

**ADEQUACY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE
TEACHER EDUCATORS IN PRIMARY TEACHERS' COLLEGES- A PARADIGM
SHIFT IN KENYA**

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ABSTRACT: *This study was an investigation of the professional development of English language teacher educators in Kenya Primary Teachers Colleges. The purpose and objectives of this study were to investigate the paradigm shift in nature, strategies and adequacy of professional development of language teacher educators and its implication on the teacher education for primary schools teachers in Kenya. This study was guided by Vygostky's ZPD and Constructivism theories. Relevant to this theory is a Conceptual framework of professional development of English language teacher educators and its implication on teacher education programme. Research design guiding this study was mixed method within the philosophical paradigm of post-positivism and constructivists' world views. The target population consists of the teacher educators and the teacher trainees. The study used questionnaires, interview schedules and observations worksheets to collect data which was later organized, analyzed using SPSS program and presented using tables, graphs and charts. The findings of this study established that there is no appropriate professional development of teacher educators of English language in Kenya's primary teachers college. The nature of existing professional development does not bridge the gap between theory and practice and it resides within the old paradigm. There is also very limited holistic approach to professional development. The present practice has a negative implication on teacher education in Kenya. This study recommends effective professional development of teacher educators of English language among others. This revelation will help to improve the quality of English language teacher education in Kenya and other developing countries.*

KEY WORDS – *Teacher Education, English Language Teachers, Professional Development, Teacher Trainers/Trainees.*

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

In today's world English has the largest number of speakers though not as the native speakers. Harmer (2001) asserted that it is the world largest *lingua franca*. Richard and Burns (2000) underscored the position of English language as the most widely used language in global economy and it provides a basis for international socio- economic development.

In Kenya, English is an official language and more important is its position in linking Kenya to the rest of the world. Being a very important language of socio- economic development, several efforts have been put in place since independence to ensure that proficiency and communicative competence of the citizens in it is realized. Though several changes have been taking place in an attempt to enhance English language teaching and learning, the situation is still a tremendous professional challenge and in fact to many people it is a daunting one.

The government of Kenya recognizes that quality teachers are key in the provision of quality education (Session Paper No 6, 1988). To have quality teachers in the field of second language teaching, quality training is indispensable. By extension, it is important to note that quality teacher educators are developed within the new paradigm shift of professional development as observed by Goderya (2010) that professional development of individuals within the modern paradigm shifts in all walks of life be it engineering, nursing, administration or teaching is acknowledged to promote growth and renewal and that for growth and renewal to be sustainable professional development has to be continuous and career life long process.

Recently several scholars in language teaching have questioned the effectiveness of traditional approaches to language teacher education in terms of the production of a reflective teacher within the framework of long term teacher development. Moreover it has been widely believed that teachers teach as they were taught (Kyung-Suk, 2012) and therefore to have teacher education within the new paradigm shift, English language teacher educators must be constantly developing themselves professionally within the new professional development paradigm. Freeman and Johnson (1998) pointed out that the traditional teacher education has changed paradigm though some teacher educators for some reasons regresses back to the traditional approaches.

Within this backgrounds it is important to note that to have an effective paradigm shift in second language education which is expected to have the following eight changes; based on a focus on learner autonomy, cooperative learning, circular integration, focus on meaning, diversity thinking skills, alternative assessment and finally teachers as co- learners, language teacher educators must be within constant professional development under the new paradigm shift.

The paradigm shift today in teacher education has also moved from training to development view, from delivery mechanism to learning process, from skill/ technique knowledge based to attitude awareness- based towards personal development, from competency based to holistic, from product/ certificate based to process weight, from means of getting a job / promotion to earns of remaining and getting job satisfaction from short term to long term, one off to ongoing from compulsory to voluntary, from top- down approach to change to bottom up approach to change, external agenda to internal agenda, from mostly being done by experts to being done by self/ peers, from trainers- centered syllabus to trainee centered syllabus, from the role of a teacher being passive in building theory and bring recipient of change to teachers active role in theory building/ subject of change.

Professional development of language teacher educators will follow almost similar pattern of language teacher education. The major emphasis will be on decentralization instead of centralization of seminars. Bottom-up processing of data instead of positioning it on up-bottom process. Reflective teaching / training, writing journals, staffroom or departmental discussion, individual action research voluntary training, active personal theory building online networking with other language teacher organizations, team teaching and encouragement of peer teaching.

Globally education systems are under great pressure to redefine their methodologies within the modern paradigm shift. For any improvement to be prominently realized in any sector as far as production is concerned, professional development plays a central part.

In Kenya context, realizing the objectives of teaching English in primary schools has become a dilemma and a concern to everybody. In this case, teachers have often been blamed for poor performance though little attention has been paid to teacher education program. Bosire (1996) in his researched indicated English language teaching is becoming one of the most challenging professionals in our society where knowledge is expanding rapidly. With the enormous expositions in language teaching worldwide, there has been an increased demand for effective teacher education programs and efficient professional development of language teacher educators.

Abenga (2005) also noted with a lot of concern the improvement of language teacher education particularly in the adoption of the new information technology in their programs. The government is also aware of the problems in the poor performance of English Language in primary schools and there have been a lot of strategies and in-service programs that have been put in place with a lot of hope to yield positive results but all seems to be far from reality.

If teachers teach the way they were taught then the present daunting situation in Kenya points a finger on teacher educators. Kyung-Suk further observed that it is surprising that teachers who absorbed teacher centered concept of teacher training tend to fall back on the traditional mode of education.

There is a lot of evidence that shows that paradigm shift in professional development of teacher educators leads to substantial success of a paradigm shift in the understanding and implementation of second language teacher education and eventually in the modern approaches of English language teaching. The question is does the language teacher educators situate their professional development programs within the current paradigm shift?

Statement of the Problem

Scientifically for any research to provide effective solutions to the intended problem, establishment of the root cause of the problem is vital. This study speculated strongly on the effectiveness of professional development of the teacher educators of English Language in primary teachers colleges in Kenya.

Professional development of the teacher educators directly affects the quality of the teacher trainees in short run and the pupils' performance in the long run. Based on this argument, pupils'

poor performance in primary school examinations in Kenya may be a function of the poor language teacher education by extension. Kyung-Suk (2012) observed that “It has been widely observed that teachers teach as they were taught” (p.1). Perhaps the Kenya's case of poor performance is perpetuated by teachers who were prepared through approaches embedded in the old paradigm of positivism a situation which urgently needs afresh consideration.

Table 1: Report on K C P E Results Analysis for the Year 2007-2011

Year	KCPE English mean score
2007	47.02
2008	41.58
2009	39.08
2010	45.91
2011	42.07

Source: Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) KCPE-Report on results analysis for the years, 2007,2008,2009,2010 and2011.

In the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) for year 2011, English Language was a subject with the highest decline in performance .On 25th July 2011, the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) report analysis shows that students performance in English revealed a consistent decline in performance year after .The same report analysis also indicted teachers on poor performance.

In view of the foregoing, this study investigated the adequacy of professional development of English language teacher educators of Kenya's primary school teachers of English language.

Objectives of the Study

The study specifically determined the adequacy of professional development of English Language teacher educators in primary teachers' college in Kenya.

Significance of the Study

This study is important because the quality of education in Kenya and particularly the teacher preparation need improvement in order for it to meet the expectations within the country's Vision 2030. A quality teacher which is of great concern to all educational stakeholders comes from quality teacher educators. This study will find prominence among those who are interested in improving primary teacher education programme in Kenya and beyond.

Scope of the Study

This study covered issues of professional development of teacher educators of English Language in primary teacher training colleges in Kenya. It assessed the programmes available for the development of teacher trainers of English in PTTCs in Kenya.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

What influences the ways teachers see the world and shape their pedagogical practices is their philosophical worldview and relevant theories. The greatest challenge today in the field of

language teaching is to link theory and practice and to link research and the current practices. Vygotsky's (1985) framework was used in the study with the following elements:

Zone of Proximal Development - The zone of proximal Development (ZPD) has been defined by Vygotsky as the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

The full development during Zone of Proximal Development depends upon full social interaction and the more the child takes advantage of adults assistance, the broader is the ZPD. The term scaffolding was invented to describe the tutorial interaction between an adult and a child.

The process of teacher education is to help the teacher to situate activities and tasks within children's ZPD. This needs professional development because if activities are too easy, children are likely to become bored demotivated and possibly disruptive. If activities are too difficult, children are likely to become anxious, and also possibly demotivated and disruptive.

The link between Vygotsky's ZPD and teacher training rest on what the teacher educators can provide or facilitate in the training and what the teacher trainees can do on their own. If appropriate facilitation fails to take place, the teacher trainee will eventually fall back and most probably teach as they were taught in high school or primary school unconsciously and automatically as put by Holly (1989).

The Link between Vygotsky's Theory of ZPD and Constructivism

Based on the work carried out by Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1990), social interactions sees the individual as born into a social world and thus learning occurs through social interactions with other people. Constructivism puts an emphasis on the ways in which individuals bring personal meaning to their world. Early researchers such as Piaget focused on the individual construction of knowledge. Bruner on the other hand placed a greater emphasis on the interaction of the learner with curriculum materials, the teacher, and other significant factors.

The link between Vygotsky's theory of ZPD and constructivist theory rest on the fact that it is possible to determine within individual constructivism what the teacher trainees or learners can do on their own and determine within social constructivism what the students/learners can do with the facilitation or scaffolding by the teacher educators or teachers.

Paradigm shift in professional development of language teacher educators

It has been widely believed by many researchers that teachers teach as they were taught. Most teachers have had many years of being taught as students and have absorbed teacher-centered concepts of education. Therefore, it is not surprising that they tend to fall back on the traditional model of education (Kyung-Suk, 2012). How, then can this situation be changed? There is no simple panacea. However, there have been a number of changes in foreign language teacher education that are likely to lead toward the improvement of teaching in the long term. This study has found out that while there is a considerable body of literature on language teaching methodology, there is a relatively small literature on language teacher education particularly on professional development of language teacher educators.

The scanty literature shows that the complexity of roles and tasks of teachers has increased rapidly over the last few decades. This is particularly true of foreign language teachers in our context. There is also an indication that little research on professional development of English language teacher educators within the new paradigm perspective has been done in developing countries. Asian countries like China and Japan registers considerable development in this area of studies as compared to African countries.

Several scholars in the field of language education and applied linguistics have strongly question the traditional approach to language teacher education particularly in terms of the long-term teacher development.

The new paradigm has emerged with a great deal of emphasis on long-term teacher development. The present study aims to articulate a theoretical framework for the field of foreign language teacher education. This study has also look at new perspectives on language teacher observation and supervision within the paradigm shift of approaches to teacher education in teacher training colleges in Kenya. The study further provides some implications for foreign language teacher education curriculum and syllabuses in our educational context. The nature of paradigm shift in the professional development of English Language teacher educators can be summarized in Table 2. The aim of this study in this context was to reflect which of the practices may be operating in Kenya's context.

Table 2: Paradigm shift views in professional development of teacher educators

<u>Old Paradigm Practices</u>	<u>New Paradigm Practices</u>
Training-centered traditional view	Development-centered current view
Based on delivery mechanism	A learning process
Skill/technique ,knowledge-based	Based on attitude awareness, geared towards personal growth/ development
Competency- based	Holistic
Product certificate weighted	Process weighted
Means one can get a job / promotion	Means one can stay interested in one's job
Short term in nature	Long term in nature
One-off/ Crisis management oriented	Ongoing continual
Compulsory	Voluntary
Top-down approach to change	Bottom -up approach to change
External agenda	It is an internal agenda
Mostly done with experts	Can be done with self/peers
Trainer-centered syllabus	Trainee-centered syllabus
Teacher educator has a passive role in theory-building. recipients of change	Teacher educator's active role in theory-building. subjects of change

Adopted from Kyung-Suk: New Perspective on Foreign Language Teacher Education

In Professional Development for Language Teacher Educators it is important to note that Training, Education and Development are confused as synonymous but in true sense there is a clear difference between them as noted here by Widdowsons (1983p.16):

' ... that the difference between training and education (at least as far as language teaching is concerned) is ... that training seeks to impose a conformity to certain established patterns of knowledge and behavior, usually in order to carry out a set of clearly defined tasks ... Education, however, seeks to provide for creativity whereby what is learned is a set of schemata and procedures for adapting them to cope with problems which do not have a ready-made, formulaic solution while on the other hand, development means growing of an individual in all respects''.

It is on the basis of this distinction that this study investigated if the distinction exists in practice in Kenya's context and on how it influences on teacher preparation. In many organizations arrangements are put in place for the development of its executives or potential executives. Such programs are designed to improve competence and performance of the workers. Language Teacher Educator development is a vital aspect of language education (LTE) because of teacher educators' central role in defining and disseminating ideas about pedagogy (Burns & Richard, 2009).

What does it take to become a language teacher educator (LTed)? The requirement for one to become language teacher educator varies from one country to another, however in most of the developing countries there are more similarities than differences.

Burns and Richards (2009) further observes very keenly that, forty years ago, becoming a language teacher educator (LTed) commonly came about in recognition of classroom teaching expertise. Good teachers thus progressed to become teacher educators as models of good practice. In many public education systems, this typically resulted in transfer to the tertiary sector to a training institution and a concomitant.

Change in status and role for the person involved from teacher to "lecturer" or (or similar). Becoming a teacher educator did not at this juncture require any specific formal preparation for the role.

Russell and Korthagen (1995) have observed that in more recent years, however, the idea has grown that teacher educators' work is sufficiently different from teachers to require some form of professional development formal and/or informal to enable them to perform their roles effectively and also to continue learning. This is a great assumption that needs a lot of reconsideration. This study has proven through a wider literature reviewed and real study that teacher educators like any other professional requires continuous professional development within the new paradigm. Teacher educators can also, in less formal undertakes their own development. This good observation is hoped to be made a reality by this study which also investigated Lecturers' own initiatives towards self professional development.

Table 2.2: Contrasts between positivism and post-positivism in teacher education

Positivism	Post-Positivism
Emphasis on parts and decontextualization	Emphasis on whole and contextualization
Emphasis on separation	Emphasis on integration
Emphasis on the general	Emphasis on the specific
Consideration only of objective and the quantifiable	Consideration also of subjective and the non-quantifiable
Reliance on experts and outsider knowledge--researcher as external	Consideration also of the "average" participant and insider knowledge--researcher as internal
Focus on control	Focus on understanding
Top-down	Bottom-up
Attempt to standardize	Appreciation of diversity
Focus on the product	Focus on the process as well

Adopted from Jacob and Farre: Paradigm Shift: Understanding and Implementing Change in Second Language Education

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount (Kothari, 2004). This research used closed ended questionnaires which were administered to the respondents accordingly. Qualitative approach was used to provide a more holistic impression and a narrative description of a phenomenon obtained through observation and interviews. This was in line with what Creswell (2008) said that it is within the philosophical assumption, that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches by mixing both approaches in a study is more than simply collecting and analyzing both kinds of data for it also involves the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research.

Philosophical paradigm shift

This study was guided by both post- positivist and social constructivist world views. The post-positivist paradigm rests on the assumption that hold deterministic philosophy in which cause probably determines effects or outcomes. This study aim at determining if the English poor performance in Kenya's primary schools is caused by poor teaching approaches which by extension may be as a result of inadequate preparation of teachers in teacher training colleges.

Study area

The area of study covered the Western parts of Kenya, mainly focusing on public primary teacher training colleges in Nyanza, Rift Valley and Western zones. The colleges which were

targeted include Mosoriot, Kericho, Kaimosi, Eregi, Bondo, Asumbi, Migori Baringo, Tambach and Narok TTCs.

This zone is selected on the premise that it covers a large area almost three quarters of the entire country and has the highest number of public PTTCs in Kenya. On this account Western region compared to other region offered a bigger sample space for this study.

Study Population

The total numbers of the student teacher trainees who were targeted were 8,800 and the total number of the English language teacher educators were eighty (80). The total number of Heads of Subject targeted was ten (10).

Sample and Sampling Procedures

This research sampled the colleges and subjects for this study based on this information from (Kabiru and Njenga, 2009) that a good study constitutes:

- a) Representative of whole target population
- b) Large enough to allow generalization. Often this should be 30% percent at minimum, and is better when it is 50% percent of the total population
- c) Selected without any bias. Every member of population should have equal chances of being selected in the sample.

This study therefore took 60% of the public teacher training colleges in the Western Region. Which was six out of ten. One college out of the six sampled colleges was used for piloting purposes. Purposive sampling which is a non-probability sampling technique was used to select the western region of Kenya and the second year teacher trainees.

The researcher used cluster and simple random sampling in this case because he wanted to make sure that all the TTCs in the three Zones Rift Valley, Nyanza and Western Zones are represented. This technique is always preferable in a widespread geographical area as it was stressed by (Mathotra *et al* 2006).

Convenience sampling also known as (opportunity) sampling was used to select the teacher educators and Heads of subjects who by nature were deemed to have technical information and tradition of second language teacher education programme in TTCs due to their experience.

This study selected six (6) Heads of English Subjects, thirty three (33) English Language Teacher Educators, and 840 students.

Research Instruments

The research tools used were questionnaires, interview schedules and observation worksheet. These instruments were used to enhance the validity and reliability through triangulation of information collected.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher administered questionnaires to student teacher trainees and the English language teacher educators. He also had face to face interview with the heads of English subjects. The researcher also observed the training resources and recorded the information accordingly.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

These instruments were presented to experts selected from the university who are specialist in educational technology and conversant with English language education. These experts were requested to assess the relevance of the content in the questionnaire independently and their comments were incorporated to improve the validity of the instruments.

To test the reliability of the questionnaires a coefficient of alpha, test- retest statistical techniques was employed. A correlation coefficient of 0.6 was yielded and was considered high enough at the 0.5 level to judge the instrument reliability.

Data analysis procedures

The raw data converted into information and from information to facts and from facts to knowledge expressed together with some statistical degree of confidence.

Once organization was ready, data analysis which refers to examining carefully the organized knowledge and making deductions and inferences about the phenomena was done with the help of SPSS program. Qualitative analysis and Descriptive Statistics were used in the analysis of the data. The last step in this section was data presentation. This was done using descriptive statistics and descriptive survey. Presentations were done using tables, graphs and pie-chart and in some case a combination of both.

RESULTS

The importance of the development of an individual sense of plausibility needs to be balanced against the adequacy in practice. Teacher educators' professional development programs need to introduce teacher trainees with a range of training education and development tools and processes that will enhance their engagement and commitment in their profession.

The study results showed that the professional development of the teacher educators of English language is seriously inadequate. This can be seen from what the lecturers reported that student teacher during their Teaching Practice still centers most of their teaching on their side (teacher centered). The results also showed that the student teachers seem not trust their trainers as good role models to emulate. Inadequacy is also featured in syllabus coverage. Teacher educators covered only training areas i.e. methodology and neglect on the content areas. The teacher educators also feels that teacher preparation is challenging and therefore appropriate in-service training based on needs assessment strategy is very necessary.

The inadequacy can also be seen clearly in the support areas during teaching practice. The only sufficient support given to student teachers is before teaching practice but the support diminishes during and after teaching practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The teacher educators of English language in primary teachers colleges should shift from old paradigm of teacher training practices to teacher education and development programme. The

government in this respect should enforce a policy that require teacher educators of English language to use modern professional development strategies such as reflective thinking skills, Action research, mentoring, scaffolding, writing and reading journals among others to effectively enhance their lifelong professional development.

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