, 2009, she

reviewed the following sentences and grammar structure. In the transcript below, Cindy relied

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[21] http://supplementaryschool.blogspot.com/2009/03/conversation-pracice.html

heavily on translating the meaning of the sentences and grammatical concepts (Table 5.18).

This example also shows how she would read the sample dialogues/sentences from the

textbook, translate them, and explain their meaning.

Table 5.18: Cindy's Class Observation 1 Transcript 2

Cindy's Class Observation 1 Transcript 2		
Speaker	**Transcript**	**Action**
Cindy	'Where is your mother?' She is out. 用簡單現在式 Translation: Use the simple present tense] Jiùshì biǎoshì Tā xiànzài da ren, Érqiě 她 Dì sān rén Dānshù (就是表示她現在的人/位子, 而且 第三人單數) [Translation: This means- where that person is right now. And, She- third person singular] Yah? very good 'Where is your mother?' She is out. Ok, Wǒmen zhīdào tā shì xiànzài shí 我們知道 它是現在時"	Cindy writes on the board, as she explains in Mandarin.

5.7.1.3 Class Management and Student Participation

Regarding class management, the class was organized and the students were

well-behaved. This can be attributed to their age, since adult students (Seniors) are more

mature, thus it was easier for Cindy to communicate with them. The students were also

willing to participate when they were asked. However, they seldom initiated the discussions

and rarely raised their hands to answer the teacher's questions. Cindy ended up calling

students as they take turns in reading or answering items on a worksheet. The students also had the opportunity to work in pairs practicing the dialogues; this collaborative effort made class more fun for the students. They were seen smiling, laughing, and enjoying themselves practicing their English together. The students seem to have fun in the activity, despite the extra effort they needed to exert in reading the dialogues in English. As Cindy did her rounds, the rest of the students were practicing their dialogues, reading the words and sentences, and commenting on each other's pronunciation. The collaborative nature of the activity seemed to work very well with these senior citizens.

The last activity for this class session was the learning of the song, 'Put your head on my shoulder'. Cindy asked the students to listen to the song while they follow/read the lyrics on the hand-out. Some of the students were singing along while the song was being played, but for others they needed more time to get familiar with the lyrics. The choice of song, since it is considered an 'old' song, was quite appropriate for their age. The students listened to the song three times. After which, Cindy wrapped up the activity and told them to listen to it at home and read/sing along with the music to familiarize themselves with the melody and the message of the song. The last few minutes of the class were spent reviewing the dialogues and grammar structures. Cindy wrote the sentences on the board, while the students double-checked their answers. After telling the students their assignment for the following

week, Cindy finally wrapped up the class.

5.7.2 Summary of the Findings from the Pre-Online Class Observation

One of striking findings from this observation was the minimal error correction; Cindy did not explicitly tell her students that they had mispronounced a few words or that their grammar was incorrect. She would, however, repeat the word, phrase, or sentence where the error was committed using the correct pronunciation or grammar structure. Her students would then repeat after her, and Cindy would then acknowledge the effort by either saying 'right' or 'good'. Rewards were not used in this class but Cindy would give out positive remarks and comments even if the given answer was not entirely correct. The video recording of Cindy's class observation provided me with an opportunity to look at what goes in an EFL classroom for seniors. It was interesting to see the differences in students' class participation and the instructional approaches that Cindy used in her class that were appropriate for students' language level and age.

5.8 Main findings from the Cindy's Online Session and Communication with Expert

Cindy was interested to learn some learning activities that would enhance her students' oral/speaking skills. Terry Doyle, who teaches ESL to senior citizens in San Francisco,

agreed to join the online session as guest expert to share some activities that have worked for

him and his students (see Section 3.3.3.3B). The online session was held in the Webheads'

Room at Learning Times.

With the online session with Terry, many ideas and personal experiences were shared.

Terry provided some information about himself, his family, and his senior class students. The

sharing of pictures and personal profiles added a nice touch that humanizes the virtual

environment creating an emotional connection thus stimulating interactions among the online

participants. He also talked about his teaching context. He teaches immigrant adults (mostly

senior citizens) from countries like Mexico, South America, China, Vietnam, Korea, Taiwan,

Russia, etc. He has taught ESL for various levels, from Level 1 (beginning level class) to

Level 8, which is the highest level in the school where he teaches. Terry also conducted an

email-survey among his colleagues at the college where he teaches about teaching seniors,

and he received about 10 responses to this survey. He also conducted an interview with two of

his senior students, Marina and Larissa, to find out more about their own learning strategies

that worked for them. Another source of information that Terry hoped would establish

credibility as our online guest speaker was the fact that he himself was a senior student

learning Chinese and Japanese.

5.8.1 Students' Success Stories

The sharing of personal success stories of Terry's students also provided Cindy added

knowledge that she could relay to her students as they could find some of them applicable to

their situation. For example, the use of audio books and watching a movie several times are

practical ways for older people to learn a language. Terry's tips and tricks in teaching senior

also provide some ingenious ways to make language learning easier and more effective for

seniors. For instance, the use of large fonts, use of visuals, different learning contents to add

variability, and repetition are some practical strategies that teachers could apply when

teaching seniors. Terry shared with Cindy four success stories; stories of his students, namely

Larisa, Marina, Igor, and Victor, who despite of their different cultural and linguistic

backgrounds have conquered the fears of learning English and adopted it as their second

language, and as immigrants in the United States, have learned to assimilate with the locals

(see Figure 5.33).

Figure 5.33: Students' Success Stories

With his interview with Larisa and Marina, Terry came up with five points that they

thought are good techniques or strategies that they use to learn English: 1) the use of idioms

in context, 2) audio books, 3) idiom dialogues, 4) discussions with classmates at a similar

level of proficiency, and 5) movies- watching many times. In his Video ESL class, the

students watch movies that are age-appropriate. Using the scripts, students learn idioms that

were used in the dialogues. Figure 5.34 is a screenshot of the PowerPoint slide Terry used

during the voice chat to show an example of a lesson content which focuses on the idioms

used in the movie used in class as a learning material, "The Joy Luck Club".

Figure 5.34: Idioms from the Joy Luck Club Movie

An example from my Idioms glossary for *Joy Luck Club.*

NOUN has more to do with NOUN = be related to; be connected to

June (narrating): Their connection with each other had more to do with hope... than joy or luck. (page 1 of the movie script)
1. A: Why did she quit school? Was she doing badly in her classes?
   B: Actually, it had more to do with his financial situation. His boss cut back on his hours, and the tuition was raised, so he couldn't afford it anymore.
2. A: Doctor Hoang? Why do I feel a pain in my chest? Do I have a heart problem?
   B: The pain has more to do with your esophagus. You have what is called acid reflux.

The screenshot shows an example of an idiom he chose from the first scene of the movie, Joy Luck Club. The sentences/short dialogues (#1 and 2) were made by him to show his students various uses of the idiom. Terry posits that using movies as learning materials in the classroom is a lot of work but could be a lot of fun, too. His statement below shows his own strategies dealing with this activity, and by enumerating the steps involved in the process he was actually modeling what and how it was done (Table 5.19).

Table 5.19: Cindy's Synchronous Chat Session Transcript 1

Cindy's Synchronous Chat Session Transcript 1	
Terry	I prepare the scripts. I make a list of all the idioms and on the slide, later we'll see two entries from the idioms list that I make. I make a lot about 2-300 idioms. For each of those I write the explanations ups. I write down what line in the script it comes from and I write a couple of example sentences, which I make by myself. So- and then I make a lot of reading and comprehension and discussion activities…I think the students find useful is the idiom explanation and sample sentences that I give.

5.8.2 Tips and Tricks in Teaching Seniors

Terry then discussed some teaching tips and tricks that he used with his students. He identified five major things that teachers of senior citizens should know and implement in class:

1. Enlarge print in hand-outs
2. Reserving front seats for 'seniors'
3. Promote interaction with younger students
4. Different content (idioms, images, storytelling, role-plays, etc.)
5. Repetition, Repetition, Repetition!

During the voice chat, Terry suggested that there is a need to enlarge the things that we write on the board. He added that it is often difficult because it means erasing the board a lot. One of the survey responses that he got suggest the use of a computer where the fonts (on the handout) can be enlarged easily. The second item on the list above, reserving front seats for seniors is also important because they often have trouble hearing the videos. Some teachers in his college also suggested promoting interaction between seniors and their younger students-if

they mind taking the extra effort to work with senior students. Using different content can also help keep maintain interest in learning the target language. Content that deals with health concerns or issues that are more relevant to senior citizens also makes the learning even more meaningful for them. Lesson contents can be delivered using various methods such role plays, storytelling, use of images, etc. And last but not the least of suggestions was "repetition, repetition, repetition!" Terry suggested that teachers need to go over things more slowly, and to repeat more than they do in classes in which there are not many seniors. One teacher said something very interesting which was computer skills class. He also emphasized the need to speak louder or turn up the volume. He added that, "it is necessary to understand that poor eyesight and hearing impairment is normal for seniors so the materials that are used have to take those things into account."

Another major finding in this online session was the different approach that Terry made in presenting and sharing knowledge and experiences. Although Cindy and I had the freedom of asking questions via the text chat and audio chat, the first half of the session was focused on Terry's presentation. Cindy and I made some occasional remarks either via text chat or voice on what Terry was saying and Terry would sometimes ask questions that would give Cindy the chance to say something either in the voice or text chat area. The second half of the session was then devoted to Q & A; this was where Cindy was heard talking and sharing her

own teaching experiences. One interesting question that Terry asked Cindy was what sort of

materials she uses in her class (see transcript below, Table 5.20).

Table 5.20: Cindy's Synchronous Chat Session Transcript 2

Cindy's Synchronous Chat Session Transcript 2	
Terry	so Cindy what's your, uh, yeah, what kind of material do you use? Have you ever used movies- with your senior class?
Cindy	no, cuz I think according to their level they can't really understand all the movie, you know, sentences, and uh words, in that movie…so, uhm, which level you start teaching them with movie or video?
Terry	Yeah, I, well, I, my video class is level 5 to 8. So we have 8 levels in class. That's like higher intermediate. I have used it in level 3 and 4. The first time I showed the movie, it was in level 3 and 4. So that was like the third level. Yeah- that's not so high. Like intermediate level, like even low intermediate level.

It was during this chat conversation that I suggested to Cindy to make use of subtitles,

especially when watching a movie (scenes) for the first time. And as students watch the same

scene for the third or fourth time, the subtitles can be removed. Cindy replied, "Sounds a good

idea. Uhm, I may try this semester in one or two more years later, because maybe their level

will be a little bit higher."

5.8.3 Summary of the Findings from the Online Chat Session with Terry

In this online chat session with Terry, Cindy was given the opportunity to experience

teacher learning where she learned new teaching skills that she could apply in her classroom.

The various instructional strategies fit into her teaching framework since many of the tips

suggested were appropriate for her students' learning needs, i.e. use of large fonts, repetition, etc. The use of a PowerPoint presentation material made it easier for Cindy to understand the content of what Terry was saying. Web sharing was also performed during the session; for instance when I showed Terry Cindy's blog and other websites that both of them could find useful. For an EFL teacher who may not have access to get in touch with well-experienced teachers like Terry, Cindy was given the chance to get to know one. At the end of the online session, I asked Cindy if she learned anything and if this presentation was helpful. Cindy responded,

> "It's awesome. I did learn a lot especially about some concepts, of teaching, teaching methods which help me a lot."

5.8.4 Cindy's Post-online Session Reflections

On April 14, 2009, Cindy posted a blog entry about her impressions on the online session that she had just participated in. In the first paragraph she noted that advantages of online tools that make it possible for people to participate in long-distance courses, she wrote, "Thanks to the useful software and websites, modern people can take long-distance courses easily. For some who are computer challenging (sic), like me, it's a great opportunity to improve English teaching and computer operating skills at the same time." In her blog entry, she admitted that she had learned some practical ideas about teaching senior citizens. However, as she wrote in her blog entry, she also recognized the difficulty of implementing

some of these ideas in her own classroom due to lack of technical tools required to put these

ideas into practice (Figure 5.35).

Figure 5.35: Cindy's Blog Entry on Classroom Set-up

"During the one-and-a-half hour live conference, I got some practical ideas about teaching seniors such as enlarging texts, seniors relevant topics and learning phrases through movie scripts. I've printed out all the power point scripts which would become one of my references".

"My senior students go to church to take my class. The classroom is, indeed, a conference room where there are no TV set or computer and big screen that I can play DVDs with. Since watching movies is an effective way to improve English, according to Professor Terry Doyle's observation in his classes, I would at least try to move the class to the equipped chapel and start with clips from movies or "commercial downloaded via internet".

5.9 Terry and Cindy's Email Exchanges

After experiencing some technical difficulties towards the end of the online session,

Terry was unable to get back in the chat room. He wrote me an email expressing his feelings

about not being able to say 'goodbye' to Cindy and he hoped that he could make it up by

sending her an email and requested Cindy's email. I gave him Cindy's email address after

getting her permission. Terry sent me a carbon-copy of the email (dated April 9, 2009) he sent

to Cindy. The first paragraph contains a few Chinese sentences that he wrote. This was a nice

touch to show not only that he had tried learning Chinese, but it was also a friendly gesture

recognizing Cindy's words of encouragement (during the online session) for him to continue

learning Chinese. Terry apologized for not being able to say goodbye (Figure 5.36).

Figure 5.36: Screenshot of Terry's Email After Online Chat Session

"Hi, Cindy. 你好吗？我昨天高兴认识你。谢谢你你鼓励我学 中文 [Nǐ hǎo ma? Wǒ zuótiān gāoxìng rènshi nǐ. Xièxiè nǐ nǐ gǔlì wǒ xué zhōngwén/translation: How are you? I am glad to meet you yesterday. Thank you, you encouraged me to study Chinese]。 Sorry that I can't write more in Chinese.   But talking about Chinese yesterday reminded me that I should study Chinese more."

"I really felt bad about not being able to say "goodbye" to you last night. I lost the connection when Aiden put up the other websites. It happened at the beginning and again at the end of the session it took longer to re-enter the learning times "room".   I did make it back, but just as you and Aiden were saying "goodbye"."

Finally, Terry mentioned that he has been reading Cindy's blog. He gave Cindy some positive comments; he wrote "Your lesson descriptions are interesting. You have good luck at getting your students to speak. I also like your idea of using songs and also talking about traveling. Cindy responded to Terry's email soon after she received it. Like Terry, Cindy sent me a carbon-copy of the email (dated April 10, 2009) she sent to him. In the first paragraph, she commented on Terry's ability to write Chinese, and that he was invited to visit Kaohsiung to see her and me (since we both live in the same city). She expressed how much she enjoyed the online chat while at the same time trying to overcome her fear of talking to people whom she has never met before. She then moved on to replying to Terry's comments about her blog and the possibility of having an exchange class activity. On April 11, 2009, Terry responded

to Cindy's email thanking her for her comments on his presentation. He expressed his interest

in continuing the email conversation with Cindy. He wrote,

> "I hope we have a chance to talk more... or maybe by e-mail... because I like your ideas about teaching your seniors class. I will continue to read your blog. I want to know more about how you teach songs. I should start a blog about teaching seniors, too."

Cindy took some time to respond to Terry's email. On April 15, 2009, she sent him an email.

In this email she expressed her interest in learning more about the effective use of movies for

senior students. She wrote,

> "I like the way you teach your seniors students with movies. It does help English non-native speakers catch up language, culture and customs quickly. Actually, I wish I could attend your DVD classes in City College; I am a movie lover. (Although some old movies you mentioned I'm not familiar with)"

On April 22, 2009, Cindy wrote Terry another email requesting some materials that he has on

movie lessons. She wrote,

> "I have very positive thoughts about teaching and learning English through movies or DVDs. If you can please offer some materials that fit my seniors students whose levels are about 3 or 4, that would really do me a big favor."

Such email conversations continued for several weeks, and the more they sent emails, the

more it helped establish a good rapport between the two. On May 22, Terry sent Cindy the

materials he had been using in his video ESL class:

- Movie 'Bella' Script
- Movie 'Bella' Listening Comprehension Activities
- Idioms
- Joy Luck Club Idioms
- Joy Luck Club Script
- Joy Luck Club Listening Comprehension Exercise

On June 2, 2009 Cindy informed Terry that she may not be able to make use of all the

materials since she may not have enough time to do the lessons since the semester was about

to end. She wrote,

> "Thank you for the movie scripts, idioms and exercises attachment. It would help me and my students with teaching and learning a lot. But the problem is that we might not have enough time to do it. Still, I'll try to squeeze time in class and also solve the technical problems, (We need to move to another computer-equipped classroom.) I think most of your suggestions and ideas are useful and helpful to me."

Cindy posted a blog entry on June 9, 2009 where she wrote that they had run out of time

and was unable to do the movie lesson on 'The Joy Luck Club'. However, her students were

willing to have an extra class for this, which they scheduled on June 17, 2009. Her student,

Kau-Nan, had agreed to bring his laptop computer to class so they could watch the movie

clips from YouTube.com. On the same date, Cindy wrote Terry an email informing him about

her plan to do the movie lesson. She wrote,

> "Next week, we would have an extra class to watch a clip of movie "Joy Luck Club" which I've found in "You Tube" website. I've also studied the materials you sent me; they are gorgeous and very helpful for students' comprehension. Thank you for making the efforts."

Terry wrote her back on June 15, 2009 telling her that he was glad about it. He wrote,

> "I'm glad that you plan to show your students part of "Joy Luck Club".   It's an interesting movie.   In my class, the students liked it a lot. Sometimes I missed some of the cultural details, but Olive and Joan (the other student teacher) helped me with this.   In fact, they recommended that I use this movie."

5.9.1 Summary of Findings from Email Exchange

The use of emails allowed the extension of discussions between Cindy and Terry with the focus on exchanging ideas that would increase Cindy's knowledge on various pedagogical approaches that she could apply to her classroom. From the examples given above, it was clear that meaningful exchanges took place. The focus of learning or what Cindy gained from these interactions with Terry was very much connected to her context of practice (cf. Loucks-Horsley, et al., 1998). The asynchronous mode enabled the delivery of continuous online teacher professional for Cindy. Through email attachments, Terry was able to send Cindy teaching resources i.e. movie scripts and related activities that would not have been possible if Cindy had not met Terry. There was continuous support and mentoring that transpired, and the level of enthusiasm from both Cindy and Terry also revealed positive teacher collaboration. Despite the geographical distance, both teachers were willing to share materials, opinions, and ideas that would have been daunting if the communications were done face-to-face. The exchange of emails also gave both teachers the time to think about what and how to respond; thus allowing them to compose their messages and to mull things over.

5.10 Post-Online Session Class Observation

Cindy did not have to wait for the class observations to take place to implement some of the more practical things that she had learned from Terry. In a blog entry, she shared her experience in using images in storytelling (Figure 5.37).

Figure 5.37: Cindy's Blog Entry on Class Activity

In today's lesson, I applied the image-concept Professor Terry Doyle offered in class practice. I put eight drawing pictures with characters and scenes on the white board and made students pick four out of them. They then could make up stories in their own ways. For example, if they picked pictures A, C, G, H and put them in the order they liked. They then started to describe what happened, who they were, where they were, when it happened…. There were five groups working on this exercise. At the end of the class, there were no stories coming out yet. They took shrunk-sized copy to create the stories as their homework.

From the video recording of the class observations for the two lessons that Cindy did, it was evident that she did a lot of class preparation. She prepared a lesson plan that itemizes the class activities that she would be doing. In both the Idiom lesson and the movie lesson, she had prepared hand-outs, worksheets, audio cassette and player, arranged for a place with internet access where the movie lesson would take place, researched for video material (The Joy Luck Club scenes) from Youtube.com, translated the transcript and the materials she received from Terry. In teaching idiomatic expressions, Cindy made use of printed images with huge font type and size. This made it easier for her students to read the text since many

of them have bad eyesight. Class instructions were given in Chinese, and most of the time,

Cindy resort to translating almost everything that she said in English.

There were some examples given by her students where the sentence structure was

incorrect and the meaning of what was being said was far from the true definition of the idiom.

For instance, a student was supposed to use the idiom, 'when pigs flies' in a sentence. But

perhaps he was confused with the illustration on his hand-out showing a pig with wings and

looked like it was in a 'flying motion'. This probably made him utter the phrase, "it is never

happens." Cindy then responded, "…is like when pig flies. Why?" The student then repeated

what he said, and looked at the illustration of a flying pig, and said, "is never happens…".

Cindy tried to make sense of what he was saying, and repeated what the student said, "it never

happens, so…" Despite the fact that the student had difficulty producing the sentence, this

example shows that he understood what the idiom meant. And to wrap it up, Cindy finally

said, "It never happens so it's like when pig flies. Very good, very good. Thank you" She

clapped her hands and the rest of the class did so, too.

5.10.1 Summary of the Findings from the Post-Online Session Class Observation

Overall, this particular class observation reveals how the students in Cindy's class are not

only motivated but also cheerful, supportive with each other, and determined to try and learn

to speak a few English idioms. For senior citizens, having the right motivation is important in learning the language successfully. By clapping her hands, smiling, use of encouraging words, and saying 'thank you' every time, Cindy helps in maintaining her students' motivation to come to class and learn English in a less stressful way. Error correction, particularly when doing oral/speaking exercises must be done with caution, and if done appropriately could also increase students' motivation. The teacher must say that an error has been committed when it affects clarity or causes distortion to the message being implied. In the example above, Cindy could have used that opportunity to tell the student that the sentence was incorrect and that the message was unclear and incomplete. Over-using the phrase 'very good' can also be detrimental to learning, and similar to correcting errors, such terms of praise should also be used judiciously.

5.11 Movie Lesson Class Observation

In teaching the movie lesson, it was obvious that Cindy had spent considerable amount of time planning for this lesson. The transcript that she received from Terry was translated into Chinese. She also had to search the Internet for the scenes that she planned to show her students. From this class observation, Cindy showed selected scenes from the movie. And from these scenes, she picked out some words and idiomatic expressions that her students

could learn. Although, her students watched the selected scenes several times with Chinese subtitles, they still had difficulty working on the written task that would test their comprehension of the story (from the scenes), understanding of the dialogues, and listening skills. Cindy admitted on her blog entry that she should have given her students a copy of the entire script ahead of time, but even if they had the script, it would have been much better if the students had the opportunity to watch the film in its entirety. In this way, they would already have a clear idea of what the movie plot was about. The second content of the video class observation was the lesson on the movie, The Joy Luck Club. Since there was no DVD player or computer in the classroom, Cindy had arranged for this particular lesson to take place in one of the students' house at a time that was convenient for all of them. The transcript below shows how Cindy carried out the introduction to the class activity (Table 5.21).

Table 5.21: Cindy's Outside Class Activity Transcript

Cindy's Outside Class Activity Transcript	
Cindy	Good afternoon everybody, welcome to the movie class. So today, we're going to watch a movie. The movie is 'Joy luck club', Chinese is '喜福會[Xǐ fú huì'] it's an old movie, so it can already be rented in DVD store anywhere. But today you can watch it online. Ok. 我們現在看[Wǒmen xiànzài kàn/We're going to watch it now]. We're going to watch a clip, a clip of the movie, and we're going to watch it twice. First, whether you can see (read) the Chinese subtitle, 可以看中文字[Kěyǐ kàn zhòng wén zì/You can look at the Chinese characters]. But the second time, you have to listen, and also we are going to do this activity at the same time, ok? And this can help you understand the movie better. Ok, so let's watch it now…You will listen (to) the clip of the movie at the same time. You do not need to watch the movie, watch the screen but you need to listen and look at all the lines- the paragraph carefully and circle the differences which is different from what you hear, okay? 聽不懂的, 沒有發現, 大概有十個 words

	or phrases, okay? So I need to turn, turn on, turn on the lights. 我們要開始啦 [We're going to start/play (the movie)]. *大部分的意思是一樣* [Most of it are the same]. *可是有字是不同, 不同的地方在哪裡巴它 'circle' 或的是 underline. Circle 或是 underline 都可以.*[But some of the words are different. Circle or underline the words that are different.]

In the above transcript, Cindy translated some of the instructions in Chinese. This was done to make it easier for the students to grasp what the activity was about. When the movie clip was played for the second time, the students had to listen to the clip again and read the transcript at the same while they identified some words that were different from the actual lines being delivered by the actors in the movie. The students were told to put a circle or underline the words that were different. After listening to the movie clip, Cindy asked her students if they were able to find the differences in the text. Since there were not many students who gave the right answer, the movie clip was played again. After which, Cindy advised her students to watch this movie at home so they would be familiar with the story and understand what the narrator in the movie was saying. Cindy also had exerted a lot of effort explaining vocabulary terms from the transcript. Encountering difficult terminology, while doing the task at the same time can be confusing and frustrating, not only for the students but the teacher as well. Cindy could have selected these words or phrases and discuss the definitions, practicing pronunciation of these words, etc. before they actually watched the movie. This could have prepared the students better. Although the movie lesson had to be carried outside the classroom, still the majority of the students were willing to attend this

lesson. This shows a high level of motivation on the part of the students to participate in

activities that would help them learn English. They had to arrange for a time and place for this

lesson to take place, and they were supportive of Cindy, offering her help and assistance.

5.11.1 Main Findings from Movie Lesson Observation

The post-online session class observation was held in June 2009, which was also

recorded on video. There were three main learning objectives for this particular class: Idiom

practice (use of idiom in a sentence, 6 minutes), Movie lesson (The Joy Luck Club, 31

minutes), and end of the semester class play (10 min). The content of the video was edited to

include only the main lesson and learning activities; class break and class preparation time

were excluded, which makes the total running time of the video about 45 minutes.

On June 23, 2009 Cindy posted a blog entry entitled, "Movie and Performance". She

wrote about her personal account and reflection on the movie lesson on The Joy Luck Club

which she conducted outside the classroom. She wrote:

> "On June 17, we went to, one senior student of mine, Mr. Wu's home for the movie
> class. He has a well equipped audio-visual room for the family entertainment. We
> decided to move to his home for the movie class, because of the technical problems
> occurred in the church. But it's just for this time; we would solve the problems before
> next semester starts."

Not all of her students were able to attend, but she was glad that at least "two thirds of

the class attended". Cindy then discussed the outcome of the lesson. Although her students

appreciated the effort in introducing them the movie, she wrote in her blog entry that they had difficulty in understanding the vocabulary and the flow of the story (see Figure 5.38).

Figure 5.38: Cindy's Blog Entry on Movie Activity

"After watching two times of "The Joy Luck Club" Part 1 (The narrating introduction and the home party), they did the Activity 2 –Listening Comprehension, Find out ten differences that you hear from the narrator, and the Activity 4-Answer these questions about this scene. (Multiple choice questions) They found these Activities were kind of difficult for their level though they did enjoy watching movies. According to their suggestions, I might give them the printed out lines of plot (offered by Professor Terry Doyle) or maybe just part of it beforehand during next semester."

On July 17, 2009, Terry posted a long comment in the comments' area for "Movie and Performance" blog entry. He commented on the three (1) your idioms lesson, (2) the way you teach Joy Luck Club, and (3) your students' performance) contents of the DVD that she sent him, the same DVD that I had for this study. On Cindy's use of large illustrations and fonts in her class hand-outs used in teaching idioms, Terry wrote, "I like your students' use of pictures to learn idioms. It's a great idea. I think it's a great way to teach idioms. And I'm really impressed by your students. They seem so interested in your class and what you are teaching them." Terry also commented on 'The Joy Luck Club' lesson and on how she delivered it. He wrote, "I also liked the way you taught the first scenes in Joy Luck Club. You used my exercise, but you used them in a way that was really meaningful for your students. Your students seemed to understand very well, and they asked interesting and insightful questions."

And finally, Terry expressed his admiration on the way she handled her classes. For a teacher who has had many years experience teaching ESL to senior students to admit that he learned some great ideas from Cindy was truly motivating (Figure 5.39).

Figure 5.39: Terry's Comments on Movie Activity

> "…you have such a warm relationship with your students… it really made me think, "I can try to teach this way." Thanks so much for sharing these lessons with me. Watching your DVD made me feel not only really inspired, but also comfortable because I have some goal… I can try to teach the way you do … with the idioms, in the way you taught with materials I made, and possibly even the play. But that would be difficult, I know. But I plan to try. This semester, my Movie ESL class is the last class of the day, so I can try something like you have done. I can spend extra time with them after the class. My Movie ESL class is only one hour a day. It's not enough time, so I go rather quickly. I get to know some students, but only those who ask questions usually after class. Also, some students repeat each semester, so I come to know them."

Such remarks had a positive effect on Cindy. On her blog entry dated September 1, 2009, she expressed her appreciation to Terry for being her online mentor/colleague/friend. She wrote,

> "He did offer the very practical and fun materials for me. My students found it a little bit difficult, but they were inspired to keep studying more. I do have good relationship with my senior students. Actually, we learn and respect to each other. I like the words that Terry described, "You have warm relationship with your students and the class was joyful." I like that expression. I suppose Terry also has a wonderful class; as I can see he is a very caring and warm teacher too. I'm expecting his blog or any stuff he is creating in the near future."

Another positive effect on this experience was how it influenced Cindy's attitude towards developing her own skills in the future; she wrote, "I think the project has opened my eyes to reach out further educational field."　Right after her blog entry on the movie lesson, I

left a brief message asking her about her students' learning improvements, if there were any; How did she know that they have improved and what were the signs of improvement. On her latest blog post, Cindy acknowledged that my questions made her think about her teaching and wondered how she could improve so that her own students could improve as well (Figure 5.40).

Figure 5.40: Cindy's Response Regarding Students' Ability

"Most of my senior students are retired; they come to community activity center or church to learn something, meet new friends or just for fun. According to my boss's command, the classes should be interesting and fun; no more any pressure to them (Some of them have high blood pressure already.) Therefore, there are no quizzes; no tests but only fun activities. My class is so called "advanced" level, so they won't go to the "higher" level class in the program. I have to admit that we don't have any criteria to classify students' levels. Even worse, after summer or winter break, a few of them would say they forget what they have learned. As a teacher, I should be more motivated no matter what the learners' attitudes are."

5.11.2 Cindy's Post-movie Lesson Class Observation Reflections

On June 24, Cindy wrote Terry once again informing him about the outcome of the movie lesson. According to her, the class "went well" and that the student had enjoyed it. She reported that they did two activities from the set of materials that Terry had sent her. She also admitted that her students 'felt the conversations in the movie were kind of difficult to comprehend." She expressed her thoughts about what she should have done to better prepare

her student. She felt that she should have given her students a copy of the script for the movie clips before the actual lesson took place. The above example is an example of Cindy's experience in adopting the ideas she learned from Terry and self-appraisal where she assessed what happened during her class while implementing a new class activity and how she could further develop her own teaching strategies.

Terry sent his comments via email when he encountered technical problems in posting comments on her blog. Even after the video recording of the class observations were done, Cindy and Terry kept in touch with each other. On July 13, 2009, Cindy wrote Terry an email asking him whether he had received the DVD recording she sent him by regular mail and wished him a good summer vacation. On July 30, 2009, Terry wrote her informing her that he has successfully posted comments on her blog (Figure 5.41). Terry's message is an example of peer observation where the positive comments he provided could motivate and increase Cindy's self-confidence towards teaching. By admitting his lack of skills in video recording also showed his sense of humility, which also illustrates that not all experienced-teachers or mentors know everything.

Figure 5.41: Terry's Email to Cindy Concerning Blog Comments

"I have posted my opinion about your lessons and skit on your blog. I like your class so much! I'm very impressed by your teaching and by your students. You are a wonderful teacher. Thanks so much for sharing the DVD with me. I can't begin to tell you how wonderful your lessons made me feel! I hope I can send you a DVD of my class someday. I'm not so good at recording, however. But student teachers I have had have done this."

5.12 Main Findings on Cindy's Blog Entries

Cindy's blog was created in February 2009, and she maintained it throughout the duration of the study, from February-September 2009. She made a total of sixteen blog entries, with one entry dated September 1, 2009 about her thoughts on the new semester and the outcomes of her participation in my study. Her blog entries mostly focus on instructional approaches to teaching 'speaking' (Table 5.22).

Table 5.22: List of Cindy's Blog Entries

February 2009 1 entry	Teaching the elderly
March 2009 5 entries	How to improve my students' speaking skills? Conversation Practice Talk in English can be fun Boring and Fun at the same time Speaking Practice
April 2009 4 entries	Practice with Games Making Stories by pictures Storytelling Weather
May 2009 2 entries	Animal Idioms Idioms Practice and Skit
June 2009 2 entries	Idioms Pictures and Rehearsal Rehearsal and schedule for last week Movie and performance

The usage of blog as reflective tool discussed in Section 2.6.3.2 and Section 3.2.3.6 was applied in devising the following categories in looking at how Cindy utilized her blog as an instrument in reflecting on the various oTPD activities that she participated in. The following table was created using the examples made in the previous section and all blog entries that she published on her blog (Table 5.23).

Table 5.23: Cindy's Blog as Reflective Tool

Categories	Usage	Blog Entry Content Sample
Express thoughts and opinions	✔	All entries
Write about process of learning e.g. planning & implementation of lessons	✔	All entries
Other than text, blog entries contain:		
photos	✔	Storytelling activity, Idiom practice, Hen skit
links	X	
videos	X	
audio	X	
Post questions and ideas that trigger open conversations	✔	3/24 (They didn't sound like elder people, did they?) 3/31 I'd like them to improve their listening with this practice. If they didn't catch all the correct words or phrases to complete the lyrics, it's still fine; they can do it at home—everyone has got their own CD. 3/16 Reading aloud 3/9 Activities during winter vacation
Readers' comments in response to questions or ideas posted	✔	4/6 Practice with Games [174 words] 5/12 Animal Idioms [310 words] 6/23 Movie and Performance [554 words] 6/9 Hen skit [120 words] 6/1 Teaching idioms [222 words]
Habitual postings	✔	Month / Number of Postings 2/2009 [1] 3/2009 [3] 4/2009 [4] 5/2009 [2] 6/2009 [3] 7-8/2009 [0, summer vacation] 9/2009 [1]

5.12.1 Summary of the Findings from Cindy's Blog Exchange with Terry

Based on the table of categories above, it is evident that Cindy had used her blog as a tool to post her reflections on the lessons and activities used in class. She provided examples of her lesson plan, types of questions used during in-class conversation practice, samples of dialogues for in-class role-play, etc. The number of times (5) that Terry posted comments on her blog entries in relation to the number (16) of blog entries that she posted show a 31% response rate, which were all followed up and continued asynchronous conversations took place via email. All 5 blog responses that Terry made were more than just answers to questions or ideas that Cindy posted on her blog. As a mentor his responses also included thought provoking questions, suggestions, perspectives on learning activities, (sharing) helpful information, and words of encouragement or motivation (see Figure 5.42).

Figure 5.42: Analysis of Terry's Comments' on Cindy's Blog

5.13 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the data gathered using qualitative methods. I have presented the communications or electronic discourse conducted in the Taiwanese EFL teachers' Yahoo! Group and Facebook network. Discussions of teaching-related issued showed that even through asynchronous means of communications, teacher-experts could share their opinions and provide suggestions that the EFL teachers could adopt in their own classroom. The posting of announcements concerning teacher workshops or conferences also provide an opportunity for these teachers to get informed about various professional development that they could participate in. Also discussed in this chapter are the outcomes of the class observations and synchronous online meetings with teacher-experts; I also presented

the categories derived from the class observations and electronic discourse from the email exchanges, the blog entries made by the teachers regarding their own TPD.

The case study approach was used to observe the oTPD process and behavior of Taiwanese EFL teachers in online community of practice (CoP). This method also allowed me to successfully implement oTPD activities and document the process of change using text analysis of 1) the asynchronous discussions that transpired in the teachers Yahoo! Group (YG) and Facebook, and 2) audio and/or video recordings of the pre and post online-session classroom observations and synchronous web meeting. This qualitative study helped me to understand the complex inter-relationships between the Taiwanese teachers (mentees) and the invited experts (mentors). The examples discussed in this chapter were grounded on real-life teaching practices, and finally, it allowed me to probe deeper into the planning and implementation of the oTPD activities applied in this study (cf. Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). The findings discussed in this chapter prove that oTPD activities played an instrumental role in the transfer of knowledge (learning) and in affecting change in the their attitudes and behavior toward professional development.

In the following chapter, I will present an overview of the answers to the five research questions that guided this study.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

6.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the answers to the research questions

using the data gathered from the survey, case studies, and electronic discourse. The five

research questions are:

1. What are the Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and
    practices toward professional development?
2. How and to what extent can Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and
    Web 2.0 tools be integrated in the collaborative professional development activities for
    Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers' professional development?
3. What aspects are enhanced in Taiwanese EFL teachers' learning and professional
    development as the principles of cognitive apprenticeship (modeling, coaching,
    scaffolding, articulation, reflection, and exploration) take place in online environments?
4. What is the role of ICT and Web 2.0 in helping Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school
    teachers translate new knowledge into practice?
5. Have buxiban/supplementary school Taiwanese teachers' attitudes, behavior, and
    practices changed as a result of participating in online teacher professional development
    activities?

Looking at the results from three data sources allowed me to find any similarities or

differences from the responses and compare them with the actual practices of the teachers

from the two groups, the Taiwanese EFL teachers' Yahoo! Group (YG) and the two case study

subjects, Joy and Cindy.

6.1 Research Question 1: What are the Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers'

attitudes, beliefs, and practices toward professional development?

To provide access to professional development, it is important to find out the Taiwanese

EFL teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and practices toward professional development that will give

them the opportunity to learn, gain knowledge, and enhance teaching skills. A teacher's

attitude can influence his/her teaching performance and inevitably can have positive or

negative ramification on students' learning (Blase & Kirby, 2000).

In this study, survey results indicate a strong alpha level response at .002 and .000

($p<.05$), which strongly suggests that they were more likely to participate in teacher training

offered free of charge. These findings also concur with what Peggy wrote on the Taiwanese

EFL teachers' Yahoo! Group that many teachers wanted to participate provided that their

employers give them permission; And since the conference/workshop was free, their

employers allowed them to go. For paid teacher development programs, teachers were 'unsure'

whether they would participate because doing so would mean shouldering the cost themselves.

The high cost involved in teacher workshops and conventions is one of the barriers for

teachers. This finding was also noted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and

Development (OECD, 2009) when they published the first results from the Teaching and

Learning International Survey (TALIS) that they conducted; according to their report "this

was most notable in Brazil and Mexico, as some 50% of teachers reported cost as a reason for not taking part in more development than they did" (p. 73). Providing Taiwanese EFL teachers with access to free professional development activities could certainly provide them solutions to meeting their professional development needs.

The participation of Taiwanese EFL teachers in the Yahoo! Group and Joy and Cindy's participation were clear indications that these teachers had the desire to learn and improve their skills. Identifying what their specific learning needs were was a very important step in designing and planning the oTPD activity. The activities conducted in the Yahoo! Group and in the classroom-based research that Joy and Cindy participated in involved individual and collaborative efforts; there were plenty of opportunities for informal dialogue with experts and co-teachers, and getting their hands on these activities made their learning experiences even more meaningful.

As discussed in Chapter 5, teachers in the Yahoo! Group also made an effort to share local conferences or workshops that were beneficial to the members of the group. There were some who attended and some who did not; those who attended reported positive feedback from what they had experienced. These practices are in sync with the findings of the two surveys that I conducted that these teachers consider the provisions for teacher training and development highly important. Thus, it is essential to keep on sharing ideas, resources, and

opportunities for TPD using the various online tools that exist today.

The findings in the Gap analysis that I conducted in Chapter 4 reveal that there is a huge

gap (Diff= 1.2) between what the teachers consider very important and their level of

satisfaction with the kind of teacher training they were actually receiving from their

employing institutions. In her message sent via Facebook, Agnes gave a rough outline of what

sort of 'on-the-job training' Taiwanese EFL teachers go through:

> "First, they give teachers a basic presentation about the school, classes and text books.
> Then, send teachers to observe classes.   After few observations, teachers would be sent
> to classes to teach…but teachers do learn from mistakes they make"

The minimal training only involved class observations of other teachers and on some

occasions new teachers were asked to teach right away without any proper induction or

teacher training; this highly resonates with the background information presented in Chapter 1.

In these examples, teachers had to look after their own professional growth. This lack of

support from the school administration can cause dissatisfaction, which could turn into further

disillusionment towards the school that could then lead to finally resigning from their job

(Yeh, 2001). If this cycle continues then it could result in high teacher turnover (Everson,

Mueller, & Price, 2004). Their perception of how satisfied they were is an indicator that

action is required to satisfy this need as low satisfaction level can certainly influence teacher

morale and motivation (Evans, 1998). Low teacher morale has grave ramifications for the

students, as Whitaker, Whitaker, & Lumpa (2008) state, "as their moods become less positive,

their attitudes will affect their students, gradually dragging student morale down to the same

level" (pp. 243-244).

6.2 Research Question 2: How and to what extent can Information and Communications

Technology (ICT) and Web 2.0 tools be integrated in the collaborative professional

development activities for Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers' professional

development?

In analyzing data aimed at answering research question 2, it is important to look at the

oTPD process used in this study- from planning to evaluation of teacher change. There are

four core areas where ICT and Web 2.0 tools were integrated in the oTPD:

1. Awareness: Teachers' Need, Goal, and Determination
2. Catalyst in Providing Teachers Access to oTPD
3. Designing the Structural and Core Features of oTPD
4. Seeing the Change in Teachers' Classroom Practices

Each core area will be discussed in detail in the following sections describing how and to

what extent ICT and Web 2.0 tools were integrated in the oTPD process.

6.2.1 Awareness: Need, Goal, Determination

Barrel (2003) states that the 'best professional development can begin with teachers real

concerns and questions about helping students learn' (p. 216), and that this step actually

begins with the teachers themselves (Brody & Davidson, 1998). In this study, teachers were

asked to look at their own teaching context and to see which aspect of their teaching skills

they wished to enhance or if there were teaching issues that they hoped to resolve. The

teachers had to have a sense of awareness of what their teaching/learning needs were, and in

doing so, they had to resort to what Richards and Farrells (2005) call "self-inquiry", where

they look at their teaching situation and ask question/s about their teaching practices (p. 14);

these needs are normally associated with a problem/dilemma that requires solution. For

instance, in the EFL teachers' Yahoo! Group, the teachers were asked to look at their teaching

needs and it was only when they expressed what their teaching issues were (see Section 5.2)

that other members were motivated to post something to the discussion list, either by offering

suggestions or comments. Teacher-experts invited to the online group were able to compose

their responses that addressed the problems more directly (see Chapter 5). For Joy and Cindy,

finding out what particular teaching skill that they wanted enhanced was also very important,

particularly in the early stages of planning the synchronous online meeting or webconference

since this information helped me in scouting for teacher-experts who were knowledgeable

about the area/s of interest. Engaging in oTPD also requires awareness that it is goal-driven

and determination to get involved in the process. The outcome of the oTPD experiences for

the teachers who participated in this study also revealed how much learning took place based

on the time and effort they put in it. Defining the teacher's need prior to any oTPD activity

could also help providers to design an appropriate program for the teachers. School

administrators, for instance, could choose one teaching need or skill-in-focus per training or

workshop to avoid the 'one-shot' phenomenon (Guskey, 2002; see also Craft, 1996) where

teachers have only one chance to learn something new and what they learnt has little to do

with what goes on in their own classrooms. Defining what the specific teachers' needs were

increased their motivation to actively participate and learn since the outcome would present

possible solutions that they could adopt in their own teaching context.

6.2.2 Catalyst in Providing Teachers Access to oTPD

In this framework, providing access to online professional development begins by

creating an online space for online meeting and networking to take place; this space could be

an online group in Yahoo! Group, Facebook, and other social networks where teachers could

come at any time, access the messages, links, or files uploaded or shared for others to view or

use (see Sections 5.5.3 and 5.5.4). Teachers and school administrators can easily create their

own personal learning network or environment using the various social media resources/tools

available on the web. In this study, I created teacher networks using Yahoo! Group, blogs, and

Facebook where messages sent or posted were directly sent to my email account. For privacy

concerns, I made the Taiwanese EFL teachers' Yahoo! Group private; those who wanted to join the group simply clicked the 'join the group' button on the group's webpage. Only once permission to join was given, did they have full access to the group site's features. On the survey questionnaire, those who expressed their willingness to join the online group also wrote their email address; an email invitation to join the group was later sent to them. Networking on Facebook was also easy since all I did was to create an account, and I simply added the teachers and colleagues whom I wanted to add or those who wanted to be added on my friends' list. By providing TPD access via various webtools, I served as a catalyst (Mattei, 2001) that sparked the relationship between the invited mentors and Taiwanese EFL teachers. Based on the outcomes of the qualitative study, it is clear that the teachers in the YG, FB, and blog networks have had access to professional development as information related to teacher training workshops or conferences (paid or with fee) were posted (see Chapter 5). The web links, teaching ideas and resources posted to group were information that these teachers could find useful. Using the shared information depended on their willingness to peruse them; nonetheless, these social media tools break down access barriers to professional development. During the period of this study, the teachers who were in these social groups got to participate in an online community of practice. These teachers shared similar goals and interests in development activities that could enhance their professional skills, and they were all in the

same teaching context. A teacher's opinion about students' motivation or parents' demands concerning their children's English learning was easily expressed and translated into meaningful discussions because they all could relate to the same situation. These common denominators defined them as a group/community having the same beliefs and value systems (Kirschner & Wopereis, 2003). Joining these online communities of practice or online groups for teachers who share the same learning interests could provide EFL teachers the opportunity to connect with others and engage in collaborative learning (Wenger, 1998). The expert-teachers whom I approached to participate in my study were all online colleagues who are members of the Webheads online community (see Chapter 2). oTPD designers and providers could use one or a combination of these social networks to start their own community of practice. Once the access to oTPD is made, it opens up the opportunity for learning as EFL teachers communicate and collaborate with others. The more teachers access these Web 2.0 tools, the higher the connectivity level and, therefore, more chances of meeting catalysts to TPD via social networking. However, it is important to note that in order for these tools to be effective, the users (TPD provider and the teachers) should be able to generate the content e.g. posting teaching/learning resources, comments, reflective entries, etc. The value of these tools depends on what the teachers add or bring to them, and how they engage with the contents that they or others have contributed.

6.2.3 Designing the Structural and Core Features of oTPD

The structural and core features of oTPD used in this study are listed in Table 6.1 and 6.2. The forms of oTPD included a blend of asynchronous/synchronous discussion workshops, (pre/post) class observations, and blogging for reflection which lasted for several months.

Table 6.1 Structural Features of oTPD

Structural			
	Taiwanese EFL Teachers YG	**Joy**	**Cindy**
Form Online Teacher Professional Development	Asynchronous Discussion Workshop	Asynchronous/ Synchronous discussion workshops, (pre/post) class observations, blogging for reflection	Asynchronous/ Synchronous discussion workshops, (pre/post) class observations, blogging for reflection
Duration	2 months	5 months: Pre-oTPD (Needs assessment); Post-oTPD (Reflection)	5 months: Pre-oTPD (Needs assessment); Post-oTPD (Reflection)
Collective Participation	✔	✔	✔

oTPD activities were geared towards the exploration of cognitive apprenticeship and e-mentoring where they learn from the outcomes of modeling, coaching, and scaffolding with teacher-experts or experienced colleagues, and from the outcomes of their own participation in adopting the new knowledge/skills they have learned into their classroom practices (Table 6.2).

The core features highlighted in this study provided the teachers the support that they needed in gaining professional development that they could actually put into practice, thus,

achieving a more "meaningful effect on teacher learning" (Garet et al, 2001, p.937, see

Chapter 2). The experiences of the EFL teachers who participated in this study were described

in Chapter 5- with focus on both synchronous and asynchronous discussions; based on the

online discourse data, the discussions conducted served as a learning instrument that allowed

the exchange of information and teacher support and for the social aspects of online discourse

to take place. The analyses of messages in both environments provide evidence that the nature

of discussions involved the use of cognitive and metacognitive skills. The implementation of

cognitive apprenticeship and e-mentoring theory into practice, where ensuring active learning

was taking place, was critical since it underlies one of the core features of this oTPD (see

Section 6.2).

Table 6.2: Core features (content, active learning, coherence) of oTPD

Core Features	Taiwanese EFL Teachers YG	Joy	Cindy
Content	Being a good teacher, motivating students, mentoring, etc.	Teaching writing to young learners	Teaching speaking to seniors
Active Learning: Cognitive Apprenticeship, Models of TPD in practice			
Online networking, scaffolding	YG- email-based discussion	YG, Blog, Email with expert/mentor/coach, Facebook	YG, Blog, Email with expert/mentor/coach
Synchronous Experts model effective practice, share advice, coach, mentor	X	✔Online session Platform: Webheads' Alado Webconference portal	✔Online session Online session Platform: Webheads' Learning Times Office, Elluminate

Asynchronous Experts share suggestions, opinions, & advice	YG- email-based discussion	YG, Blog, Email, Facebook	YG, Blog, Email
Documentation/ articulation, reflection	YG message board	YG message board, Blog, Email, video recording of class observations	Blog, Email, shared/discussed video recording of class observations
Practice & Exploration	✔	✔	✔
Feedback	Feedback/Comment on posted message thread	Feedback/Comment on posted message thread and during live session	Feedback/Comment during live session, blog comments' area, email exchange
Coherence	Consistent with their teaching goal		

The online synchronous discussions that Joy and Cindy participated in were both

considered effective since they expressed learning something new and relevant. However, the

level of effectiveness varied due to the online discussion/web conference platforms that were

used. Joy felt that it was sometimes difficult to read the online chat and listen to what people

were saying at the same time. The lack of visuals (PowerPoint) also meant that she had to

listen intently to be able to understand the flow of discussions. The number of expert-teachers

who joined Joy online also influenced the flow of discussions as there were more people

whose opinions and suggestions added various perspectives that Joy had to carefully consider

and react to. In these synchronous online communications, writing in the text chat area of the

web conference platform was done to supplement, repeat, or expand what was said in the

voice chat. Based on the review of transcripts (see Chapter 5), the information exchange

during the synchronous web conferences/discussions was effective for the participating

teachers. Compared to face-to-face discussions, the synchronous discussions conducted proved to hold certain advantages. For one, this multipoint voice discussion allowed several teachers from various parts of the globe to come and meet in one online space where they contributed their ideas and teaching expertise to a Taiwanese EFL teacher who may not have had this opportunity to interact with expert-teachers if such online technology was not available. The content of discussions flowed easily as the expert-teachers picked-up the conversations that created an interesting exchange of ideas. One example was when the thread of conversations shifted from mindmap to storytelling to error correction. There were plenty of questions and comments that were addressed not only to Joy but among the expert-teachers as well (see Chapter 5).

Cindy's online live meeting with Terry was less interactive since he was the only expert-teacher in the session. The topic and flow of conversation was more streamlined. The first half of the synchronous discussion was spent on sharing success stories about Terry's students; since he prepared PowerPoint slides to show pictures and snippets of dialogues from the movie activity that he was sharing made it relatively easy to make sense what and how the activities were like (see Figure 5.27). Although, there were a number of activities that were shared, the discussion sparked Cindy's interest in using images in storytelling and movie clips with subtitles in her class. Although the conversation was less interactive compared to Joy's

synchronous session with the Webheads, the outcome was still quite satisfactory since it did

not fall short in the amount and quality of information that was shared.

The YG, blogs, email, synchronous chat platforms served as the media tools for

meaningful communications and discussions enabling the transfer and construction of

knowledge. The voluntary participation of the Taiwanese EFL teachers in these discussions

gave them the opportunity to share their ideas, suggestions, experiences- making the contents

of shared information personal and meaningful (Kirschner & Wopereis, 2003) which is a

far-cry from traditional teacher education or required TPD courses where attendance and

participation are enforced by the instructors.   The examples of collaborative discussions of

on-the-job problems and shared solutions/suggestions given in Chapter 5 show the online

media tools which can assist conveyance of constructing knowledge and skills (Jonassen,

1999). As seen in this study, oTPD can be facilitated in an informal way without losing so

much of the structure as planning and outline of oTPD events are still necessary in achieving

the goals set out by the teachers themselves; The role of e-mentors or those educators

proficient in the use of technology both in the classroom and their own TPD willing to

help/mentor teachers is important in the oTPD process.

6.2.4 Seeing the Change in Teacher's Classroom Practices

In this step, seeing the change/s in the teachers' classroom practices required the use of digital technology (for video recording and for pictures taken) and computer-mediated communication (CMC) and web 2.0 tools. The transcript of the recorded synchronous web meetings/conferences, message archive of the Yahoo! Group, and blog entries reveal what topics were discussed, what kind of opinions were given, and what specific teaching strategies were shared. Documenting the process and the outcome of this TPD experience was made relatively easier not just for me as a researcher but for the teachers as well. Since they still have continued access to these social networks; they could easily retrieve any information they want, review past blog entries, re-read past discussions that took place, but most importantly, these tools were valuable for self-evaluation (see Chapter 5). As stated in Chapter 2, the video recording can be shared with peers, mentors, coach, etc. to validate the effectiveness of the implementation of a new instructional approach. In Cindy's case, she shared the video recording of her class not only with me as the researcher but Terry as well. In Joy's case, she only shared the video recording of her class observations with me. She also did not write a blog entry that would update her blog followers about the outcome of her class observations. However, she sent me an email message containing a copy of her lesson plans and evaluation of her own teaching performance. Since Joy was given the freedom to work on

this TPD activity the way she wanted to, she was not forced to do otherwise. For details regarding the changes in the teachers' practices that took place see Section 6.4.5 and 6.7, and Section 6.6 for the discussion on changes in students' learning.

6.3 Research Question 3: What aspects are enhanced in Taiwanese EFL teachers' learning and professional development as the principles of cognitive apprenticeship (modeling, coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection, and exploration) take place in online environments?

The premise of Collins, Brown and Newman's (1989) cognitive apprenticeship theory is that it centers on the development of higher level thinking skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, learning to learn, being creative, etc. In other words, it is aimed at "teaching the processes and strategies used in expertise and how this knowledge is used to solve real-world problems" (Dennen, 2004, p. 813). Both case study subjects, Joy and Cindy, were asked from the beginning of the study if they were given the opportunity to engage in a professional development activity with the experts or experienced teachers, what aspect of their teaching they would want to learn and improve; both identified enhancing teaching strategies. Experts and experienced teachers in the specified fields were invited to serve as mentors or coach. Since Joy and Cindy did not have the opportunity to engage in a personalized teacher professional development (TPD), the use of online technology enabled

collaboration at a distance. The online TPD for Joy and Cindy were carried out for them to experience an informal mentoring relationship among expert EFL/ESL teachers which includes the transfer of knowledge related to the teaching skills or strategies relevant to their own teaching contexts. While everyone was focused on mentoring, learning, sharing, etc., the entire social interaction (with the teacher-experts) process involved the development of cognitive skills as Joy and Cindy participated in an authentic learning experience. The conversations between the experts and the Taiwanese EFL teachers also demonstrated that collegial relationships can be fostered based on trust and respect. Exchanges of messages show that efforts were made to collaborate with each other while engaging in consultation and sharing problems and solutions, which in the end helped the Taiwanese EFL teachers make sense of their teaching practices as they gave/received feedback. This is an example where communication tools serve as mindtools within a community of practice (Kirschner & Wopereis, 2003). The section below provides evidence of development of cognitive skills through discussions of the different principles (modeling, etc.) and how they worked in this study.

6.3.1 Modeling

With the modeling method learners are given opportunities to observe how experts go through the process of problem solving. According to Wang & Bonk (2001, p. 137), such opportunities "provide learners with an overall mental model of the task that they are trying to learn, as well as demonstrate how an expert uses domain knowledge and strategies to solve problems." There are two types of modeling, behavioral and cognitive modeling (Jonassen, 1999). Behavioral modeling is the most common type as it implies the need to imitate what is being shown or demonstrated. Cognitive modeling, on the other hand, is more complicated since it involves the application of resembling strategies (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Novice teachers may observe experienced teachers as they discuss their classroom strategies, how they decide on a learning activity, etc. The experts model a certain process by talking about it and explaining the reasons for doing so.

In the case of Joy and Cindy, the type of modeling employed falls into the second category, cognitive modeling where they observed and participated in the discussions and where experts shared their own teaching strategies. In Joy's online session with the experts, there were about ten creative ideas/strategies that were shared regarding the teaching of writing to young learners. Below is an example of modeling method that was used during the online chat conference:

"I find that at these levels kids usually require a lot of assistance from the teacher. They usually need vocabulary and they find it better. If I'm walking around and if I can help with vocabulary and help them just marking- perhaps- I just walk in between the desks and tell them if they've made a grammar mistake and uhm- they can put up their hands and ask me when they need vocabulary. I usually prefer to start with activities that are sort of controlled. And most of them are based on units or lessons we're doing in class. Another thing that I find very useful is to concentrate on certain task types. Like for instance letter writing, or writing close --- writing for a couple of months. And then maybe move to storytelling." (Invited expert: Alejandra/Ale)

In Cindy's online session with Terry, he shared how he made use of movies or movie clips to teach idioms in context. Below is an example of modeling from Cindy's online chat session with Terry:

"… before we watch a scene I give them an explanation of those idioms. And then I added the steps to present dialogues with those idioms. So for example before watching a scene from Grace is Gone, A couple of idioms, 'what if' and the expression 'oh my gosh' Dialogue, ah, so we would read that. I always do it with one of my student-teachers. I have two student-teachers in my ESL video class. One would be A and the other one would be B, and we would read that. Some of the students would have the script of this so they could watch, listen while we look at it- while listening, and some of them didn't want it, so one who don't want it just turn it over and don't look…But last Thursday, Marina said this was the best way to study the idioms." (Invited expert/mentor: Terry)

Another example of modeling was when Elizabeth posted a message to the Yahoo! Group answering April's call for some teaching strategies that would make her students participate and be interested in the class better. In her message, Elizabeth talked about the 'Name Game' activity that would not only be fun for all but also a great activity to get to know one another. Her step-by-step explanation of how the activity goes made it relatively easy for April to follow the instructions and implement it in her own class (see Figure 5.3). The activity turned out to be a success since her students who previously did not engage in class activities started

347

to participate and enjoyed the activity. April saw the changes in the way her students behaved in the class meeting that followed. This experience had positive ramifications on her attitude towards teaching and her own perception of herself as a teacher.

6.3.2 Coaching

In Collins, et al (1989) cognitive apprenticeship theory, coaching entails monitoring, assisting and supporting learners when necessary. One of the constraints of coaching in traditional settings is the time availability of the instructor's (coach/mentor). In addition, the instructor is also required to be physically present in the classroom. By using Web 2.0 tools such as blogs, conferencing or online chat sessions, emails, etc. this constraint can be resolved. According to Wang & Bonk (2001) "one major advantage of e-mail and computer conferencing is this ability to break the temporal and spatial boundaries of a traditional learning environment" (p. 137). The examples below provide evidence of the effectiveness of coaching in online environments. Joy and Cindy were able to immediately post their questions during the online chat sessions, and Cindy was able to follow-up on her questions via email exchange with Terry. The synchronous chat meeting allows prompt feedback, while in the case of emails; the speed of receiving/sending responses will depend on how soon they could send it, which normally ranges from a few seconds to a number of days. The transcript below

shows the question Joy raised during her online chat with the Webheads:

> "I want to know how can we make the students uhm understand how they can maybe put a piece of writing together cus uhm I I can always do lots of reading or uhm fill-in-the-blanks or they have to re-order the different paragraphs, …"

There were several suggestions that were offered. Gladys Baya suggested the use of templates, she wrote in the text chat area, "Perhaps you could create templates, and brainstorm the options with the class?..." DafneG via voice chat suggested the idea of doing pre-writing activities (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: Dafne's Pre-writing Activity Suggestion
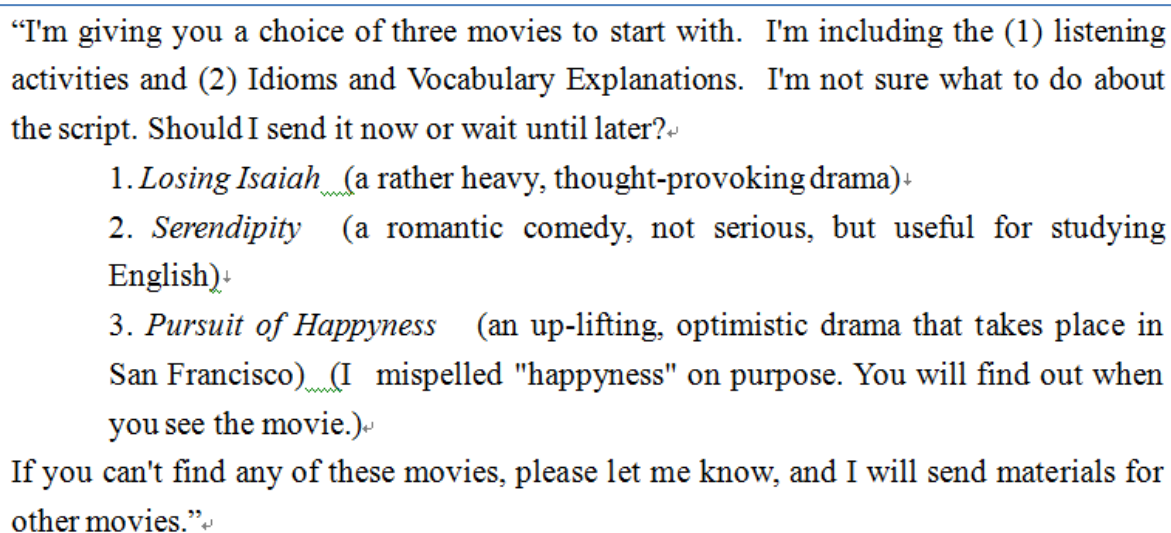
"I think that's when pre-writing activities ah play a great role because you can uhm brainstorm the words that they will use in the mother's day composition and they can write it in there in the classroom before going home and maybe they can edit after they have spent the mother's day with (their) moms and add some more information to their compositions because in that way they will be writing in the classroom and they nobody will do the activies for them and they can share words and ideas and then each one will write their own compositions. I think that's the best way to have them write their own paper."

The following text from Cindy's email sent to Terry is an example of questions that novice teachers would normally ask a mentor:

> "Speaking of study, since one of your effective ways to improve the seniors students' English is watching movie or guessing statements from the clips of movie. Do you still keep the T/F statements sheets from the authentic movies? I do need them to create a new lesson. <snip> …But could you please make a little time to assemble the materials for me." Email sent on May 20, 2009

On May 22, 2009, Terry responded and sent her movie scripts and corresponding comprehension activities for Cindy's perusal. On June 15, 2009, Terry sent Cindy more teaching materials on various movies that can be used in teaching EFL to seniors e.g. Listening Comprehension activity and idioms from the movie "Pursuit of Happyness" (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: Screenshot of Terry's Message on Teaching Materials

> "I'm giving you a choice of three movies to start with. I'm including the (1) listening activities and (2) Idioms and Vocabulary Explanations. I'm not sure what to do about the script. Should I send it now or wait until later?
> 1. *Losing Isaiah* (a rather heavy, thought-provoking drama)
> 2. *Serendipity* (a romantic comedy, not serious, but useful for studying English)
> 3. *Pursuit of Happyness* (an up-lifting, optimistic drama that takes place in San Francisco) (I mispelled "happyness" on purpose. You will find out when you see the movie.)
> If you can't find any of these movies, please let me know, and I will send materials for other movies."

The examples above show the kinds of coaching or ways of providing teacher support, which range from simple suggestions or ideas to sharing teaching resources such as Terry's listening comprehension activities that Cindy found to be both "very practical and fun materials" (see Cindy's blog entry excerpt below).

"Speaking of movie class, I'd like to thank Terry again. He did offer the very practical and fun materials for me. My students found it a little bit difficult, but they were inspired to keep studying more."

Other examples of effectiveness of coaching are discussed in detail in section 6.4.7.

6.3.3 Scaffolding

Collins et al (1989) state that in scaffolding method teachers provide an interim support to learners in areas where they need help. Teachers can either provide direct help or give suggestions, but such teacher support is expected to fade or be removed when it is no longer needed or necessary. One way of doing the scaffolding is by allowing learners to co-construct knowledge with others such as "providing learners with strategies of successful students" or provide "instruction tailored to specific learner needs based on current ability and interest" (Dennen, 2001, p. 815). It is important that scaffolding is done "through social interaction between the learner and someone who is more experienced" and must be within the learner's zone of proximal development (ZPD) or the learner's present ability level and potential performance. Dennen (2001) contends that "scaffolding is a learner-centered strategy whose success is dependent on its adaptability to the learner's needs" (ibid).

One form of scaffolding is giving hints. In the example below, Teresa was suggesting to Joy in the text chat area that there is a downside to overdoing error correction. She wrote,

"when they are being corrected all the time, they may feel shy about talking and making mistakes in front of others." In connection to this thread, Glady's posted message was also a hint to be cautious when correcting students' writing, "what I've found challenging (though I chose to do it) was to learn to accept (as a T) that not all mistakes need be corrected!"

Another form of scaffolding is modeling or demonstration. The experts invited in the online chat sessions modeled their teaching strategies by discussing them. Demonstrations were done by showing examples of successful class blogs that they have done in conjunction with a class project that they have completed. Teresa wrote in the text chat area, "Joy, take a look at the T-S blog I did with my students for 1.5 years and see if get any ideas. Communicating with kids in different schools and countries is a way of writing with a purpose. Here's the URL…″ Dafne also did the same to show Joy an article where she discussed in detail how she worked on a storytelling project for K-12 , "I did some work with storytelling - with k-12 students, this is an article about it[22]…"

Using students' success stories (i.e. Marina and Larisa) in learning the English language was also a good form of scaffolding done by Terry since Cindy could also learn some strategies (from learners' perspectives) that she could use. Words of compliments and appreciation that Terry wrote in his emails and blog messages provided emotional scaffolding for Cindy as she worked on improving her teaching skills. Below is a snippet of Terry's email

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[22] http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols/vol36/no1/p14.htm

sent to Cindy on July 30, 2009:

> "I have posted my opinion about your lessons and skit on your blog. I like
> your class so much! I'm very impressed by your teaching and by your students. You
> are a wonderful teacher. Thanks so much for sharing the DVD with me. I can't begin to
> tell you how wonderful your lessons made me feel!"

Cindy posted a blog entry on September 1, 2009 where she wrote how much she appreciates

the positive comments made by Terry:

> "I like the words that Terry described, "You have warm relationship with your students
> and the class was joyful." I like that expression. I suppose Terry also has a wonderful
> class; as I can see he is a very caring and warm teacher too. I'm expecting his blog or
> any stuff he is creating in the near future."

6.3.4 Articulation

Articulation is a part of cognitive apprenticeship where students express what they know,

why they think so (reasoning), how they solve or decide on issues related that they are facing

(Collins et al, 1989).   The online chat sessions with the experts, email exchanges, and blog

entries used in this study provided Joy and Cindy with venues to articulate their thoughts and

feelings about their teaching contexts. Both were engaged in dialogue with teachers who are

experts or well-experienced in the same area, which would not have been possible without the

existence and use of these computer-mediated communication tools. The blog entries that Joy

and Cindy published on their sites (see Figure 6.3) are examples of blog entries where they

articulate their thoughts.

Figure 6.3: Sample Blog Entries

Trial-Run with Aiden

Time: June 17, Friday, 15 GMT at Alado.

It was absolutely wondeful. I never had any oppotunities like this to dicuss teaching matters with teachers from other countries. It was surprising that we were all facing the same difficulties: teachers lacking the joyful spirit, students lacking the agressieve attitude, parents lacking the responsibility and time.

Now I know the problems do not only exist in Taiwan, and there are many people in Webheads who can help me find solutions to them. This helps ease my mind.

Joy

2009年6月9日 星期二

Rehearsal and Schedule for Last Week

June 8, I think the whole class had a very relaxed time today. We didn't learn anything new, but rehearsed the "Hen Skit" and reviewed the idioms with pictures again. In next class, we'll do the rehearsal with costumes on the stage; I hope everything would go well. We did run out of time to do the movie class, fortunately, my seniors students want to have an extra class that we can watch a clip of movie. So, the schedule for next week would be: Mon. June15 rehearsal, Wed. June 17 movie class, Fri. June 19 semester closing ceremony. Kau-Nan, one of my students would bring his notebook to the classroom that I can play "Joy Luck Club" movie with. And I'll set the "you tube" film before the Wednesday class starts.

Cindy R Shih

Below is another example of articulation where one buxiban teacher in the Yahoo! Group (YG) posted a message where she shared her thoughts about her own class particularly one student of hers that somehow got on her nerves (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4: Buxiban Teacher's YG Message on Student's Learning Attitude

> "   However, in Taiwan, the fundamental have been built up in a different way. Kids never understood why they are learning, and especially why they have to learn English. Let me give you an experience I had back early this year.
>
>   I've just started to take classes when I have signed the contract, and luckily, I was assigned with a class that has been regarded as a 'smart class'. However, there was a boy that I really dislike, even till now.
>
>   At that time, they had only finished a final exam, and there was about 10 minutes left till the class finish, so I start asking questions in Chinese, try to get some interactions with them. They were smart, but most of them have no idea why they have to learn English. So, I went and ask each of them (they were about 10-12 year old kids). I came along with this boy Joe, he replied to me; I don't know why the hell that my parents sent me to study English, it's useless! So I told him that English is an international language, it will be useful in the future days especially at work. You know what he said? He said: "Doesn't matter to me! I am going to work in Mainland, where my grandfather has lots of factories and companies there, you don't need to speak English there-- Chinese is enough."
>
>   I felt pity for that boy, because he probably doesn't know that China is doing much better than Taiwan regarding English learning. And he probably doesn't know that China is one of the biggest traders in the world, so it does require English language in the trading process."

This teacher's encounter with this particular student made her think about the way young students in Taiwan are being pushed to study. This was her 'issue'- dealing with students who lack motivation in learning the English language. The discussion on the YG gave her a chance to deal with the situation by thinking it over, talking about it, and sharing her experience with other teachers who could relate to what she was going through.

6.3.5 Exploration

In the process of exploration, learners have the chance to work on their own and come up with their own plan or ways of getting through a learning task (Collins, et al, 2001). In this

study, Joy and Cindy were given the chance to digest what they had learned from the online sessions with the experts and choose a particular idea, a teaching concept, or teaching strategy that they could apply in their own classroom. Instead of simply adopting the experts' suggestions, both Joy and Cindy had carefully considered the things that they should implement, leaving out some ideas that they thought would not be suitable for their students. For instance in Joy's case, from the many ideas that were shared with her, she chose two learning activities that she could implement in her own classroom: (1) posting students' writings on a website and invite other students from different countries to comment and provide feedback, and (2) in-class task-based activities following the 'communicative approach'. In her own evaluation, she wrote that she did not follow exactly what the experts had said, but instead she came up with an adaption that she felt fitted her students' learning needs better. By tapping into her students' first language, she came up with a matching-type activity where students had to match the English phrases with the Chinese translation. Instead of having the students do a Fill-in-blank activity, she decided on 're-ordering of sentences' activity.

In Cindy's case, she chose the movie 'The Joy Luck Club" from a number of movies that were discussed during the online chat session and from the various materials that she had received from Terry. She deliberately chose to introduce the first part of the movie, which

includes the introduction of the narrator and the home party scene. She also chose to give her students a listening comprehension exercise and a multiple-choice exercise. Conducting this lesson outside the classroom also provides evidence that she was willing to 'explore' and try out new methods despite the lack of technology available in her classroom.

In the Taiwanese EFL teachers' Yahoo! Group, suggestions regarding teaching strategies were shared, resources were passed on, and opportunities to participate either in online or traditional workshops or conferences were often posted to the list. It was up to the members of this group whether to make use of these resources or not. But when they did, they were engaged in their exploration by trying it out. For example, April could just have read Elizabeth's posting about the Name Game and do nothing about it, but she did put into practice what Elizabeth suggested and it worked. By being personally engaged in planning and implementing the activities in their own classrooms, allowed them to clearly see the ramifications of their own teaching strategies on their students and how the overall experience have affected their attitude towards teaching and learning.

6.3.6 Reflections

"To become better educators we need reflection time built into what we do."

(Utecht, 2010, p. 44)

According to Collins, et al (1989), reflection offers learners the chance to express their thoughts (metacognitive processes) and open them for evaluation. And in the process of evaluation, they analyze the outcome of their actions and compare their method with those of the experts and other students. Joy made use of her blog in posting her reflections about her teaching lessons, her thoughts about the issues or topics raised in the Taiwanese Yahoo! Group, and her opinions about some of the traditional f2f workshops that she had participated in. However, her reflections toward the actual online meeting with the experts and her class observations were written in Word document and were sent to me via email. They were not posted on her blog. Since the use of blog was voluntary, I could only suggest its use but still it was up to her to post anything on it.

Cindy, on the other hand, had used her blog well. She posted her reflections about her teaching, her lesson plans and learning activities. She commented on her students' performance in class and wrote her teaching strategies and how she might change them depending on the needs of her students. Cindy's blog also showcases how mentor/mentee, expert/novice teachers could use it for collaborative TPD activities. The use of user comment

areas made it possible for Terry to leave messages. But as when he wrote his email messages

to Cindy, he encountered technical difficulties posting his comments on her blog. Nonetheless,

in the end Terry was still able to post his comments on Cindy's blog (see Chapter 5).

Reflecting on the events that took place in the process of learning and putting what they

had learnt into practice, and articulating their reflection through writing, validated their TPD

experience as they evaluated the success of the efforts employed in trying to improve what

and how students learn (Bolster, 1983).

6.3.7 Mentoring or Developmental Coaching

Table 6.6 (below) contains the characteristics of informal mentoring (cf. Chao, Walz, &

Gardner, 1992) that took place in this study based on the descriptions and definitions given in

Chapter 2. In informal mentoring relationship between the mentor and mentee is formed as a

result of chance or circumstance; As Mattei (2001) posits, "some catalyst to spark the

relationship between the mentor and the person being mentored (p. 44)" was needed, and in

this case, it was formed by tapping the researcher's network of professionals belonging to

existing communities of practice, the Webheads and TESOL NNEST-EVO 2009 group.

Compared to formal mentoring, the mentoring that took place in this study was done

voluntarily by all the participating mentors and mentees (Taiwanese EFL teachers). The open

call for volunteer-teacher experts to participate was announced on my social networks and CoPs stating what their participation would entail and the particular professional skills/knowledge these Taiwanese EFL teachers wanted to learn more about. Colleagues who felt that they had something to share and were willing to devote their time and effort to extending their help to mentor/coach these Taiwanese EFL teachers, expressed their commitment and followed it through to completion. Allocation of volunteer-mentors to Taiwanese EFL teachers was made by making sure that these mentors had considerable experiences and were knowledgeable enough in their field of expertise. The invited mentors in this study were experts in their own right and all of them have solid background and experience in ELT/EFL. Since I had personally experienced working with the volunteer-mentors on various online class projects and online/f2f conference presentations, I could attest to their professionalism and credibility.

The open dialogues in the online environments where mentoring/coaching took place clearly show the hierarchical status between mentors (experts) and Taiwanese EFL teachers; looking at the transcripts of text/voice conferences and messages posted on YG (see Chapter 5), questions such as "Do you think it can work or if you were me, what would you do?" automatically classified the person who sent the message as someone who may not have enough experience in dealing with a situation was calling for advice or suggestion. Figure 5.1

in Chapter 5 shows an example of a mentor's status which could be seen from the statements

made; In Arnold's statement, "The problem you're facing is universal…Don't worry too much

about it and just get started…" manifests authority from someone who was adept at

providing guidance.

Table 6.3: Characteristics of Informal Mentoring in Various Online Environments

Characteristics	Taiwanese EFL Teachers' YG	Joy	Cindy and Terry
Design structure	Group discussions lasted for an extended period of time	Pre-determined length of time for synchronous discussion, asynchronous discussion in YG lasted for an extended period of time	Lasted for an extended period of time; after the synchronous meeting, conversations continued via email and blog
Catalyst connector to Network of experts and professional teachers	Researcher's access to Webheads CoP	Researcher's access to Webheads CoP	Researcher's access to NNEST-EVO 2009 session
Allocation of mentors to protégé (Taiwanese EFL Teachers)	Called for volunteers, assigned mentors based on teachers' needs and complementary knowledge and skills		
Participation in mentoring/coaching	Voluntary, based on mutual professional identity and respect	Voluntary, based on mutual professional identity and respect	Voluntary, often based on mutual professional identity and respect; which turned into friendship of peers
Monitoring procedures	No formal monitoring but followed/participated in discussions on YG	No formal monitoring during synchronous meeting but followed/participated in discussions on YG	No formal monitoring but followed conversations via email and blog; commented on class observation recording
Communication	Dialogue and open asynchronous communication	One-time synchronous discussion; open asynchronous communication	Continued dialogue occurred
Status in mentor/mentee relationship	Hierarchical status: Expert-less experienced	Hierarchical status: Expert-less experienced	From hierarchical status (Expert-less experienced) to peer

			status
Mentor connection with protégé (Taiwanese EFL Teachers)	Personal connection of protégé to mentor through coaching, counseling and role modeling strategies	During the synchronous discussion connection of protégé to mentors was established but not enhanced although coaching and role modeling strategies were performed	More personal connection of protégé to mentor through coaching, counseling and role modeling strategies. Later as partners complementing each other's knowledge and skills
Commitment to the mentoring activity	Self selection based on personal and professional qualities, reciprocal benefit		

In Cindy's case the transcript from the voice/text synchronous web conference also clearly marked the difference in status between the expert (Terry) and Cindy simply by looking at the manner of Terry's presentation. For example, during the web conference, he said, "I make a lot about 2-300 idioms. For each of those I write the explanations up. I write down what line in the script it comes from and I write a couple of example sentences, which I make by myself." In this statement, it was obvious that he was well versed in doing this particular activity, and by sharing with Cindy the number of movies that he had transcribed, studied, and turned them into EFL teaching/learning activities also showed his expertise in creating materials and using them in his own classes. The mentor-mentee relationship however slowly transformed into a non-hierarchical relationship which transpired during the continued exchanged of emails where both were seen as co-mentoring/peer coaching each other (c.f. Bona, Rinehart, & Volbrecht, 1995). In one of his emails to Cindy, he admitted how he got inspiration from watching Cindy's DVD and that he could incorporate the same instructional style when teaching idioms.

> "…you have such a warm relationship with your students… it really made me think, "I can try to teach this way." Thanks so much for sharing these lessons with me. Watching your DVD made me feel not only really inspired, but also comfortable because I have some goal… I can try to teach the way you do … with the idioms, in the way you taught with materials I made…"

And in the comments he left on Cindy's blog where he wrote, "I can't begin to tell you how wonderful your lessons made me feel!" show that he read the lesson plans and explanations of class activities that she posted on her blog, and his reactions also discloses his admiration for her intuitiveness.   In the same message he added, "I hope I can send you a DVD of my class someday. I'm not so good at recording, however", also reveals the impact of doing a recording of class observations and wished that he could do the same but he also admitted that he may not have enough technical skills in recording. In these examples, it was pretty clear that in the process of prolonged communications either via email or blog comments, the interactions that took place had an effect on the mentor-mentee relationship that gave way to a more collegial relationship (Singh, Bains, & Vinnicombe, 2002).

The mentoring that took place in this study focused more on learning rather than teaching where the Taiwanese EFL teachers were engaged in a learning process that allowed them to develop, and to perform in their own classroom what they have learned from the oTPD experience (Whitmore, 1995). And as stated in Chapter 2, this is what makes mentoring synonymous to developmental coaching. The examples of online mentoring given in this study provide evidence that they were facilitated in a way that supported Clutterbuck &

Megginson's (2005) definition of developmental coaching where mentor-mentee relationship, on-the-job learning, and teachers's knowledge and ability were enhanced. Table 6.4 provides a list of characteristics of Taiwanese teachers' and mentors' input in the online mentoring process. Looking at the examples mentioned in Chapter 5 and 6, the Taiwanese teachers exhibited various cues that show active learning whereas the mentors' input ranged from expressing appreciation to maintaining communication by sending feedback.

Table 6.4: Characteristics of Taiwanese Teachers' Input

Cues as active learners
● **Analyzed and identified areas/skills needed** ● **Took time to self-reflect** ● **Shared and opened up discussions** ● **Asked/gave answers** ● **Exploring mentor's suggestions by choosing a strategy that worked for them** ● **Adopting/Adapting learning activities in their own classrooms** ● **[For Joy & Cindy] set goals and worked on accomplishing them** ● **[For Joy & Cindy] prepared and implemented lesson plans**
Maintaining mentor-mentee relationships
● **Expressed appreciation for mentors' input** ● **Established good rapport** ● **Showed respect as evidenced in the choice of words** ● **Maintained communications by sending response/feedback**

In this section I have provided evidence of the various aspects of Taiwanese teachers' learning and professional development and how they were enhanced when the principles of cognitive apprenticeship were applied in online environments. In the following section, I look at the role of ICT and Web 2.0 in translating new knowledge into practice.

6.4 Research Question 4: What is the role of ICT and Web 2.0 in helping Taiwanese buxiban/supplementary school teachers translate new knowledge into practice?

ICT and Web 2.0 tools used in this study served as the bridge that connected the Taiwanese EFL teachers to the realm of endless professional development opportunities. Both synchronous and asynchronous communications that took place would not have been possible without the use of the live chat/discussion formats i.e. Elluminate and Alado, the Yahoo! Group, blog, and Facebook. While it was the teachers who created the content (published on their blogs or message boards), it was the online technology i.e. ICT and Web 2.0 that enabled the connectivity. Without these tools there would not have been an online place to meet, to discuss, and to share knowledge and information. These teachers would not have had the chance to experience learning from a group of international teacher-experts and from other local EFL teachers who were in the same situation. As stated in Chapter 2, the ability to link people from different parts of the globe, the connectivity and the speed that makes this connection possible make these tools profoundly social in nature. Thus, it is easier for people to communicate, create a social network and their own personal learning environment. The tools used in this study allowed the professional development to take place crossing the borders of global teacher learning as common concepts in pedagogical strategies were shared and adapted in local context.

Utecht (2010) states, "The true power of the Internet can be found in communities that form just in time around any given topic (p. 5)." It is up to the teachers to reach out, join online communities, and create and make the most of their learning network and "use this new knowledge for their own professional growth and pass the knowledge and power of the network on to their students (p.6)". Shown in this study, the Taiwanese EFL teachers group was formed to discuss issues concerning their role as EFL teachers in an industry that often cast them aside. It is the need to talk about these issues and to validate their feelings and desire to improve themselves as language teachers that made them join the group and participate in the TPD activity (see also Section 6.2.7).

oTPD relies on technology-mediated interaction. As technology advances, there will be more educators who will find it essential to integrate online technology and web 2.0 in getting connected to people, either for personal or professional reasons. It is therefore, essential for school administrators or TPD providers to use the appropriate tools that would help them deliver online professional development. Using the proposed oTPD framework makes it economical and practical to put the cognitive apprenticeship and e-mentoring theory into practice. These tools (ICT, video/audio conferencing technology, and web 2.0) enable the interactions between EFL teachers, teacher-experts, and TPD providers.

The live synchronous web conference/meeting with the teacher-experts via Alado and

Elluminate online chat/conference platforms allow the Taiwanese EFL teachers to engage in

discussions with international teacher-experts in real-time; the chance to be able to hear

someone talk and view webpages being shared and in Cindy's case, see the pictures or

important details that Terry was sharing with her, were as close as they could get with mentors

or coaches who were willing to listen to them and share with them knowledge/skills that they

could use in the classroom. Joy and Cindy were able to chime in during the live

webconference; they introduced themselves, asked and responded to questions, voiced their

opinions, and had the opportunity to feel connected in a way that augments the asynchronous

components used in their oTPD.

For Cindy and Joy blogging was used as an online space for reflection. The blog entries

they wrote reveal their feelings about certain issues; Joy, for instance, wrote extensively about

the local workshops that she had participated in and what she learned from them. For Cindy,

the lesson plans or activities posted showed her organizational skills and creativity in working

on them. Blogs as a reflective tool, and if used in the way Cindy did could actually be an

effective means of providing oTPD. The reflections made in the blog entries and the

comments left by Terry on the blog as supported by his emails to Cindy show evidence of

teacher change in her practice as she provided elaborate discussions about the integration of

some of the skills/ideas she had learned from Terry into her own classroom.

The online tools in this study allowed not only the mentors-mentees relationship to be enhanced but the relationship among Taiwanese EFL teachers themselves, particularly those in the Taiwanese EFL YG, as they provided suggestions/ideas as well on issues that they could all personally relate to; thus transforming the oTPD process into a very holistic experience for those involved.

Whether synchronous or asynchronous, the communication tools were used in the oTPD for critical thinking and meaningful sharing and learning to take place as ideas, reflections, suggestions, etc. were shared among the participating teachers including the teacher-experts. Although these tools provide a host of many different possibilities for improved oTPD and teacher learning, mediation and support that comes from caring colleagues i.e. Webheads and other CoPs, is essential. Tools without people are useless; the same goes for online tools and other social media platforms. People who will serve as catalysts to other peoples' oTPD are those who enable access to teachers, like Joy and Cindy and the other Taiwanese EFL teachers who took part in this study, and gave them online support and the opportunity to engage and experience oTPD. Online tools make it incredibly easy to socialize online and connect with other EFL teachers on a global scale. As seen in this study, teachers from Portugal, Venezuela, Netherlands, USA, Taiwan, etc. were connected, virtually in touch with each other, supporting,

sharing knowledge and transforming ideas into workable solutions that the Taiwanese EFL

teachers tried with their students. These tools matched with the right teacher-support-group

have significant potential about teaching and learning. With more social media tools

becoming available for EFL teachers, tapping their potential in facilitating oTPD or blended

TPD (e.g. mentors or speakers are invited to do a webcast with or for a group of local teachers)

lies only on the teachers' ability and determination to cross virtual boundaries.

6.5. Research Question 5: Have buxiban/supplementary school Taiwanese teachers' attitudes,

behavior, and practices changed as a result of participating in oTPD activities?

As stated in Chapter 2, changes in behavior could be a consequential outcome of

previous experiences (Jehu, 1975); but what really matters is the quality of experience that

took place. Thus, it is imperative to look at the process of learning, the activities that the

Taiwanese EFL teachers engaged in, and the social nature of the learning environment that

bring about the acquisition of new skills and/or knowledge (Gaskins & Gaskins, 1997). As

discussed in Section 6.4 the high level of social interactions that took place in this study

allowed the construction of new knowledge (various concepts and skills in EFL pedagogy).

Adopting the principles of Vygostky's (1978; Aubert & Soler, 2008) zone of proximal

development theory, the presence and valuable contributions of teacher-experts during the

process served as a learning scaffold to guide the professional growth of the Taiwanese EFL teachers. As reported in Chapter 5 and Section 6.4, the Taiwanese teachers had the chance to review their situation before adopting a teaching strategy that they learnt from the online discussions with the teacher-experts. The planning and actual implementation of their chosen strategy signifies a change in their practice; refining their own teaching style, they adopted a strategy that they felt would benefit their students (Nunan and Lamb, 1996). Change in practice becomes evident when teachers carry-out the suggestions and/or ideas given by the expert teachers (Richardson, 1994) and normally entail doing something that was never done before (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). As described in Chapter 5 and in this chapter, it was evident that those teachers who exerted effort in performing what they have learned and/or gained from the oTPD in their classroom reported back either through the YG list, email sent to me, and posted blog entries acknowledging the positive experience.

Table 6.5 below shows the types of attitudes and behavior that April expressed in her messages posted to the Taiwanese EFL YG soliciting advice regarding her dilemma. In her first two messages to the list, she expressed her concerns about taking over a new class. From her message, specific statements that she made provided signs of distress and negative attitudes toward the class and herself. She took Elizabeth's advice and tried using the 'Name Game' activity in her class. Elizabeth's simple explanation of the activity and explicit

guidelines made it easy for April to implement it. By the time the class ended, April knew that

the activity worked. The use of three exclamation marks in *"…class went smoothly!!!"*

exhibit a positive feeling combined with extreme amazement. She observed more positive

changes in her class such as increased student involvement and their behavior towards her has

likewise been improved. These experiences led her to gain self-confidence while her overall

attitude and behavior towards this class changed as well.

Table 6.5: April's Expressed Attitudes/Behavior Cues

	April's Expressed Attitudes/Behavior	Cues
Before	- I have pressure when I teach English because the students get used to their first teacher's style already	- Feeling the stress -Feeling threatened
	- they think…Do you agree or not?	- Fear of not getting employer's approval
	- Should I be like her or just be myself?	- Self-doubt
	- I can feel they don't really like me	- Low self-esteem
	- I could not only felt (sic) they were uncomfortable to get used (sic) to me but also didn't response (sic) me when I said hi to them.	- Making false assumptions -Misinterpreting students' actions - Lack of confidence
Practice	-I took Elizabeth's suggestion to play the "Name game"; to make the class enjoyable; I paired them up; I gave each of them a piece of paper w/ questions many questions on it and they must ask their partners; - we discussed together; taught them a song and did the puzzle game	- exerting effort to improve relationship with students - taking part in the learning activity

	- Finally the non-participants took part in the activity so the whole *class went smoothly!!!*	-feeling the thrill of accomplishment
After	-In the second class this week, they tried to get used to me including my teaching method and didn't argue with me again - Now I have more confidence in my teaching and I know "I am not such a bad person"!!	- seeing and experiencing the change in students' involvement and behavior towards her -gaining self-confidence -change in attitude and behavior

Unlike April, Joy was interested in learning more about writing activities that her students could find interesting. From the posted messages she sent to the Taiwanese EFL YG, she was confident with her teaching skills and language proficiency as she was more vocal and responsive compared to other Taiwanese teachers in the YG. She was aware of the NNEST-NEST issues in the hiring practices among local supplementary schools, but she viewed them as opportunities for her to keep on improving herself (Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5: Joy's Blog Entry on Self-Improvement

> **but that fact that I was busy and exhausted all the time did not stop me from seeking self-improvement. In contrast, it motivated me to make myself a better and better teacher every year. I've realized since then: the only way to earn myself a better/more fair deal in the future is to prove to the schools that my work/performance is definitely worth the salary that I expect them to pay me.**
>
> **Of course, higher salary/better treatment at work should not be the only reason for one to improve him/herself. As an English teacher, I see how important it is for children to keep progressing, and I believe it is equally important for the teachers to keep progressing—both in teaching skills or the language itself. Not only will this help the children's learning be more effective, but also guarantee them better quality teachers.**

Table 6.6 provides a random list of statements gathered from the messages that she posted to the YG, her blog, and her emails to me, which reflected her attitudes, behavior, and practices, and reactions to her TPD experiences. She acknowledged the 'Webheads' spirit' and its impact on her attitude towards her own professional development to become a better EFL teacher.

Table 6.6: Joy's Expressed Attitudes/Behavior Cues

	Joy's Expressed Attitudes/Behavior	**Cues**
Before	-I've just started my only new class at Garden this week; I need a little time to set up the class.	- Awareness of what her class needed
	- The topic I want to discuss: ways/methods/games/activities that help Ss learn how to write.	- Certain about what she wanted to learn -Focused on students' learning tasks
	-Look forward to the online lecture already!!! Talk to you soon.	-Thrilled about the online webmeeting to experience a different learning challenge
Practice	After the super busy two weeks of winter break, I finally found time to create my own blog. It's a brand new experience, just like being offer (sic) a place in an UK university.	-Carried on with busy work schedule -Acknowledged new learning experience -Hopeful despite feeling uncertain

	Not sure what to post yet, but hope that here will be a place where good things happen.	on how to begin using her blog
	Yes, I will try to apply some ideas on Friday. (But first of all I have to go back to read the copy of the on-line discussion because I was lost many times during the section.)	-Willing to try and take risks in doing a learning activity -Expressed recognition of difficulty
	I got many ideas from the conference…two ideas that I tried to apply in the 2nd class…Providing task-based activities. I was going to moving on to the next writing project after my first lesson, but after the conference, I decided I should spend more time on one task. This allowed Ss to create a writing piece by a less "structural" and more "communicative" approach to writing.	-Adapted and improvised ideas turning them into learning activities that worked for her class
After	I did learn from it so it's achieved part of the goal for my "TPD".	-Recognized learning achievement
	… I watched the tape after I recorded the two classes, and found there are many things I can improve: I said too many "ok, all right, now", I've got a hunchback, and I make mistakes when speaking English too…(there should be more, but I don't remember now).	-Awareness of new learning needs -Acceptance of personal weaknesses -Recognized need for improvement
	Despite of the "difficulties" I've encountered personally, I enjoyed the conference, and was very honored and grateful to have been offered this opportunity.	-Participated and embraced opportunities
	The "spirit" I have learned from this group that will continually help me to push myself to becoming a better teacher, a better-organized course planner, and a more responsible/caring educator.	-Observed and recognized the 'Webheads' spirit' experienced from both the YG and online discussion and its impact on her attitude towards her own professional development to become a better teacher

Compared to Joy and the teachers in the YG, Cindy was not teaching young learners; her

students were adults and most of them were retired, and senior students' learning needs and

goals are different. Cindy's students attend English classes mostly for leisure and they simply

had the time to do it. In this class, Cindy wanted to provide her students more opportunities to

enhance their speaking/conversational skills. Looking at the table below, prior to meeting her

online mentor, she was 'nervous' in taking part in this study, but she also acknowledged that

this was a learning opportunity she should not miss and make the best out of. Like any other

mentees, she asked questions when she was not quite sure how to proceed. She did implement

some of the things that she learned during the online meeting and the email exchanges with

Terry; and like Joy, she also made the necessary adaptations to the activities that would be

appropriate to her students' level. The idiom activity using visual graphics worked well and

her students agreed that it could help them remember the phrases. The movie activity,

however, was a little challenging for her students, and she admitted that she should have

provided them with a copy of the transcript beforehand. This helped her realize how to better

prepare her class for this type of lesson as she also saw the potential of using movies as

learning material in her future classes. In the end, this oTPD has given her the chance to see

and experience a different way of learning, and it has also provided her with a new sense and

perspective on engaging in further education possibilities (see Table 6.7).

Table 6.7: Cindy's Expressed Attitudes/Behavior Cues

	Cindy's Expressed Attitudes/Behavior	**Cues**
Before	I'm excited as well as nervous about getting involved in...I perceived this is an approach to learn more professional teaching skills for free.	Excited yet nervous; saw the experience as a learning opportunity
	Since this is a quite precious opportunity for me, I'll try my best and keep my blog up-to-date weekly.	Knew that she had to try and exert effort
	…there are some questions…what's the length	Expressed questions; desired

	of the passage would be proper? The contents would be relevant to my teaching experiences and classes…	guidance
	I enjoyed the online conference, too. Although, I was scared of talking with "strangers" online before, I then conquered the fear.	Acknowledged her own fears and overcoming them
	I'll try out some new ideas you offered and share the information about e-mailing with foreign students and online exchange.	Was willing to try
	I have very positive thoughts about teaching and learning English through movies or DVDs. If you can please offer some materials that fit my seniors students whose levels are about 3 or 4, that would really do me a big favor.	Asked for help and support
Practice	Also I did learn some great concepts and ideas through your presentation and the comments on the blog	Acknowledged learning
	I'll give you another DVD (the same copy) of my teaching class	Shared recording of class observations
	I applied the image-concept Prof. Terry D. offered in class practice… For example, if they picked pictures A, C, G, H and put them in the order they liked. They then started to describe what happened, who they were, where they were, when it happened. There were five groups working on this exercise.	Applied what she learned; adapted activity to fit her class's learning needs
After	Thanks for all the comments, and I think what you are doing is going to benefit lots of people including me and students of mine.	Recognized benefits of this experience
	Thanks to the useful software and websites, modern people can take long-distance courses easily. For some who are computer challenging (sic), like me, it's a great opportunity to improve English teaching and computer operating skills at the same time.	Expressed advantages of using technology in enhancing skills
	I applied this idea in today's animal idioms review. My students all agreed this idea helped them memorize idioms easily. I've recorded the idioms review and described what I'm doing with that recording.	Awareness of post-activity effects on students; committed in teaching
	But they felt the conversations in the movie were kind of difficult to comprehend. I might give them part of the scripts previously and then play the movie in class during next semester.	Awareness of what went wrong in the activity and how to remedy it
	I'd like to continue using your movie materials while teaching.	Persistence in practice
	I think the project has opened my eyes to reach out further (sic) educational field.	Changed in attitude

Based on the discussion above it is evident that buxiban/supplementary school Taiwanese teachers' attitudes, behavior, and practices have changed as a result of participating in oTPD activities.

6.6 Seeing the Change in Students' Learning

Desimone's (2009) core conceptual framework (Section 2.6.2.1) proposes a measure in gauging the effectiveness of TPD where it looks at improvement in student learning after a change in instruction, while Guskey's (2002) model of teacher change suggests that change in teacher's beliefs and attitude can only happen after the teacher sees change in student learning outcome as a result of the change in the teacher's classroom practices. It was also discussed in Section 2.6.2.2 that change in students' learning happens as a consequence of the teacher's actions, and that the change can either be positive or negative. This section relates to Research Question 5, more specifically on the relationship between teacher change (i.e. change in attitudes and practices) and student learning outcome. The class observations done in Joy's and Cindy's class were video recorded to gauge the impact of the change/s in instruction on students' learning. In the video and on the transcripts presented in Chapter 5 there was a high level of student participation in both classes. Learning activities that the students had in class involved the use of worksheets, reading from textbooks, answering teacher's questions,

engaging in class activities, etc.; these instances shown on the video provide some evidence of learning taking place in the classroom. Various learning activities were analyzed based on Joy's and Cindy's class instructional methods that met Bloom's three domains of learning: Knowledge, Skills, and Attitude (Bloom, 1956 in Rada, 2001). In determining whether students have learned what they were supposed to learn, I looked at other forms of class evaluation as shown in the video recordings, since formal assessments i.e. testing were not available; In Cindy's class I looked at performance-based assessment such as discussions, etc. where students get the chance to show their skills. As stated in Chapter 2, scope of assessment can involve students' scores on class quizzes and tests, students' attendance, participation in class discussions and activities, classroom behavior, motivation for learning, and their attitudes toward school, the class (towards other students and teacher), and themselves; learning outcomes include "whatever kinds of evidence teachers use to judge the effectiveness of their teaching (Guskey, 2002, p. 384)."

Evidence of learning from post-observation videos is discussed in the following section.

6.6.1 Cognitive Domain

The cognitive domain involves knowledge and the development of intellectual skills, which includes the recall or recognition of facts, procedures, and concepts. Examples of

student participation (Table 6.8) show how the six categories in Bloom's cognitive domain were employed in the classroom. For example, in recalling information from previous lessons Joy made use of 'Who' and 'Where' questions when asking her students about the characters and plot details of the story. Cindy, on the other hand, was asking students to listen to the dialogues from a selected movie clip, while they do a fill-in-the-gap activity where they had to write the missing phrase of a dialogue. In assessing students' comprehension of a lesson, Joy did an activity where students had to put the story in order of its correct sequence. The students also had to know the meaning of the phrasal verbs to be able to match them with the Chinese translations and use them in sentences. Cindy also made use of translation exercises to test her students' knowledge of the key words and phrases from the movie clip.

Table 6.8: Cognitive Learning

Cognitive	Examples from the Classroom	
	Joy's Students	**Cindy's Students**
Knowledge: Recall data or information and relates to questions whom, what, when, where, how, etc.?	Joy: Opening. Good. Alright. I want you to look at part one, and now tell me which one, Body, ending, opening. Simon? Simon: opening Joy: Opening, very good. Joy: Can anyone tell me who was or who were in the story? Yes, Jim. Jim: Amelia- Amelia Ear—	Student: Over there, nobody will come because I will speak only perfect <u>English America English</u> Cindy: oh yeah everybody knows perfect American English. So what do you think, perfect American English Student: very fluent, fluently and

	Joy: Yes, Amelia Earhart, and who else, at the beginning of the story? Students: two farmers Joy: two farmers. Good. And where did the story happen? Student: in their field…in…Ire…land	no accent
Comprehension: Understand the meaning, translation, and interpretation of instructions and problems. Students explain/describe using their own words.	Students re-order the story Translates phrasal verbs and uses them in sentences.	Translates words and phrases from the movie clip; Understanding the lyrics of a song
Application: Applies what was learned in practice	Students analyze the parts of a story, and break them down into three parts.	Students identify the differences in the sentences on the hand-out from the actual voice narration in the movie clip
Synthesis: Students create a new meaning or structure.	Students write their own stories using the template Joy provided.	Students create sentences using the idioms that they've learned.
Evaluation: Make judgments and develop opinions	Students interpret and summarize the Amelia Earhart story	Students compare sentences, relates to the Joy luck story and compares the cultural values and theme with their own Chinese/Taiwanese background

6.6.2 Affective Domain

The affective domain (Krathwohl, Bloom, Masia, 1973) includes the way we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes.

According to Rada (2001) it is "demonstrated by behaviors indicating attitudes of awareness, interest, attention, concern, and responsibility and ability to listen and respond in interactions with others" (p. 11). The following characteristics were evident among the students in Joy's and Cindy's class:

- Listening to others with respect
- Active participation
- Willingness to respond
- Satisfaction in responding
- Can work independently
- Cooperating in team or group work

Joy's students were young learners in elementary education, while Cindy had senior citizens in her class; there was a substantial difference in the way they behaved in the classroom. Although Joy's students also exhibited good behavior in the classroom by listening to the teacher and other students with respect, as children it was quite normal for them to show their excitement by raising their voices or by vocally expressing their content or discontent. Joy had to work hard in handling class management issues specially when doing games and other activities that require movements.

6.6.3 Psychomotor Domain

The psychomotor domain includes physical movement, coordination, and use of the motor-skill areas (Simpson, 1972). Students in Joy's and Cindy's class exhibit the following psychomotor skills:

- Imitating teacher's pronunciation
- Creating/producing their own work i.e. sentences, writing pieces, etc.
- Following teacher's instructions, doing what the teacher asked them to do
- Performing i.e. singing, doing role-plays

In both class observations, the students in Joy's class and in Cindy's class showed in many instances active participation in the class activities. They were seen laughing, talking, moving, and showing their ability to think and create i.e. sentences; stories, etc. (see Chapter 5).

The types of students' learning discussed in this section were based on the instructional methods that were used in the classroom as they fit Bloom's taxonomy of learning (see Section 2.2.1). It is, however, important to note the learning difficulties that the students experienced while Joy and Cindy implemented some changes in their instructional strategies as a result of using new learning activities and/or learning materials they adapted from their participation in the oTPD (Table 6.12).

As discussed in Chapter 5, Joy had some classroom management issues when she implemented the game, 'Walk the stairs'; materials needed for the activity were not

well-prepared as Joy assumed that as elementary school students, they should have a pair of scissors or rulers with them at all times. Since the game involved ordering sentences, those who finished the activity first earned scores, and those who were slow did not; this had brought a brief disruption in class but was handled pretty quickly as Joy moved on to the next learning activity.

Although Cindy's students had fun in the classroom with the idiom learning activity using visual illustrations, they certainly had difficulty in doing the comprehension activities for the movie lesson that she had prepared. She attributed this to the difficulty of the vocabulary in the movie scenes and admitted that she failed to provide them the transcript prior to watching/viewing the scenes. The idiom activity using visual illustrations was easier for her students since there were visual prompts to aid in the construction of sentences. As shown in the class recording, they were enjoying the activity despite the oral mistakes that they made; each student had the chance to practice, compose their sentences, and compare their work with each prior to being called by the teacher. The movie lesson had a few strategic loopholes even from the start. Doing the lesson outside the classroom was not much of a problem since the students agreed the time and place they would meet and do this extra lesson. Since movies are known for being long, using them in class that meets for less than two hours could be challenging. Students are either advised to watch the film prior to coming to class or

to read the transcripts of the scenes that would be used in the activity. Discussing the movie plot and/or going through the list of vocabulary prior to giving them listening comprehension activities could also help students understand the gist of the story and perform the tasks better.

In conclusion, looking at the outcomes of these class recordings it was apparent that there were not any major changes in the students' language abilities. Although there were no tests or formal assessments to back this argument, the class recordings (post online sessions) showed that the students' oral skills were at the same level compared to the pre-online session recording (see Chapter 5). In Joy's pre- and post-online class observation, students showed a good grasp of vocabulary items i.e. clothing, parts of a story, etc. Her students could easily catch the cues that she provided. Hence, students could easily create a story using the words/phrases from vocabulary list discussed previously in class; in some occasions, they even added silly characters or verbs that added fun in what they were doing. In the post-online class session observation, the lesson was pretty much a continuation of the previous class lesson, but was focused more on building a story structure based on opening (introduction), body, and ending format. Translations from Chinese to English and vice versa were also used in making sure that students comprehend the meaning of the words/phrases in their local language. Although Cindy's students also showed active participation in class, some of her students were having difficulty with English pronunciation. The transcripts also showed that

construction of basic sentence structures was challenging for many of them. Yet despite language learning difficulties, Cindy's students had shown positive learning attitudes; they laughed at their own mistakes, and they were supportive of each other. Since they were not graded, their participation was not mandatory, and their active presence in the classroom was an affirmation of their persistence and motivation in learning the English language. Despite the little impact that the change in classroom practices or learning activities had on students' learning, it is important to note that they were not the only factors that could have affected their learning.

6.7 Taiwanese EFL Teachers' Yahoo! Group: A Community of Practice?

This section relates to Research Question 2, how and to what extent can Internet technology be integrated in collaborative professional development activities. In Chapter 2, I discussed the importance of Communities of Practice (CoP) in teacher learning and development. Lave and Wenger (1991) posit that "learning is a process that takes place in a participation framework… It is the community, or at least those participating in the learning context, who learn under this definition… [it is] distributed among co-participants, not a one person act" (p. 15). It is with the same belief that I created the online group for the Taiwanese

EFL teachers participating in this study (see Chapter 5). The question is does this group

embody the same features of a CoP?

Looking at the definition given by Wenger (2006), "communities of practice are groups of

people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as

they interact regularly. (n.p.)" This is similar to Eckert & McConnell-Ginet's definition

(1992), where a CoP "is an aggregate of people who come together around a mutual

engagement in an endeavor…practices emerge in the course of this mutual endeavor" (p. 464).

The Yahoo! Group was created to provide the Taiwanese EFL teachers an online space where

they could discuss the issues concerning their profession as EFL teachers. Using both

definitions above, the Taiwanese EFL teachers' YG fit the description; they (the teachers in

the group) share the same 'concern and passion' about EFL teaching in buxiban/language

private schools. A handful of people interacted regularly during the time in which online

discussions with the teacher-experts were going on. This was the time the group's interaction

was at its peak (see Chapter 5). Indeed, the group exhibited sharing the same background

knowledge and experience teaching in the private sector (domain), the same ethnic and

professional background (community of EFL teachers who work in buxibans and private

language schools), and doing the same practice- teaching EFL, and shared the same interest

on teacher professional development. Lave and Wenger (1991) describe how CoPs often

evolve and self-organize because of the community members' passion to know more about an issue or topic through collaboration with others. In the Taiwanese EFL YG's case, there were a few instances were face-to-face collaborations were done involving 2-3 Taiwanese EFL teachers who were interested in attending local TPD workshops. They arranged to meet in person and attended the workshops together. This was an example where online acquaintances bridged into something real where human relationships flourished outside the virtual world. However, the group did not evolve into a larger network; and similar with other online groups the Taiwanese EFL YG faced the same sustainability dilemma as Hanewald & Gesthuizen (2009) posit "Like many groups, they can grow, develop, change and mature or stagnate" (p. 28).   Using Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder's definition (2002), CoPs are "groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by *interacting on an ongoing basis*" (p. 4). It is in the last phrase where the difference lies; active participation from the EFL teachers in the YG declined after a year when most of the raised issues were covered in the discussions. Although I was able to achieve what I had planned to do concerning this group (i.e. provided an online space for these teachers to interact, learn, and discuss) within the time frame initially laid out for this study, I was hoping that this group would continue to serve its purpose as the years went by. Wenger, et al (2002) had already predicted that some CoPs may die if they are not

nurtured. To keep a CoP alive, the members need to "generate enough excitement, relevance, and value to attract and engage members" (p. 1). In other words, interaction among members must be re-energized. As stated in Chapter 2, for a CoP to thrive, it is vital for the members to establish a sense of shared leadership, which helps in creating a "pool of goodwill" (p. 37), where members take the initiative to contribute to the community, hoping that others will benefit in some form or another. During the time the study on this online group was taking place, members shared information about local conferences that were taking place at the time; they also shared suggestions and opinions about other teachers' dilemma. However, only a handful of teachers were pretty active; the rest simply lurked or remained silent and did not share their ideas throughout the discussions (Salmon, 2000). Two possible reasons for lurking could be attributed to 1) fear of criticism on what they have written to the list and 2) their preferred learning style i.e. they would rather stay silent, observe and reflect (Pearson, 2000). The first reason resonates with Johanson's (2001) published report of the study he conducted on Taiwanese graduate students' perspectives regarding academic writing in an online writing community.

> "Shu-chih reported facing a dilemma because one of her classes required her to participate in an on-line writing community that she feared would expose her English errors to her classmates. To avoid a potentially "face-losing" situation, she posted her entries as late as possible, diminishing the likelihood that her classmates would be able to read them in time for class. She described her choice for adopting this type of avoidance strategy: "It's because I don't have much confidence. If I could write really well, of course I will welcome everyone to see my writing. 'Be my guest!' But right now, I'm not good enough." (p. 29)

Johanson (ibid) reported that the Taiwanese students suffer extreme pressure when writing in English, and that this anxiety is a result of lack of training writing in English in their formative education (high school and college) in Taiwan and fear of being judged by others concerning the imperfections in the content or grammar. The same is true with the results of a case study Hansen (2000 in Johanson) conducted about a Taiwanese mathematics major's ordeals in writing for the discourse community and ESL class; even when using the mother tongue (Chinese) as a language of communication, Taiwanese teachers are often reluctant to engage in online asynchronous communications. Juang, Liu, & Chen (2008) also found those who lack confidence in speaking found it difficult to engage in open discourse as they felt easily intimidated in online communications environment, which had the tendency to aggravate anxiety problems. In Juang's PhD dissertation (2007) on the use of computer support for teacher development in increasing pedagogical content knowledge of primary school teachers in Taiwan, the teachers interviewed preferred face-to-face communication to the provided online communication tools "since they could see and feel each other's emotional expressions." (p. 71)

Despite the lack of continued interaction within the YG, I still continued to post information about teaching resources, local conferences, web conferences, and news or magazine articles that they might find interesting or useful. The most recent feedback I

received regarding a blog post shared to this YG was a confirmation that continuous efforts in networking, sharing access to oTPD and open learning were not in vain. I posted an announcement on my personal blog which was also shared and posted to all my social networks i.e. twitter, Facebook, Taiwanese EFL YG, about a possible webcast of a Post-graduate (PG) conference; I wanted to find out if anyone from my network of EFL teachers with limited access to TPD would be interested in participating in a webcast of the various PG presentations. On September 23, 2010, a teacher from Taiwanese EFL YG responded to my message on YG (Figure 6.6). I replied and told her that there was no assurance that the webcast would push through as planned since other PG students have reservations about sharing or putting their work online; I also provided her links to timeanddate.com where she could find out more about time conversions.

Figure 6.6: September 23, 2010 Message Posted on YG

"Dear Aiden,
How and any time different (sic) b/w UK and TW or China? if i don't have any trouble to open the website from shanghai, and i would like to join this opportunity. email me details plx.
(name removed, sent on 9/22/2010 via Taiwanese EFL YG)

Dear Aiden,
Thx so much! I work in shanghai for a little while and have not gotten any chance to attend any PD courses here. I went back to TW this summer and most of courses were hosted during school year. The only hope i have so far is online learning. Have a great day.

This teacher who had been silent through these years all of sudden wrote a message

requesting for more information about this learning opportunity only reaffirms my belief

about the power of networking, sharing, and open learning in online environments and what

they can do to EFL teachers in embarking in oTPD activities. It is fair to say that within the

period of time this study was conducted, the Taiwanese EFL teachers were able to experience

oTPD within a CoP where world-wide group communication, collaboration, sharing of

knowledge, sense of belonging to a community, learning and practice took place. It should

also be noted that some of the members from the Taiwanese EFL teachers' YG migrated to

other social networks i.e. Facebook, and have established contact with me. As long as they are

connected to a learning network the higher the chance of being engaged in oTPDs. Joining the

social networks of local or international teachers' associations also provide a point of access

to oTPD. For instance, in addition to having their official websites, TESOL and IATEFL and

some of their interest sections (IS) or special interest groups (SIG) have created networks on

Facebook, Twitter, and Yahoo! Groups which are open to non-members, as well.

6.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the answers to the research questions using the data gathered

from the survey, case studies, and analysis of the electronic discourse from the webinars and

asynchronous discussions via Yahoo! Group, Facebook, and E-mail conversations. The use of method triangulation allowed me to test the consistency of the research findings, thus adding validity and reliability of data. The findings from the surveys support the data gathered from the case studies that Taiwanese EFL teachers in supplementary schools understand the need for teacher professional development. The findings also suggest that EFL teachers do not get TPD support from the Ministry of Education or their employing institutions. The teachers were aware that pursuing any form of TPD would have to come from their own initiative. And as seen from the data gathered from the case studies, the EFL teachers who participated in the oTPD facilitated in this study were willing to engage in collaborative learning. They were motivated to share and discuss issues that matter to them.

Cognitive apprenticeship played an important role in this research since this model has contributed to the interpretation of the data. It provided me a list of benchmarks to assess what aspects in Taiwanese EFL teachers' learning and professional development were enhanced. Examples of modeling, coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection, and exploration provided in this study show that the teachers learned something new from their participation and involvement in the oTPD, and that they were also able to put this into practice.

The TPD frameworks used in this study also proved to be equally useful, not only in their application to my data analysis, but also in the construction and design of the oTPD.

They helped make this oTPD a planned, structured, and coordinated TPD effort. The same frameworks were used in measuring the effectiveness of the oTPD, particularly in terms of achieving the learning goals set by the teachers themselves.

This study shows how ICT and Web 2.0 tools were used in the oTPD. The examples provided in this chapter prove these tools can be integrated into collaborative professional development activities in a way that bridges learning and professional growth of teachers who may not have mentoring opportunities available in their own teaching/working context.

In the following chapter, I will discuss the main conclusions of this research study, the implications of the research findings for oTPD providers, i.e. school owners/administrators of a buxiban, a proposed oTPD framework that Taiwanese teachers and oTPD providers can easily apply, contributions of this study to the field, limitations, strengths and weaknesses of this study, and finally suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.0 Introduction

Given the fact that many Taiwanese English teachers enter the EFL classrooms without formal preparation specifically in teaching EFL, professional development has become more important than ever. As the EFL industry in Taiwan becomes more competitive, it is necessary for school directors to understand the importance of providing quality among their teaching staff. The main conclusion which can be drawn from this study is that online technologies have huge potential in providing teacher professional development without the high costs usually involved in traditional TPD, and professional development providers/school administrators and EFL teachers should tap them for their own benefit. I believe TPD is necessary for teachers to help them become effective teachers in the classroom, because in the end, it still boils down to what they do in the classroom that provides the 'what and how' students learn. Web 2.0 tools can be a stepping stone to reach out to NNEST teachers, particularly in Asia, which could provide a head start for their own professional development. Online technologies and social media/networks can help break down the perennial access barriers to TPD i.e. travel costs, conference fees, and so forth. Taiwanese EFL teachers are forging ahead and using social networks and local blog sites e.g. Wretch.com.tw, so why not make use of these in establishing connections and expanding their

network of people who could then intentionally or serendipitously open access to oTPD. The more Taiwanese EFL teachers connect online in search of oTPD opportunities, the higher the chances of tapping an access point.

The aim of this chapter is to present 1) the implications of the research findings for oTPD providers, i.e. school owners/administrators of a buxiban, 2) a discussion of the oTPD framework utilized in this research that Taiwanese teachers and oTPD providers can easily follow and apply to their local contexts, 3) the contributions of this study to the field, limitations, strengths and weaknesses, and 4) suggestions for future research.

In the following section, I discuss the implications of the study for owners/administration of a buxiban.

7.1 Implications of the Study

The research findings have several implications for oTPD providers and Taiwanese EFL teachers. For oTPD providers, i.e. buxiban owners/administrators, this study provides a feasible framework that can be integrated into their benefits or incentive scheme. oTPD can be offered as an added benefit for teachers working at their schools. It has been shown from the survey results that teachers understand and highly value TPD but they are dissatisfied with their employing institutions' ability to provide TPD (if there is any at all). For supplementary

school administrators, retaining quality teachers should be a priority. A high teacher turnover reflects a poor image of the school, which can have an effect on student recruitment. Providing TPD can make the teachers feel that they are being valued, that their contributions to the school matter. A free oTPD is an investment in teaching staff's professional development, and it inevitably becomes an investment in the quality of the school as an educational provider. Continuous TPD instills the value of teacher learning; and if it is done over a period of time, the teachers will get accustom to participating in TPD until it becomes second nature to them. At the same time, school administrators can also use it as a benchmark when hiring teachers, employing and retaining teachers who are dedicated to their own professional development. School administrators must also recognize the importance of having hiring guidelines which place value on continuous teacher training and professional development. They should also recognize the effort made by teachers make in their PD as it will trickle down to class performance and teaching practices, i.e. what they do in the classroom. Recognition can be given by offering rewards or other forms of incentives for successful completion of any TPD effort. In other words, schools need to develop PD plans that are built around clear learning/teaching goals and outcomes.TPD is an incentive in itself where teachers can improve their skills and knowledge, which can have an effect on their students as well. oTPD can easily be facilitated by tapping social networks to gain access to

TPD and to expand pool of ELT professionals who can serve as mentors, coach, or invited speakers for webinars; thus creating a community of practice (CoP), which can easily be done using Yahoo! Groups, Google groups, Facebook, etc.

This study also has several implications for EFL teachers. First of all, it shows that teachers who are dedicated to their craft persevere in engaging in oTPD endeavors. The effort and time invested in participating in oTPD can have positive influence on their teaching practice. Secondly, as shown in this study, teachers learned something from their interaction/communication with the invited experts. Since the oTPD was geared towards meeting their professional needs, the outcome was highly positive. Finally, this study also shows that oTPD efforts can and should address where the teachers think they need to grow as effective EFL teachers. TPD must be on-going as there is a need to update skills and reignite their passion for teaching to avoid experiencing job burnout. In other words, to become an effective EFL teacher, one must be motivated to gain improvements in professional skills, increase content knowledge, i.e. English language, stay committed to the profession, and keep the passion for teaching and learning burning.

7.2 Originality of the Study

In recent years, TESOL and IATEFL have been offering oTPD, but there is a gap in the field. There is little research that focuses on measuring its effectiveness in terms of teacher learning and what goes on in the classroom and how much of the teachers' classroom practices changed. This study is unique because there is no other empirical research conducted on this topic that discusses the TPD models used in online environments specifically geared towards Taiwanese EFL teachers in supplementary schools. There are no studies on the Taiwanese teaching/learning context that shows TPD measurements being put into practice. This study provides oTPD providers and teachers various ideas on how to measure their TPD efforts by looking at TPD models and teachers' learning goals as benchmarks. What also makes this research study unique is that it demonstrates that oTPD can be effectively and successfully facilitated in online environments. I was able to present different ways of providing TPD via asynchronous discussions in Yahoo! Groups, synchronous webinar, and present the effective use of blogs.

7.3 Proposed oTPD Framework

The online teacher professional development (oTPD) facilitated in this study shows how an effective professional development in online environments can be implemented without

incurring the high cost involved in providing traditional teacher professional development (TPD). The oTPD framework being proposed here illustrates a process that blends the theoretical models of TPD. Blending these theories and putting them into practice is necessary in gauging the effectiveness of the oTPD, from facilitation to seeing positive outcomes on teachers' attitudes and practices toward their own professional learning and development. This framework also shows that informal oTPD can still be facilitated following an organized and structured design. The process involves practical steps that oTPD providers (school owners/administrators) can easily follow when designing and planning TPD workshops/events for their teachers. The process also provides teachers with ideas on how to engage in oTPD and make the experience meaningful and personally rewarding.

The graphic representation of the approach (Figure 7.1) provides a visual image of how the steps fit in an accessible framework showing the integration of online technology and Web 2.0 in the oTPD process.

Figure 7.1: Proposed oTPD Framework
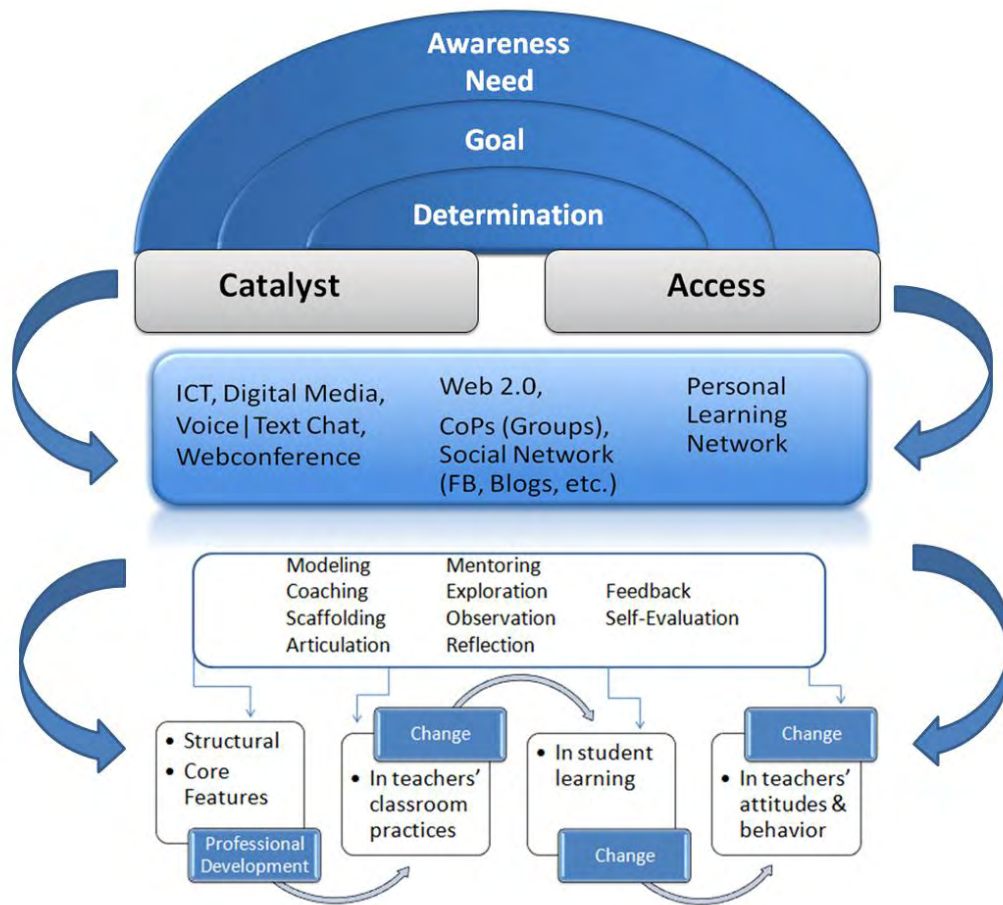
There are four core areas needed when engaging or facilitating the proposed oTPD framework:

1. Awareness: Teachers' Need, Goal, and Determination
2. Catalyst in Providing Teachers Access to oTPD
3. Designing the Structural and Core Features of oTPD
4. Seeing the Change in Teachers'

The oTPD framework begins with having an understanding of what the teachers' learning needs and goals are. This can be related to a specific instructional skill or classroom management skills. The teachers should also be aware of what their short-term goals are in

relation to their classroom practices. The teachers who want to engage in oTPD should also be self-determined to go through the process to make the experience even more meaningful. Knowing what they need and having a practical goal in mind, combined with determination all falls into the first step of the oTPD: Awareness.

The second step is Catalyst in providing Access to oTPD. This where online tools are now integrated into the process as they will be used as a 'gateway' where teachers can have the opportunity to learn something new. Being a catalyst means being an agent in providing information or links to an oTPD opportunity. The oTPD catalyst can be anyone (school administrators, teachers, colleagues, etc.) who is willing to share TPD or oTPD information that teachers can look into. This is why social networking is important. The network of like-minded people can share oTPD events that can be beneficial for EFL teachers.

The design of the core and structural features of the oTPD is the heart of the entire process as it determines the how, where, when the oTPD will take place: why it is being offered, who the people participating are, and what the content focus of the oTPD is about. The major planning revolves around this area. After finding out what particular topic the teachers want to discuss or learn more about, searching for suitable mentors or experts who would be willing to share their expertise is the next step. Posting a call for volunteer mentors to various professional networks and communities of practice (e.g. Webheads), similar to

what I did in this study, is one solution in looking for experts or experienced teachers who can

serve as mentors. This is also the time to plan for a suitable timeframe for the oTPD, taking

into account the availability of both the mentors and the local teachers. Determining the venue

where the oTPD will take place should also be in place around this time. Choosing the online

platform will depend on the type of oTPD, whether it involves asynchronous discussions,

synchronous webinars, or both. The use of other learning tools, such as blogs or wikis, will

also depend on whether reflections are part of the oTPD. This study strongly suggests that

opportunities for teacher reflections should be incorporated into the oTPD process. In this way,

the teachers will have the chance to review and reflect on their oTPD journey. The use of

blogs for reflective purposes is a great way to achieve this; and as seen in this study, mentors

can also make use of the blogs to leave comments or feedback, thus making the

mentor-mentee connections even stronger. In addition to the platforms used in this study, there

are plenty of other free online tools that can be used for oTPD (see Recommendations).

Finding out what the teachers learned from the webinars or asynchronous discussions

can be done by looking at recording or chat archives. The quality of the interactions with the

experts/mentors can say a lot about the communication dynamics that took place. Did the

teachers ask questions? How engaged were they in the conversations? Did the teachers

request further information? Did the mentors provide scaffolding or modeling? In what way

did they show e-mentoring support? These are just some of the questions that can be answered by reviewing the conversations in the various online learning environments used for oTPD, and the cognitive approach model can aid in measuring the extent of teacher learning that took place.

In this oTPD framework, the use of classroom observations was seen to be very useful in investigating the change in the teachers' instruction and change/improvement in the students' learning. For most TPD or oTPD models being used today, TPD providers do not have access to what goes on in the teachers' classroom. Thus, it is very difficult to assess whether the oTPD experience has any impact on their teaching and on their students' learning at all. Looking at case study participants in this study, Joy and Cindy, and the level of openness or sharing that took place after their synchronous webinars, it was very clear that Cindy's oTPD experience was to a larger extent more successful than Joy's. By sharing with Terry the video recordings of her classroom observations, Terry was in a better position to suggest teaching materials that she could use in her own classroom. Terry was also able to provide positive and constructive feedback on Cindy's instructional approaches and on the students' learning activities.

7.4 Contribution to the Field of oTPD

This study provides a positive contribution to the body of knowledge relating to oTPD practice, from planning to measurement of the outcome of effective facilitation. The results of the investigations of the five research questions make several contributions to the fields of EFL teaching, EFL teacher education, and computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and in particular to teacher professional development in online environments.

First, this study provides new insights into the attitudes and practices toward professional development of Taiwanese English teachers working in private short-term language tutorial supplementary schools (for young and adult students), and their attitudes toward the employing institutions' ability to provide incentives, compensation package and benefits, and provide teacher training/development and how satisfied they are with them.

Second, given the fact that the opportunities and resources allocated for EFL teachers in this sector are very limited and inadequate, the online teacher professional development (oTPD) framework suggested in this study provide oTPD providers, i.e. school administrators and teachers alternative means in pursuing/delivering professional development. Emphasis is given to how access to oTPD can be afforded simply by networking and participating in communities of practice (CoP). Despite the informal nature of oTPD involved, the structure and core features of the professional development activity were carefully planned and

implemented. The forms of oTPD included a blend of asynchronous/synchronous discussion workshops, (pre/post) class observations, and blogging for reflection which lasted for several months. This study shows that using various media tools, e.g. Yahoo! Group, blogs, email, and synchronous chat platforms provided, for meaningful communication and discussions to bridge the transfer and construction of knowledge.

Third, the steps undertaken by the teachers who participated in this study also provide an in-depth look at the role of cognitive apprenticeship and informal mentoring in online learning environments. This study puts online teacher learning and development in a new perspective by examining the possibilities of what and how Taiwanese EFL teachers can learn from the invited experts and experienced teachers during online synchronous and asynchronous meetings and discussions. This study was able to examine how collaborative activities afford teachers opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills, and sustain their drive to pursue continuous professional growth within a CoP and network of like-minded people.

Fourth, the in-depth investigation using class observations, transcript analysis of these recorded class observations and online discussions, text analysis of posted messages on the online group network also provides information regarding the documenting process and evaluation of the outcome of the Taiwanese EFL teachers' oTPD experience.

Fifth, this study provides a thorough discussion of the potential use of online technology to empower language teachers by simply 1) gaining access to the various free online professional development workshops such as those being offered by the TESOL Computer-Assisted Language Learning Interest Section's (CALL-IS) Electronic Village Online (EVO) sessions, and 2) joining social networks and other professional communities of practice (CoP), such as the Webheads, to engage in continuous teacher learning through e-mentoring, collaborative class projects, webinars, etc.

7.5 Limitations of the Study

Despite the longitudinal and exploratory nature of this study, there were some limitations that need to be addressed. This section discusses four major limitations of this research study.

7.5.1. Number of Survey Respondents

Limitations on the generalization of findings from this study due to the number of respondents (c.f. Valentine & Cooper, 2003) from Surveys 1 and 2 (S1 & S2) may not be representative of Taiwanese EFL teachers' population working in private supplementary schools in Taiwan. Nonetheless, the findings from the surveys in this study can still provide insights regarding the demographic characteristics and description of the Taiwanese EFL

teachers' attitudes and practices in the language classroom, the level of importance and

satisfaction with the employing institutions' ability to provide incentives, compensation

package and benefits, and provide teacher training.

7.5.2. Limitation of the Case Studies

A limitation of the case studies (c.f. Stake, 1995; 2000) involving a few Taiwanese EFL

teachers is that they may not be representative of the Taiwanese EFL teachers' population's

attitudes and practices towards oTPD, and outcomes from such endeavor could vary from

teacher to teacher. However, similar to what Hodkinson & Hodkinson (2001) posit regarding

the strengths of case studies, evidence from the data gathered from this study strongly support

their claims that they 1) can help understand complex relationships, 2) are grounded on lived

reality, and 3) facilitate the exploration of the unexpected and unusual. And due to the

longitudinal nature of this study, I was also able to observe the oTPD process and behavior of

Taiwanese EFL teachers in online CoPs. The strengths of the case studies based on Hodkinson

& Hodkinson (2001) are as follows

  A. **They can help us understand complex inter-relationships.** The case studies were

      able to show the mentor-mentee relationships between Taiwanese EFL teachers and

      invited guest online mentors and how they took place in an online environment used

in the study (Section 6.4). This study was able to explore the various perspectives and their oTPD experiences of the teachers involved; the limited number of EFL teachers also allowed me to follow their oTPD process from beginning to end.

B. **Case Studies are grounded in lived reality** The teaching and learning contexts were very much connected to what the Taiwanese EFL teachers do in their classroom; the circumstances that occurred during the oTPD process reflected real life conditions in Taiwanese EFL setting. The oTPD events that took place have direct impact on their lives since they lived these experiences, they observed the process of their own learning and outcomes, and witnessed first-hand how their participation helped developed relationships and connections online and beyond.

C. **Case studies facilitate the exploration of the unexpected and unusual.** This study was able to show that in planning and implementation of informal oTPD, flexibility is needed to be able to adapt to unexpected events that could come up. For example, the process of inviting online mentors could be tedious as it involved sending messages to my network of communities of practice, awaiting response, confirmation of participation, planning/setting date and time of online session/webmeeting, etc. The asynchronous communications in the YG or blog also had their share of unexpected turn-out of events. Participation via sharing of experiences, comments, suggestions,

etc. were all done on a voluntary basis. Dealing with silent participants must be done

cautiously without sounding too pushy or desperate; constant friendly reminders,

whether or not they were acknowledged, were necessary.

7.5.3. On Students' Learning Assessment

This study was only able to show what and how students' learned based on the teachers'

self-report and on the video recording of the class observations. Formal and informal

language assessments are needed to have a better gauge of the impact of oTPD on teacher's

practice.

7.5.4. On New Technology

The Web 2.0 online tools used in the study were limited to Yahoo! Group as a CoP, Blog

as a reflective tool, Facebook as source of data and network, emails as main source of

communication, and synchronous webconference platforms i.e. Alado and Elluminate.

Although, these tools are still being used by many language educators, there has been an

influx of new technology that has surfaced in recent years, which can be tapped into providing

oTPD.

7.6 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study

Like any other longitudinal research undertaking, this study has several strengths and weaknesses. One of the strengths of this study was that it was able to achieve the research goals i.e. facilitating effective TPD in online environments and measuring its outcome in terms of teacher learning and change. Another feature of this study is that it is unique and original (see section 7.3). There is a need for this kind of study, which provides positive contributions to the field, putting TPD theories into practice establishing a feasible oTPD framework that can be used and repeated in other research endeavors. This study was able to show ways of using social networks and CoPs to keep up to date with learning and TPD skills, and what works best in language teaching/learning.

One of the drawbacks of this study was that it relied heavily on qualitative data in analyzing the teachers' oTPD process, teacher learning, and change in their attitudes and classroom practices. The amount of data to be sorted out and analyzed was immense. For future study, the survey questionnaire can be adjusted to reflect an in-depth perspective of the teachers' attitudes toward traditional and online teacher professional development. This should also create a balance between the data gathered quantitatively and qualitatively. Second, because of the empirical and longitudinal nature of this study, new online tools for oTPD had to be integrated to keep it up to date. For example, back in 2003-2004, the leading

platform for asynchronous discussions was the Yahoo! Group. Although, it is still being used today in the EFL/ESL TPD activities, there are other platforms available today. Hence, Facebook was later added in this study as a source of data. For synchronous webinars, Alado can still be used but Elluminate seems to gain leverage in terms of online presentation tools and applications, e.g. interactive whiteboard, web tour, and ease of use. Other free webinar tools such as Skype and WizIQ can also be drawn in future research on oTPD.

7.7 Lessons Learned

What I have learned from conducting this study was that it has reaffirmed my beliefs in the potential use of online technology to empower language teachers. My membership and active participation in TESOL and IATEFL has allowed me to expand my horizons and broaden my professional connections, which enabled me to serve as catalyst providing oTPD access to non-native EFL teachers in Taiwan. Investigating sensitive issues concerning the teacher training, learning, and professional competency of Taiwanese EFL teachers in cram schools is/was not an easy task. Actually to have these teachers participate in professional development activities and have them apply what they have learned, and to reflect on the outcome as they look at the changes (if there were any) on their attitude and practices were major challenges that this research was able to overcome due to 1) its longitudinal and

empirical nature, and 2) the sheer determination and motivation of these teachers to engage in their own TPD. Another important aspect of what I have learnt from conducting the study is that, as a researcher doing empirical research, motivation, patience and being flexible to changes are key ingredients in seeing a longitudinal study come to a close. Any study that would take more than five years to finish would require two or more surveys for data comparison and trend analysis. A large group of case study subjects are needed to establish strong data outcomes. However, all this would mean creating a small research team that would ensure validity and reliability of data analysis. This study turned out to be a huge research undertaking that I managed to complete. It may have taken me longer than I expected, and my level of motivation seemed to fluctuate in the process; nevertheless, my perseverance allowed me to bring this research to an end.

7.8 Recommendations

This section discusses the recommendations for future research endeavors investigating online teacher professional development based on the limitations discussed in the previous section.

7.8.1 For future research, a larger sample size could provide significant effects on the generalization of the survey findings.

7.8.2 Last minute cancellations or unexpected technical failure could affect the outcome of synchronous events. Technical scaffolding and coaching were needed to make sure that both the Taiwanese EFL teachers and online guest mentors were able to participate with a minimum of technical glitches. Experience in online moderation and facilitation is/was necessary in oTPD; the ability to make wise last-minute decisions during a live oTPD event was crucial in staying focused in achieving the set goals despite technology break-down.

7.8.3 As stated in Chapter 4, only 30.9% (S1) and 29.2% (S2) of the teachers surveyed possessed a Bachelor's degree; the cross-tabulation results also showed the age level of the teachers is concentrated in the 20-29 age bracket, which signifies that many of them were still in college or just freshly graduated from college when they started teaching. Another disturbing result presented in Figure 4.2 showed that almost a majority of the respondents have not taken proficiency tests that would demonstrate their credibility and competence in the target language. As mentioned in Chapter 5, despite the lack of proficiency in English, teachers were still hired and some of them even landed a teaching post in mainstream Elementary schools. Although, enhancing English language proficiency was mentioned and considered by the teachers in the YG as one of the skills that they need to work on, it was not,

however, the immediate need of the teachers who took part in the actual oTPD, as April, Joy, Amei, and Cindy were more interested in the instructional aspects of EFL. Future oTPD efforts are definitely needed for English language enhancement; however, the problem lies in whether teachers would be willing to come out in the open, since doing so could be seen as an admission of their own ineptitude.

7.8.4 Formal language assessments i.e. test scores, samples of students' writing or worksheets could help provide more accurate data on students' learning in addition to teachers' self-report and on the video recording of the class observations.

7.8.5 Various social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Skype and a lot more are already available in mobile-web applications format. From asynchronous chats in email-based CoPs to video-conferencing/webinars, access to oTPD is literally within an educator's reach using mobile technologies. Staying tuned-in with the latest research development or information on skill-enhancement training has never been made easier. The use of online technologies, whether mobile or desktop, provides solutions to teachers' oTPD needs. Teachers and TPD providers should consider what these new technologies could offer and how teacher development can be delivered in more ways than one. Further research is needed on the

application and relative effectiveness of new web tools on oTPD. Below is a partial list of

tools that are being used for oTPD purposes:

7.8.5.1 Microblogging via Twitter has been catching on among language teachers as a source

of oTPD (Stevens, 2008). For example, organizers of the IATEFL 2010 Conference at

Harrogate tweeted (posted on twitter.com) live events or sessions for those who could not

physically attend the conference; tweets ranged from what it was like being there to web links

where online participants could watch the live interviews or webcasts of keynote speakers and

links where presentation materials i.e. PowerPoint slides, full paper, etc. were archived.

7.8.5.2 Skype and WizIQ can be used for web meetings or web conferences with participants

(teachers and oTPD facilitators) from different parts of the globe to share oTPD

activities/events online. Similar to Elluminate and Alado, Skype and WizIQ can also be used

for live webcasts of online or f2f conferences. Jeff Lebow's Dave Cormier's Worldbridges

projects e.g. Webcast Academy, Edtechtalk, Koreabridge, webheadsinaction.org, etc. are

examples of oTPD activities that teachers could participate in.

7.8.5.3 Moodles and Wikis serve as course management systems (CMS) or learning management systems (LMS) which allow the user to manage course or learning content i.e. learning resources, activities, task guidelines, etc. A moodle works on an open-source courseware system which is used in course development and delivery of these courses online. Although it only takes a few minutes to download and install the software, navigating the site and tinkering with its configurations and settings can be difficult for teachers who may be technologically-challenged (Rice, 2006). Wikis may be used as an alternative to Moodle since all it takes is to sign up for an account; Wiki providers such as pbworks and wikispaces provide simple steps in putting content to the wiki; they are much more user-friendly and as Jakes (2006) posits they are "handy tools for planning workshops or conferences. Trainers can post documents and other resources on the wiki prior to the workshop and have participants create and post their own notes during the event. Later, participants can return to the wiki to further reflect on what they've learned (p.1).

7.8.5.4 Mobile learning or the use of mobile technologies (smartphones and other handheld devices with Internet access) to enhance the learning experience has also joined the bandwagon of new modes of learning (Kukulska-Hulme, 2005). Since mobile devices are portable, they enable online learning beyond the physical boundaries of geographic locations.

7.8.6 From Discussion to Action

It has been mentioned in the previous chapters that Taiwanese EFL teachers in supplementary schools have lower salaries, and yet, they are expected to put in more hours for class prep-time and other administrative jobs. It is not easy to encourage teachers to spend extra hours for oTPD when they have full work load with inadequate salaries. It is crucial that they see oTPD as a personal endeavor that could lead to greater self/personal satisfaction. Taiwanese EFL teachers in supplementary schools need to be aware of the key-take-aways of participating in oTPD, such as: stimulating discussions, hearing from experts/mentors, access to lesson plans/activities, ideas, practical tips, and links to useful resources. However, aside from participating in the discussions, teachers need to act on what they have learned. It is recommended that teachers set a short-term oTPD plan that they know they can easily carry out. If blogs are integrated in oTPD, teachers must know that building blogs is like building muscles- it takes time, patience, and a lot of work. Maintaining a blog could be less stressful if teachers are in a collaborative mentoring/coaching environment, where the goal is not simply to publish a certain number of blog posts, but on the sharing and construction of ideas and knowledge. Taiwanese EFL teachers have to find ways in using social networks for their own professional development, and learn to establish a do-it-yourself (DIY) oTPD plan. They can learn most through constant contact with people who are experts and knowledgeable in

their own right, who could point them in the right direction, i.e. by identifying the latest development in language teaching or finding solutions their classroom dilemma. A DIY plan is a self-devised and schematic oTPD plan, and it is imperative to know that there are different ways of acquiring oTPD. It also involves managing and nurturing their own professional development. Having a DIY plan does not assume that teachers will become better teachers, but surely change in beliefs and classroom practices is inevitable if they are to put into practice what was learned from their oTPD experience. In Table 7.1, I provide some tips to help them get on the oTPD bandwagon:

Table 7.1 Catching the Drift of oTPD

Catching the Drift of oTPD	
1) Identify your social networks	You need to identify what social networks to use for your own professional development. To do this, ask yourself this question: What kind of TPD information do they give you? How useful are they, in terms of applying them in your own classroom?
2) Build a sense of community	Know and make use of some language teaching/learning websites, and try to build a sense of community by leaving/posting comments in forums, blogs, etc. Find pages or online groups where you could interact with people who could provide you links to useful information, e.g. Webheads in Action (WiA) group is a good place to start.
3) Create a FB account	Have a Facebook (FB) account. Browse and 'Like' other FB pages related to language teaching/learning. Follow the postings and links on your FB newsfeed. Try to maintain a lively exchange of posts and comments from people who like your FB status or whatever it was that you shared.
4) Create a Twitter	Have a Twitter account. Twitter is a place where people

account	recycle information, ask questions, get replies, talk about trends- it simply opens a whole new way of keeping informed about what is happening in the English language teaching (ELT) professional world. For a start, participate in live tweet chats such as those regularly hosted by #ELTchat and/or #Edchat where teachers from various parts of the globe meet every week online to exchange ideas on a chosen topic.
5) Participate in EVO sessions	Participate in the Electronic Village Online sessions- free five-week-oTPD workshops sponsored by the TESOL CALL Interest Section (see Chapter 2) offered during January-February of each year. Join other EFL/ESL teachers in the same learning journey, and find yourself mentors whom you could learn from.

Doing one or all of the above should help teachers create their own personal learning network (PLN) of trusted nodes, i.e. people or groups that they follow on FB, twitter, YG, etc. The following are some recommendations to help teachers create and expand their PLN:

1. Choose your learning community by defining and nurturing your network.

2. Decide what your learning interests are, what pedagogical areas you would like to learn more, and so forth.

3. Select and filter your social network to help you identify and follow people who could serve as your online mentors.

The idea of jumping onto the oTPD bandwagon simply because it is the trend seems pretty daunting, but we cannot deny the fact that these social networking tools have made it

relatively easier to get in contact with ELT experts, who could provide a helping hand in

getting us moving towards improving ourselves as EFL educators.

7.9 Conclusion

In this study, I have explored the various ways of using online technologies in interacting,

communicating, and collaborating with other teachers from different parts of the world,

sharing and creating knowledge in online environments. Without these teachers who took part

in this study, the Web 2.0 tools would simply be just tools. It is the teachers who use these

tools that make the change - not only on their attitude but their practices as well. It is too

idealistic to think or even say that teachers who use online technology and social networks

will be highly motivated in using them in engaging in oTPD. Robertson, Calder, Fung, Jones,

O'Shea, & Lambrechts, 1996 in Mumtaz, 2000, pp. 320-321) categorized seven factors that

affect teachers' motivation to using computers in staff development:

- resistance to organisational change;
- resistance to outside intervention;
- time management problems;
- lack of support from the administration;
- teachers' perceptions;
- personal and psychological factors

Any of the factors mentioned above can be applied to Taiwanese EFL teachers. Looking at the

kind of support they receive from their employing institutions, they get little if none at all (see

Chapter 1). Even if technology permits oTPD, the question "What do I get out of this?"

always comes up; In other words, some teachers look at it from the monetary perspective, the lack of compensation or monetary benefits prevents them from pursuing professional growth (Kirby & Grissmer, 1993; Hughes, 2001). Time management or work schedule is also a critical factor; many of the Taiwanese EFL teachers work long hours which usually start from early morning to very late at night. Finding the time to participate in synchronous webinars would mean giving up some hours of sleep. However, since many oTPD webinars are also recorded and available for download, they still could avail themselves of these materials and listen to them as podcasts while they ride their scooters on their way to work or home. oTPD allows teachers the opportunity to learn and develop in multiple ways, but then again, it also depends on the teacher's perception and personality and other psychological factors that have the power to ignite their personal drive and determination; as Wheatley (2009) writes:

> The gap between knowing and doing is only bridged by the human heart. If we are willing to open our hearts to what's really going on, we will find the energy to become active again. We will find the will and courage to do something…We can't keep rejecting solutions because they require us to change our behavior… (p. 70)

Although self-determination emanates from the self (Deci & Ryan, 2004), friends, family, and colleagues and social interaction with people also serve as catalysts (see Sections 2.3.6 and 6.3.2) in affecting the motivation to take part in teacher learning and development activities. Social persuasion may occur during informal chats or feedback from colleagues or mentors who could inspire a teacher to take action and try to engage in TPD (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Indeed, learning is a socially constructed

process (Candy, 1991) where collaborative efforts and interactions take place. Online environments help build networks of like-minded people, an online community of practice (CoP), as Mak (2010) posits,

> The teacher within the network, COPs may act as a facilitator, a mentor or a guide, a curator, or a technologist, but most often the teacher may appear as a peer learner, an expert learner, rather than a traditional expert of the field in order to encourage participation and engagement of adult learners. (para. 6)

Taiwanese EFL teachers need to become competent lifelong learners; they need to keep abreast of the knowledge and pedagogical skills to help them become better EFL teachers. Aside from acquiring knowledge, teachers engaged in oTPD need to keep track of what they have learned and grow from it. In this study, we have seen how blogs can be used not only as reflective tools but e-portfolio as well. Looking at Cindy's blog, for example, we could see how she documented her lessons and class activities. Such documentation can be used as evidence of her skills and capabilities, and could be a powerful tool in building self-confidence as others acknowledge the effort she put into her craft- a validation of her learning progress.

Teachers have various reasons for participating in oTPD, and in some cases they simply want to get to know more information about a trend. Immediate changes in their teaching approach may sometimes not be their ultimate goal. So in making sure that oTPD serves its purpose, it is really necessary to find out what their oTPD goals and needs are. Whatever form of oTPD EFL teachers use, they need to invest their time and effort. By looking at the

outcomes of the oTPD process, we could measure its effectiveness, and how much of the teacher's investment reaped results. Using Guskey's measurement allowed me to gauge what knowledge/learning was constructed, what was applied in their teaching context, and how it affected their instructional practices, which ultimately had an effect (positively/negatively) on their students' learning. However, it should be noted that although the change or implementation of new pedagogical strategies or learning activities had little impact on students' learning, it was not the sole factor that could have affected their learning. Nonetheless, EFL teachers should still reflect and evaluate their students' learning at the end of a learning activity. Finding out what worked and what did not could help them refine their teaching strategies to produce better learning outcomes. The blog postings, messages sent via e-mail and YG, and the recording of class observations served as great evaluation tools to identify what oTPD outcome was implemented in the classroom and how it was done. This study was able to fulfill the aims of this research. I was able to not only present data that revealed the attitudes, behavior and practices of Taiwanese EFL teachers in private supplementary schools, but I was also able to facilitate oTPD using various tools that supported 1) its delivery over a period of time, 2) the transfer and construction of teacher knowledge and skills that had direct implications on their practice and on EFL students' learning (Gutskey, 2002), and 3) the social interaction and collaborative efforts of local and

international teachers in the oTPD process. Being part of a learning network means sharing knowledge and experiences with other teachers so they may in turn be provided with the same access to professional development. The 'pay-it-forward' concept works very well in learning networks and CoPs; the idea is to keep on sharing not only expertise but enthusiasm as well, as Stevens (2010) aptly puts it "we can be change agents by getting our colleagues to interact with us using 21st century Web 2.0 technology tools" (para.1).   The more teachers engage in connecting with other teachers, the more their network becomes an influential force in their personal and professional growth.

Engaging in oTPD is much more about investing time and effort in professional development. It is about expanding the teachers' ability to share their experiences and what they know, receive knowledge from others, their capacity for collaborating with other teachers, networking with like-minded people, and their passion for learning itself. It brings with it a new sense of awareness about things they may have never heard before, new beliefs about teaching practices, and a whole new way of being an effective teacher and doing what good teachers do. To successfully implement the key lessons in this research study, oTPD efforts must be focused on the EFL teachers' needs in developing their professional skills. Doing what they learned in any oTPD activity requires time. They need patience and tenacity in accomplishing the goals they set out for themselves. The online tools mentioned in this study

are simply the means to an end, not the goal itself. By integrating these tools into their professional endeavors, they can empower themselves as effective EFL teachers.

It has been my intention to write and share the results of this study that have had a positive transformational effect upon the lives of Taiwanese EFL teachers working in supplementary schools. It is my hope that others who might have the chance to read this thesis would learn something from it, and put it into practice. I believe that continuous learning and drive for self-improvement is immensely beneficial to our own professional growth. I also believe that the effects of positive oTPD outcomes, if shared and pass on to others resound far further than any of us can imagine. By taking responsibility for our own learning and refining our skills, improving the quality of our teaching and those who work with us (locally or internationally), we individually make a significant contribution to the greater field of EFL.

Appendix 1: Self-developed Questionnaire

Aiden Yeh's PhD Research Questionnaire

葉佰賢的博士研究詢問表

A. PURPOSE AND RESEARCH BACKGROUND 研究目的和背景

這次調查是特別針對台灣私人語言補習學校的英語教師。 這次調查的目的是檢視台灣教師的態度，教導習性和他們對專業訓練的意見。

B. PROCEDURES 方式

您的參與在這項研究過程是完全自願。 請仔細閱讀以下內容並依要求對這些問題作出回應。 完成此詢問表將花費不到 20 分鐘。 您的答案對這項研究有非凡的價值。 這張詢問表為匿名調查，所有收集的資訊都將被可靠的儲存。感謝您的時間及支持。

C. QUESTIONS 問題

如果您有關於調查或方式的問題，您可以聯絡 aidenyeh@yahoo.com。 或者來電 0938-392-852 您可以透過我的電子郵件要求寄發一份此調查表的副本給其他的台灣英語教師。

PART 1: Background Information

Q1. What is your gender? Tick [✓] one 您的性別是___？ 請選一[✓]

Male 男性 _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Female 女性 _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Q2. What is your age group?您的年齡層是？ 請選一[✓]

under 20 years 小於 20 歲 _ _ _ _ _ _ _

20-29 years 20-29 歲 _ _ _ _ _ _ _

30-39 years 30-39 歲. _ _ _ _ _ _ _

40 years –above 大於 40 歲 _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Q3. Which of the following best represents the highest level of education that you have completed? Tick[✓]one only 您已經完成的最高教育為？請選一[✓]

_ _ _ _ attended some college 上一部分的學院

_ _ _ _ 5-year Junior college 五專

_ _ _ _ 2- year college 二技

_ _ _ _ Bachelor's degree 學士學位

_ _ _ _ Master's Degree 碩士學位

_ _ _ _ Ph.D. 博士學位

_ _ _ _ Other, please specify 其他，請確切說明 _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Q4. Are you currently enrolled in a program? Tick [✓] one only 您目前就學中嗎？請選一[✓]

＿＿＿＿＿＿ Yes, please specify course and degree 是的，請敘述課程和學位　＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿＿＿ No 不就學中

Q5.　How long have you been teaching English? Tick [✓] one only 您從事英語教學工作有多久時間了呢？請選一**[✓]**

＿＿＿＿＿＿ Less than one year 不到一年

＿＿＿＿＿＿ 1-2 Years 年

＿＿＿＿＿＿ 2-3 Years 年

＿＿＿＿＿＿ 3-4 Years 年

　　　　＿＿＿＿＿＿Other, please specify 其他，請確切說明　＿＿＿＿＿

Q6. Which of the following English proficiency tests have you taken? Please tick [✓] all that apply and specify the grade [or approximate if you don't remember, for example: 500-600 or above 500]. 您考核過下列那種英語測驗？請選一[✓]

＿＿＿＿TOEFL 托福考試 Grade 成績＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿ TOEIC Grade 成績＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿ IELTS Grade 成績＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿ GEPT Grade 成績＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿ Other Grade 其他考試及成績＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿ No, I haven't taken any English proficiency test, but may consider taking one in the future

否, 我未考核過英語能力, 但是可能考慮將來考核

＿＿＿＿ No, I haven't taken any English proficiency test, and I'm not interested in taking one in the future.否, 我未考核過英語能力, 也不考慮將來考核

＿＿＿＿My school [where I work] does not require it 我的學校 [我現在工作這裡]不需要英語能力考核。

＿＿＿＿ If my school [where I work] required it, I would take one 如果我的學校 [我現在工作這裡] 需要，我將考慮考核 。

PART 2: Attitude.　　Please tick one[✓] which best represents your views.

教學型態。請選擇最好描述您的意見。請選一[✓]

Q7. Language used in the classroom 在教室裡使用的語言	非常同意 strongly agree	我同意 I agree	不同意或反對 neither agree or disagree	不同意 disagree	非常反對 strongly disagree
Use English only in class 在課堂上只使用英語					
Use Mandarin/Taiwanese when giving classroom instructions 在課堂上只使用漢語/台灣話					
Use Chinese when teaching grammar 當教文法時，使用漢語					
Q8. Teaching Methodology 教方法學. 請選一[✓]	非常同意 strongly agree	我同意 I agree	不同意或反對 neither agree or disagree	不同意 disagree	非常反對 strongly disagree
Students should memorize the conversation patterns from their textbooks 學生應該背下他們的教科書談話形式					
Students should enhance their spelling skills through repetitive writing 學生應該透過重複的寫作來提升他們拼音的能力					
Students should be given more time to speak English in class 學生應該在課堂上給予更多的時間講英語					
Lessons should be fun 上課應該是有趣					
Lessons should be prepared ahead of time 課程應該提前準備					
Teachers should start the class on time 教師應該準時開始上課					
Teachers should clearly communicate their expectations to students 教師應該清楚把他們的預期告知學生					

Q9 Teacher Quality **A teacher in supplementary schools...** 教師品質 請選一[✓]	非常同意 strongly agree	我同意 I agree	不同意或反對 neither agree or disagree	不同意 disagree	非常反對 strongly disagree
must hold a bachelor's degree in order to be considered highly qualified 必須有學士學位，已認定為非常合格。					
must obtain full certification or pass the National licensure exam 必須獲得充足的認定或者透過國家發給執照考試					
must undergo teacher training 必須經歷教師的訓練					
must join Teacher Associations such as Taiwan's English Teachers' Association [ETA] for professional development 為了專業訓練必須參加像中華民國英語文教師學會那樣的協會 [ETA]					
should attend remedial courses if their English proficiency is weak 如果他們的英語能力不足，應該參加補充的課程					
should undergo teacher training if their teaching skills are below par 如果他們的教導能力是在相同水準之下，應該經歷教師訓練					

Q10. Would you be willing to participate in teacher education and training program in the future?您願意將來參加師範教育和培養訓練計畫嗎？	Please tick one 請選一 [✓]				
	很 可 能 most likely	可能 likely	不 確 定 not sure	很 不 確 定 most likely not	不考慮 will not
TESOL's Online Education Programs [with course fee]TESOL 在線上的教育計畫 [付費課程]					
Teacher education/training program sponsored by private companies such as Caves Bookstore, Oxford Taiwan, Longman, etc. [with course fee] 私營公司(例如: 敦煌書局，朗曼公司，台灣牛津，等)發起的師範教育/ 培養訓練計畫 . [付費課程]					
Free education/training program sponsored by private companies such as Caves Bookstore, Oxford Taiwan, Longman, etc 私營公司(例如: 敦煌書局，朗曼公司，台灣牛津，等)發起的免費師範教育/ 培養訓練計畫					
Taiwan's Ministry of Education English teacher training program 台灣教育部英語老師培養訓練計畫					
Free online teacher education/training program 免費在線上的師範教育/ 培養訓練計畫					

PART 3: Classroom Practices

Q11. Your teaching goals. Please Re-evaluate each goal and tick one per row 您的教導目標。 請評估每個目標後請選一[✓]	不怎麼重要 Not so Important	重要 Important	沒意見 No Opinion	非常重要 Very Important	最重要 Most Important
Enable students to pass examination 使學生能通過考試					
Enable students to communicate orally in English 使學生能夠用英語口頭交談					
Enable the students to speak and listen to the target language 使學生能夠講並且聽懂目標語言					
Enable the students to read and write in English 使那些學生能夠用英語讀並寫					
Enable the students to speak, listen, read and					

write in English 使那些學生能夠講,聽,並用英語讀寫					
Other, please specify 其他,請確切說明 _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _					

Q12. Teaching Listening/Speaking Please tick one 教導會話。請選一 [✓]	總是 **Always**	經常是 **Often**	有時是 **Sometimes**	很少是 **Rarely**	決對不是 **Never**
I allow students to watch videos of graded difficulty 分級困難時我允許學生看影片					
Students play language games 學生玩語言遊戲					
Students sing songs in English 學生唱英語歌					
Students act out dialogues (role-play) 學生表達對話(用角色扮演)					
I use recordings (tapes) to emulate native-speaker speech 我使用錄音(帶子)來模仿講英語的外國人					
Students follow conversation patterns from textbook學生從教科書中聽從談話形式					
I provide discussion activities我提供討論活動					

Q13. Teaching Reading/Writing. Please tick one 教導讀與寫。請選一 [✓]	Always 總是	Often 經常是	Sometimes 有時是	Rarely 很少是	Never 決對不是
I use vocabulary exercises 我使用詞彙鍛鍊					
I give them writing homework 我給他們寫家庭作業					
I give them a spelling notebook for spelling practice 我給他們一個拼寫的筆記本來拼寫練習					
Students write weekly journals or diaries 學生寫周記或者日記					
Students read books and stories 學生讀書和故事書					

Q14. Class Assessment [Type and frequency] 課程評價[種類和頻率]	How do you assess students' work? 您怎樣評價學生的學習？請選一 [✓]	Daily 每天	Weekly 每周	Every month 每月	End of Semester Evaluation 學期末的評估	Other, please specify 其他，請確切說明
Reading/Writing 讀與寫	Formal assessment tests 正式的測試					
	Quizzes 小考					
	Performance assessment 評量測驗					
	Observation checklist 觀察性的檢查表					
	Student portfolios 學生成積夾					
	Assessment rubric 評量題					
	Other, please specify 其他，請確切說明					
Listening/ Speaking 聽與講	Formal assessment tests 正式的測試					
	Quizzes 小考					
	Performance assessment 評量測驗					
	Observation checklist 觀察性的檢查表					
	Student portfolios 學生成積夾					
	Assessment rubric 評量題材					

Q15. Materials. Please tick one. 教材。請選一。[✓]

_ _ _ _ _ I mainly use the textbook and supplementary materials published and provided by my school 我主要使用被我们學校出版並且提供的教科書和補充教材

_ _ _ _ _ I mainly use the textbook and supplementary materials [by other publications] provided by

my school 我主要使用教科書和補充教材 [其他出版社]由我的學校提供

_ _ _ _ _ I mainly use the textbook [published by school and/or other publications] provided by my school, but occasionally choose my own supplementary materials 我主要使用教科書 [由學校或者其他出版社出版]由我的學校提供，但是偶爾選擇我自己的補充教材

_ _ _ _ _ I use my own chosen textbook and authentic [newspapers, Internet resources, radio, etc.] supplementary materials 我使用我自己選擇的教科書和 其它[報紙, 網路來源, 收音機, 等] 教材

_ _ _ _ _ I use almost all authentic [newspapers, Internet resources, radio, etc.] materials; I hardly use a textbook 我使用其它[報紙, 網路來源, 收音機, 等] 教材, 很少使用教科書

Q16. Language in the classroom. Please tick one 課程語言請選一[✓]

_ _ _ _ _ I use English all throughout the class 我在講課期間只使用英語

_ _ _ _ _ I use mostly English during the lecture but use Mandarin/Taiwanese when giving instructions [commands]我在講課期間大多使用英語,但是在給予指示時使用漢語/台語

_ _ _ _ _ I use both English and Mandarin/Taiwanese equally 我在講課期間使用英語及漢語/台語各半

_ _ _ _ _ I use mostly/usually Mandarin/Taiwanese but occasionally English 我在講課期間大多使用漢語/台語偶爾使用英語

PART 4: Employment History 就業記錄

Q17. What is the current status of your employment? Tick [/] one only

您目前的工作狀態請選一[✓]

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ Full-time [Monthly salary] 全職 [月薪]

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ Part-time [Hourly]兼差 [時薪]

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ Other, please specify 其他，請確切說明 _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Q18. What is your employing institution? Tick [/] one only 雇用您的機構狀態？請選一[✓]

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ Family/Individually-owned school 家庭/個人擁有的學校

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ Chain or Franchised School　Optional: Name of School:加盟或者連鎖學校選擇性回答學校的名字： _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Q19. How long have you worked for this school? Tick [/] one only 您為這所學校工作多久？

請選一[✓]

_ _ _ _ Less than one year 不到一年

_ _ _ _ 1-2 Years 年

_ _ _ _ 2-3 Years 年

_ _ _ _ Other, please specify 其他，請確切說明 _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Q20. How many classes of the following do you teach? Please tick [/] all that apply.

您教導以下內容中的多少種課程？ 可複選 **[✓]**

Young learners [4-6 years old]:年幼的學習者 [4-6 歲]:_____ 1-2 節 ＿＿＿ 3 節或更多＿＿＿＿ 無

Children [7-12 years old]孩子 [7-12 歲]: _____1-2 節 _____3 節或更多　　 ＿＿＿＿無

Young adults [13-17years] 青年人 [13-17 歲] _____1-2 節＿＿＿ 3 節或更多　　 ＿＿＿＿無

Adults [18 years- above] 成年人 [18 歲以上]:____1-2 節＿＿＿ 3 節或更多　　 ＿＿＿＿無

＿＿＿＿＿ **other, please specify** 其他，請確切說明 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Q21. On average, how many students are there per class? Please tick [/] one

平均每班有多少學生？請選一**[✓]**

Young learners [4-6 years old 年幼的學習者 [4-6 歲]: _____11-20 個學生 ＿＿＿＿＿ 21-30 個學生

＿＿＿＿ 多於 31 個學生, 請確切說明 ＿＿＿＿

Children [7-12 years old] 孩子 [7-12 歲]: _____11-20 個學生 ＿＿＿＿＿ 21-30 個學生

＿＿＿＿ 多於 31 個學生, 請確切說明 ＿＿＿＿

Young adults [13-17years]青年人 [13-17 歲]: _____11-20 個學生 ＿＿＿＿＿ 21-30 個學生

 ＿＿＿＿ 多於 31 個學生, 請確切說明 ＿＿＿＿

Adults [18 years- above] 成年人 [18 歲以上]: _____11-20 個學生 ＿＿＿＿＿ 21-30 個學生

 ＿＿＿＿ 多於 31 個學生, 請確切說明＿＿＿＿

Q22. How many Taiwanese English teachers are teaching at your school now? Please tick one.

您的學校現在有幾位台灣英語老師**?** 請選一**[✓]**

__ ＿＿＿1-2 Taiwanese teachers 1-2 名台灣教師

＿＿＿＿3-5 Taiwanese teachers 3-5 名台灣教師

_____6-10 Taiwanese teachers 6-10 名台灣教師

＿＿＿＿11 or above, please specify 11 或以上，請確切說明 ＿＿＿

Q23. How many foreign teachers are teaching at your school now? Please tick one.

您的學校現在有幾位外籍英語老師? 請選一 [✓]

＿＿＿＿ 1-2 foreign teachers 1-2 名外籍老師

＿＿＿＿ 3-5 foreign teachers 3-5 外籍老師

＿＿＿＿ 6-10 foreign teachers 6-10 外籍老師

＿＿＿＿11 or above, please specify 11 或以上，請確切說明 ＿＿

Q24. Can you state at least one or two advantages that a Taiwanese English teacher brings to the classroom?您能說明至少一兩個台灣英語老師在教室的優勢嗎？

1＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

2＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Q25. Why do you think your school hires foreigners [if they do] or might want to [if they do not]? Please state at least one or two reasons. 您認為您的學校僱傭外籍英語老師 [如果他們這麼做] 或者可能想要 [他們尚未僱傭]? 請說明至少一兩個原因。

1＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

2. ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Q26. For each of the following statements please indicate its importance to you and your level of satisfaction with it. Tick [✓] the appropriate box. 對於每個下列的陳述來說，請對它的滿意度和它的重要性。 做適當的選擇。	[Please use 1 to indicate low importance or low satisfaction and 5 to indicate high importance or high satisfaction. [請使用 1 表是低的重要性或者低的滿意度和 5 表明高的重要性或者高的滿意度。請選一 [✓]									
	重要性 Importance					滿意度 Satisfaction				
	1 low 低	2	3	4	5 high 高	1 low 低	2	3	4	5 high 高
Your school administration communicates educational goals and strategies [how to achieve goals] effectively 您的學校管理有效的傳達教育目標和策略 [如何達到目標]										
Your school provide incentives for a job well done 您的學校為做得好一個工作提供獎勵										
Your school's overall benefits and compensation package is competitive within the industry 您的學校的 總福利及薪資計畫在業內具有競爭性										
Your school provides teacher training 您的學校所提供的教範訓練										

Thank you very much for completing this survey. May I contact you to follow-up on your answers to this survey?謝謝你完成這次調查。 我可以對於這次調查的後續與你聯繫嗎？

＿＿＿＿＿＿Yes 願意 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ No 不願意

If you answered "Yes" above, please provide your name and contact information.
如果你回答願意，請提供你的名字和聯繫方式。

Name 名字： ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Email 電子郵件： ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Phone 電話： ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

---END OF SURVEY---

Appendix 2: Survey Questionnaire Cover Letter

Dear Colleague,

 My name is Aiden Yeh. I am a lecturer in the Department of English at *Wenzao Ursuline College of Languages* in Taiwan. I am currently doing a PhD (University of Birmingham, England) on attitudes toward professional development of Taiwanese English teachers in supplementary schools [bu-xi-bans]. Your help is needed to get an accurate impression of the Taiwanese teachers' attitudes, classroom practices, and views on professional development.

The attached questionnaire should take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. It is written in bilingual format (English/Chinese). You can answer the questionnaire in the language you prefer. Most of the answers simply involve ticking a box; some questions require writing short answers. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may choose to not answer some questions. Anonymity and confidentiality of participants and responses will be maintained. Only the researcher will have access to the data. Consent will be assumed if the survey is completed and returned.

Please return by handing it over to the person who gave you the questionnaire or return by mail or email by *(specify date)* to the address indicated below.

 Thank you for taking the time to respond to the questionnaire. If you have any questions, concerns or comments about this survey, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

 Aiden Yeh
English Department 英文系
Wenzao Ursuline College of Languages 文藻外語學院
900 Mintsu 1st Road Kaohsiung 807, Taiwan R.O.C 高雄市三民區民族一路 900 號
Email: aidenyeh@yahoo.com

Appendix 3: Consent Letter

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

College of Arts and Law (CAL)English

Research Context:

Taiwanese Buxiban (supplementary school) teachers' attitudes, classroom practices, and views on professional development

Name of participant:

Name of student researcher: Aiden Yeh

I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written plain language statement to keep.

I understand that my participation will involve ***class observations, participation in online conferences, creating and maintaining an online blog to be used as my professional development journal*** and I agree that the researcher may use the results as described in the plain language statement.

I acknowledge that:

(a) the possible effects of participating in this project have been explained to my satisfaction;

(b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any unprocessed data I have provided;

(c) the project is for the purpose of research;

(d) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded;

(e) I have been informed that with my consent the ***class observations and online conferences will be digitally recorded and I understand that the recordings*** will be archived by the researcher;

(f) my name will be referred to by a pseudonym in any publications arising from the research;

(g) I have been informed that a copy of the research findings will be forwarded to me, should I agree to this.

<u>I consent to the class observations and online conferences being recorded</u>   □ **yes**   □ **no** (please tick)

<u>I wish to receive a copy of the summary project report on research findings</u>   □ **yes**   □ **no** (please tick)

Participant signature: Date:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Appendix 4: Invitation (Call for Experts) sent to Webheads' Online Group

6-9-2005, Message #3505

Dear Webheads,

 As some of you may know, I'm doing my post grad studies on Taiwanese teachers' professional development. I am now on the 2nd stage of my research. I have three Taiwanese EFL teachers teaching at supplementary schools (cram schools) who have agreed to take part in my research. Two have created blogs to help them reflect on their teaching and things that they want to learn. We are now about to go to the observation phase. This phase is divided into two stages, before and after the online discussion/lecture/sharing (I still don't know what to call it). Joy (one of the teachers who agreed to participate in my study) will have to document her teaching, in particular, how she teaches writing (her choice). She will then join an online discussion where my invited 'expert' will talk about/share some tips and fun activities that could motivate students.
 Joy works Mon-Sat (am) and is willing to devote Saturday evenings (anytime from 13-15 GMT – an hour to an hour and a half) for special online discussions where she could learn something invaluable and something that she could do in her own classroom.
 My dilemma is I need an expert on this topic, teaching writing to young learners. You do not have to be a teacher trainer, but you must at least know and have experienced teaching writing to young students. If you know some successful writing activities that you would like to share with Joy, then I also encourage you to join us.

 This online discussion/sharing will not only be part of my study but most importantly, part of Joy's professional development. Many Taiwanese EFL teachers in private language institutions share the same fate that Joy is experiencing: lack of teacher training support from the government and from the school that she works for. TPD for these teachers are considered to be unimportant because they are after all, what many locals consider 'just a language school teacher'. Compared to Elementary school/high school/college English teachers, they are not really recognized as 'teachers'. However, this does not mean that they are not good enough. I know some language school teachers whose English proficiency is far better that junior college teachers. I believe that with the right support and encouragement, these motivated teachers could experience the personal satisfaction of engaging in TPD. Joy has created her blog where she posts her thoughts and opinions about things that she's learned in f2f conferences. She has attended 3-4 local conferences, and in one of these conferences, she was the only language school teacher who attended- the rest where college/university teachers. She was not intimidated by this, as a matter of fact, she was very active, participated in the session, and even raised some questions. Other teachers who were present were not as active as she was.

 You may say that she's different. But what makes her different is her tenacity to learn and improve herself (like Webheads)- all this without financial remunerations or the constant prodding of an employer or teacher. I think that she's not at all different from the rest of us.

 If you are interested in sharing your knowledge and skills with Joy, and if you are willing to spend an hour (or perhaps an hour and half) discussing some fun activities on teaching writing for young EFL students, then please, join us. There is no fixed date yet, but it's going to be a Saturday, 13-15 GMT, probably Alado or Learning times.

 Many thanks in advance and I hope to hear from some of you.

 Cheers,

 Aiden Yeh

Appendix 5: Expert Invitation for Second Case Study: Cindy

Call for Experts
Via Webheads' and NNEST-EVO online group, sent on Mar 7, 2009

Dear All,

This is an open invitation to teacher trainers or teachers who have taught/are teaching EFL/ESL to adults (retirement age) to participate as guest speakers in online voice conferences about effective strategies in teaching oral/speaking skills…

…I am now conducting my second case study. The same process is involved but this time this (new) teacher is interested in teaching oral/speaking skills to her adult students. She has started a blog and you may visit it to understand more about her teaching context (http://supplementaryschool.blogspot.com/). She is aware that her blog will be shared with others and she has expressed her willingness to participate in this project as she sees it as an invaluable experience in improving her teaching skills. She is in the process of doing her first class observation, and after that, I hope to arrange for the first live voice conference. She would like to learn more about effective strategies in teaching EFL to seniors. Tips, lessons, and activities contributed in this topic are highly appreciated. Your participation in this activity, no matter voluntary, is a major factor in assuring the quality of discussions and positive outcomes that will influence the future TPD activities not only for Taiwanese EFL teachers but to other NNEST teachers as well. The first live voice conference is going to be held sometime April 2009- right after I come back from TESOL.

Thank you for reading this long post, and I look forward to hearing from you.
Cheers,
Aiden Yeh

Appendix 6: April's Response to Message Thread Regarding Working Scenario

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April's message in response to the Taiwanese EFL teachers' working scenario in buxibans discussion thread.

Dearest Aiden: Here are some answers I think you are eager to know. **1. My current working scenario---**I have been working at the cram school for a half year since I came back to Kaohsiung. (I graduated last June then I flew to vistit (sic) my friend in Boston. That means I started to work at the cram school from last August). My working environment is pretty good. My duty is to cooperate with the foreign teacher. I teach English one hour a day but I need to be in the classroom to deal with the children's problem when the foreign teacher teaches.(The foreign teacher teaches English 2 hours a day in my class) That means the children learn English 3 hours a day. I think I am very lucky because the foreigner who I cooperated is from "Hess". He has been trained to teach English for a period of time in Taipei. I don't need to worry about his preparation or teaching methods before the class.I learned a lot of things(e.g games , phonics, teaching story....) from him. Although I abandned this job in favor of another, I still contact with him.... **2. The teaching skill I know**---Depending on different children and English level, there are some skills can be used! For example, TPR, games, activities, roll play......but I think the most important thing is to understand each kids personalities and characteristic to develope and apply the skill what we know from the books or experience. **3. The skill I want to learn and improve**-- Because I always teach 7-9 years old students, I don't know how to teach higher grade students.**4. The poll**--- I took the poll already!! **5.What I want to learn--**I would like to learn both to improve my own language skills and to learn how to teach these to my students!!   Thank you !!

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