



Perceptions and The Implementation of Continuing Professional Development Through Publication Among English Teachers

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Article Info

Article History:

Accepted 20 November 2017

Approved 15 January 2018

Published 15 March 2018

Keywords:

Perceptions;
Continuing Professional Development (CPD);
Implementation of CPD Scheme

Abstract

This article is part of bigger study aiming to investigate Junior High School English teachers' perceptions of continuing professional development (CPD) and its scheme implementation through self-development, publication and innovation. This article highlights the implementation of CPD through publication. The study employed qualitative method The data was first obtained from the questionnaire distributed to 13 English teachers. The result of the data was presented in simple percentage. Later, to get deeper understanding 7 English teachers were selected conveniently out of the 13 teachers to be interviewed. Data analysis of CPD implementation of the teachers is used as the evidence of the practice. The findings showed that English teachers in this study had positive perceptions towards CPD scheme implementation through publication. In practice, however, only few teachers wrote or published their works. This condition was caused by the limited time of the teachers to write, the lack of training on writing and other responsibilities besides teaching they had to bear. To help teachers publish their works, assistant in the form of training by experts is needed. Teachers' active participation in teachers' forums helping them to write should also be encouraged.

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p-ISSN 2087-0108

e-ISSN 2502-4566

INTRODUCTION

English teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) is one of the keys to the success of English as a foreign language (EFL) learning in Indonesia. It is generally believed that the improvement of English teachers' quality will be followed by the improvement of students' learning. Broko and Putnam cited by Villegas-Reimers, (2003) argued that CPD played an important role in changing teachers' teaching methods, and that these changes has positive impact on students' learning. They also argued that experienced teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and pedagogical content beliefs can be affected by professional-development program and that such changes are associated with changes in their classroom instruction and student achievement. The main goal of CPD is therefore not only to improve teachers' quality but also mainly to improve students' learning.

In Indonesian context, CPD has been the focus of teachers' quality improvement. A nation-wide program namely teachers certification had been started and various attempts are being developed to refine the program. Conducted under the umbrella of Law No. 14/2005 on Teachers and Lecturers (known as Teacher Law), the certification program is believed to be the suitable way to improve teachers' quality.

Teacher certification program that is still being developed during its implementation is somehow able to frame new movement of teachers CPD in Indonesia. The awareness of Indonesian teachers of the importance of CPD is also improving. Teachers now have to conduct several steps prior to receiving certification. Based on the regulation of the Minister of education No. 29/2016, teachers have to participate actively in PLPG. First, they have to be registered in the data base, fulfilling all the administrative requirements and having minimum teacher competency exam score of 55. Second, they have to conduct pre-conditioning activity for three months. In this phase the teachers independently learn the materials of the

PLPG. Next, they have to make a report of their progress. In the next phase, they have to join in the trainings, teaching practice, and final examination. When they passed the exam they have to go on taking teacher competency examination. If failed, they can retake the test. If passed they receive teacher certificate.

Teacher certification should not be considered the final step of teacher professional development. After gaining the certificate, teachers should not stop continuing their professional development. Teachers should consider CPD as any activities that help them develop. Day (1999) explained that CPD consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which constitute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. This definition implies that CPD involves learning activities which were planned and aimed to help those related to the teachers can take advantage from such activities.

CPD should also be considered as a long-term process of development. Teachers have to keep planning, conducting and evaluating their developmental processes. Villegas-Reimers (2003) stated that only in the past few years has the professional development of teachers been considered a long-term process that includes regular opportunities and experiences planned systematically to promote growth and development in the profession. This shift has been so dramatic that many have referred to it as a 'new image' of teacher learning, a 'new model' of teacher education, a 'revolution' in education, and even a 'new paradigm' of CPD (Walling and Lewis, 2000).

CPD can be conducted in many forms. It can seen generally as any attempt to increase teachers' professional knowledge both during and after the initial preparatory stages (Johnson & Golombek, 2011). It can be done in the form of face-to-face training or even remote training via online courses such as using *Coursera online courses* as a platform for English teachers' professional development (Silvia, 2015). CPD should entail skills development, continuous

learning, keeping up to date, learning for interest, and professional revitalization (Alibakhsi and Dehviri, 2015). It should be seen as a learning activity, a challenge to think creatively and critically as a learner and as a teacher, and learning with and from their colleagues (Al-Asmari, 2016). There are at least fifty activities of CPD could be done by teachers (Wong, 2011).

Study by Bailey, Curtis, and Nunan (1998) showed that CPD could be done independently. CPD did not have to be done institutionally or based on government regulation. They focused on what they called self-directed professional development. This form of CPD stressed on reflective practice in which teachers observed their own teaching and learning activities and reflect those activities. In line with the idea Harley (1989) argued that the most effective form of professional development for teachers was that which involved them actively over an extended period of time in examining issues central to their teaching in the context of their own classroom.

The main reasons of CPD should be aimed at improving teachers' quality and students' learning. It involves not only teachers but also the schools, authorities, parents and students. A study by Langer (200) showed that professional excellence involved collaborative efforts of some parties, teachers' active participation in professional communities, well structured plans for activities and embracing of lifelong learning.

In line with the above study, it is true that CPD should involve not only teachers but also related parties. Karimi (2011) suggested educational policy makers should consider launching quality professional development programs aimed specifically at raising teachers' operational knowledge and content standards which in turn boosts the teachers' efficacy. It is believed that by having such higher efficacy scores teachers had more confident to face challenges in teaching and implement their teaching strategies they believed. Al-Bidawi (2015) also suggested a sound design of CPD to

help teachers that once become the transmitter of knowledge to makers of knowledge.

Teachers' active involvement in CPD is also the key to the success of their attempt to pursue to the quality improvement. Without it, any CPD programs launched by the government will not be successful. Lee (2011) stated that teachers' active involvement was increasingly recognized as a crucial component of their CPD. Further she explained that in many EFL contexts CPD is still largely built on the premise of knowledge transmission and knowledge consumption.

Besides the above common assumption of CPD, challenges in conducting CPD also include school management problems, limited learning facilities and discouraging traditions of self improvement (Simegn, 2014). Those challenges oftentimes hinder teachers' implementation of CPD activities.

In Indonesian context, in-service teachers, including English teachers, that have gained teacher certificate may continue their professional development as the scheme is already available. The regulation of Ministry of Empowerment of State Apparatus and Beaurocracy Reform No 16, 2009, stated that teachers can conduct CPD through self-development activities, publication, and innovation.

It is imperative for the teachers to have those four competencies. Teachers should be able to put in practice those four competencies. Not only having good content knowledge, professional teachers nowadays, for example, should also be able to integrate character values in their teaching documents such as lesson plan (Linggar Bharati, 2011).

According to the regulation the activities of self-development include participating in in-service training, workshop, seminars, discussions or any other collaborative activities with other teachers. Publication requires teachers to write and publish their work. It can be in the form of becoming presenter in seminars or workshops. It can also be in the form of writing and publishing books, journals, textbooks, modules, etc. While, innovation

demands the teachers to make or develop technologies used in teaching and learning, creating arts, making/developing teaching media etc.

This article focuses on investigating publication activities as one of the ways of CPD of English teachers. It is commonly believed that through writing teachers can gain teachers' knowledge and skills. Publication is often commonly referred to academic publication in the form of academic journals or research report. A study conducted by Miranti and Mujiyanto (2016) explaining sociocultural relations among participants in articles on teacher as researcher and teacher as educator revealed different sociocultural background resulted in the opposing ideologies. In this paper, however, the perceptions will be taken directly from the teachers' opinion. This paper investigates how the teachers perceive publication as one of the recommended CPD activities and whether they conduct such activity.

METHODS

This study employed qualitative method. Qualitative data was taken in the field where participants experience the issue under study (Creswell, 2013).

This article aims to explain teachers' perceptions and implementation of CPD through publication. To achieve the objective, the researcher used questionnaire and interview as the instrument of the study. According to Brown cited in Dornyei (2010) questionnaires are any written instruments that presents respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answer or selecting from existing answers.

Through the questionnaire, the respondents were required to respond to a simple closed ended yes-no option. It asked them whether they publish their works. After that the respondents had to answer an open-ended question requiring them to provide opinion related to publication. Later, the interview questions related to publications were

used to get deeper information. Document analysis is also employed to support the data. The documents are the evidence of teachers' implementation of the publication activity.

There were 13 teachers involved in this study. They all responded to the questionnaire. Semi-structured interview was later conducted. Edwards and Holland (2013) explained in a typical semi-structured interview the researcher has a list of questions or series of topics they want to cover in the interview, in interview guide, but there is flexibility in how and when the questions are put and how the interviewee can respond.

The interview involved 7 teachers selected conveniently. They were English teachers from the schools within the same sub-district in Ungaran. The respondents were labeled R#, the short form of Respondent's number.

Data from the questionnaire was reported in the form of simple percentage. It was followed by respondents' responses to the open-ended questions. Meanwhile, the interview was audio-taped and transcribed in the form of writing. The data was later interpreted by the researcher.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Closed-ended question was first given to the respondents of this study. They had to respond to the question whether they wrote for publication or not. The data showed that most respondents (76.9%) did not write for publication as an attempt to develop their professionalism. Only 23.1% of the respondents stated that they wrote and published their work.

Despite their negative responds to the above question, the data from the open-ended question from the questionnaire showed that the teachers in this study basically perceived publication as helpful for their professional development. They were aware the importance of writing and publication to help them improve their knowledge and skills. Writing and publication also helped them see their own strength and weaknesses. The following was the answer of one of the respondents:

- R#7 : CPD activities help teachers to develop themselves, to write their ideas and to develop writing skills.
- R#10 : Helping to see his/her own abilities. Sharing to other teachers. Developing teachers' performance.
- R#12 : Teacher will get motivated through CPD activities by publishing writing.

To prove whether the respondents conduct publication as one of the CPD scheme implementation, the researcher interviewed them. The respondents were again asked whether they wrote and published their works.

The data from the interview showed that most of the respondents did not write for publication. They did not even write for any of their classroom action research report. They stated that they started to write the proposal but failed to display their works when required by the researcher of this study. Being busy with other duties as a teacher or as a housewife, feeling too old to write and lack of trainings were among the reasons why they did not write.

The following were their answers:

- R#4 : No, Sir. Not yet. I have not got the chance, too. I have not participated in activities about it, too. Yes. Online training is only about the proposal. So I have not made Classroom Action Research completely. I have so many things to do, Sir. Taking care of my children. Taking care of my family, too. (laughter)
- R#5 : Yes. A proposal. I have. I used to teach in a Vocational School. The students were different from the ones in high schools. Then I chose a very easy title about how to describe, sorry, someone using pictures. It is because you know Vocational students are different. Yes. I actually want to continue until finish.
- R#11 : That is I once participated. I once participated. Where was it? In Satya Wacana I think. But then it was not continued. Well, I am too old, Sir. The one like me for writing, it is too difficult. Perhaps it is for young teachers.
- R#13 : Yes. Basically it is good for active and creative teachers. For me

personally I have started to write but I stopped in data collection. Err.. I participated in the program, I did... even I did not need to pay I could freely access the program. They supplied us with snack and everything. It was different from the paid ones and the other. So, so, I was happy with that. It is bad there is no outcome. Well, it depends on our own will. Yes. When it collides with the teaching time... Those who focus on the writing will get problem with their classes..

One of the respondents (R#1) stated that she started to write together with her teacher colleagues. They formed a teacher forum as a place to share and discuss their works. Although she herself had not published her work, she stated that some of her friends did. The following was her answer:

- R#1 : Yes. Because err..Publication .. now... I just participated in Tenganan. It's called Forum Guru Serasi. It is a group of teachers. ,a forum, Sir. It helps teachers to write Classroom Action Research. It is expected that they can make a classroom Action Research and then disseminate it. Last Friday there was one that was disseminated, later on... Friday, next Friday the second dissemination. There will be three slots. So, then this Forum Guru Serasi will make their own journal. It is expected that those who have disseminated their publication will be able to publish the CAR report easily. So far, we find it difficult to publish our work.

After interviewing most of the respondents, the researcher found only one respondent (R#2) that successfully published her work. Although she did not publish academic articles in academic journals, she successfully wrote articles related to education. Her works were published by a local newspaper. Besides that, she was actively involved as an editor in educational magazine issued by local Board of Education. She also wrote some articles related to education in the magazine. The following was her explanation:

R#2 : He ehm.. Before I took my master degree program, I wrote in Suara Merdeka two times, If I'm not mistaken. Two or three times. And then in Bulletin Pustaka...Yes perhaps that. Then the one I wrote for Bulletin Pustaka in Ungaran,if I am not mistaken.. once. Then I become the board of editor in Mahardika magazine in Semarang Regency... Board of Education..The Board of Education of Semarang Regency has Mahardika magazine that was issued thirteen times then. Because the editor members are quite busy, now only six issues a month. There was a time when they only issued once a year. Somehow, we have made seventh edition. As an editor I wrote the main report, of course. It is on the last page.. the one with my name.. it around two or three. I am not always in every edition. But the main report I always write it.

The above data revealed that most teachers did not really write for publication. Some attempts, however, had been made. The formation of new teacher forum to help them write is one of the evidence although they have not produced any works yet. It somehow showed that opportunity for the teachers to write and publish their works is widely open.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion that can be drawn from the study is that despite positive opinions about the positive effect of writing towards the development of the teachers, the activity of writing for publication was not conducted by the teachers. The lack of time among their duties in teaching becomes the main reason why they do not write or publish their works. Another reason is the lack of trainings related to writing and publication. This study, therefore, suggests that the teachers plan their activities including writing so that they have time to do it. They should also take the benefit of the existing teacher forums to help them write and publish their work. The government should also provide

trainings and education programs that suit the teachers' need concerning writing and publication.

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