

Stages of Teacher's Professionalism: How Are English Language Teachers Engaged?

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Abstract—Teaching as a legitimate profession where teachers could practise their teaching and decide on their professionalism has been under debate over the last two decades. This study reflectively discusses the changing of building and developing teacher's professionalism in Saudi Arabia. It draws on my teaching journey as an English language teacher and the established theoretical framework. In order to gain in depth understanding of this issue, the study utilized small scale study to investigate teacher professionalism issues that disempower Saudi teachers from being legitimate in their profession to bring clear illustration about teachers' beliefs and practices of their professionalism. Three Saudi teachers reported that top down policy decisions regarding their professionalism, their supervisors as well as head teachers practices and cultures of teachers' education impacted negatively on their professionalism. They discussed in depth how the context of their teaching impacted on their professionalism. Specifically, the study aimed to explore whether teachers are able to practise their identity and agency as legitimate in their professionalism. Interviews were used to collect data then were transcribed, coded and thematically analyzed. One of its findings is teachers' visualizing their professionalism and they recognize themselves as legitimate teachers. The other findings were discussed and recommendations developed to help Saudi English Language teachers and Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia, as well as researchers in the future.

Index Terms—professionalism, teacher's agency, teacher's identity

I. INTRODUCTION

Professionalism in teaching English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia has been affected by the wide-ranging reforms in education such as curriculum, instruction, and assessments with the intention of achieving better education for Saudi learners to match the challenging educational demands of life and work in the 21st century. These contexts of rapid change are forcing many teachers to work hard in order to respond to such changes effectively and call for new styles of teaching which can be introduced to teachers through continuous professional programmes. Suffice it to say that for the purpose of this study, professionalism can be conceptualised as a mechanism or a strategy for empowering teachers' professional knowledge and pedagogy (Day & Sachs, 2004). Having defined the concept of professionalism, this needs careful preparation and decision making by authorities which are responsible for teacher education, where it can lead to either meeting teachers' needs or frustrating them through top down policies that do not match their wants (Dillon, 2010). The question that arises from this is what teacher preparation programmes are needed to prepare teachers who are ready to teach well in the 21st century classroom. This means that teachers are required to be qualified to have high-level of knowledge in education which in turn advances their own professional knowledge and could also lead to the development of their teaching as a profession. However, many teachers work without job security or benefits. Moreover, they view their situation of becoming teachers as accidental or because it is the shortest way to find a job (Alshahrani, 2010). Moreover, the discourse of professionalism is not obvious in the teachers' discursive culture where many of them drew on alternative identities (Thomas, 2005). This alternative identity where teachers view themselves as illegitimate teachers because of the aforementioned problems which make the profession difficult and live constrained by the imposed learning standards, prescribed theories and the top-down courses of training. All these pressures and pervasive authority from the position of head teachers and subjects 'supervisors are leading the disempowered teachers to re-construct their professionalism, to make judgments about training courses and affect their beliefs about professional learning. These tendencies can be affected by many factors such as personal, educational and political discourses which shape the status of being a professional teacher.

Through the literature reviewed, it is clear that a plethora of research is needed to investigate teacher's professionalism from the perspective of teachers themselves. Therefore, and in light of this situation, the current study can be seen as a reflective enquiry which investigated two closely related issues. The first issue is the role of teachers, as I am one of them, in their professional development programmes offered by the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia, while the second as a small scale study which looked to examine the sense of professional identity and teachers' beliefs about their professionalism. Finally, the study reflected on how this inquiry enhanced my awareness of teachers' role in the professional development programmes and the teachers' sense of professional identity, which should lead me to a better understanding of myself as a professional English language teacher and educator.

II. MY REFLECTION ON TEACHER'S PROFESSIONALISM

A. Teachers' Role in the Professional Development Programmes

Teacher's professionalism does not end with graduation from universities. It is an endless and continuous process which is aimed at making teachers more effective and efficient in their teaching. After graduation from university, I believed that teaching English is my best choice to get a job in my country since I have a bachelor degree in English with a qualification in Education. When I was appointed to be a teacher in a secondary school in my town, it was difficult to teach English which is not my mother tongue in front of students in their young adulthood. I remembered that the Directorate of Education in my city just sent me to that school without any induction courses or training programmes. This happened to me and to all the other teachers in my subject as English and the other subjects. This struggle let me think again and again and raised some theoretical and methodological issues to myself. For example, the following questions were the basis for such issues:

- Why did I choose TEFL as my profession?
- What are my plans about my profession?

Prior to the above issues, the issue of who I am and the beliefs, preconceptions and ideals that I brought to my teaching were of paramount concern to me. I thought that teaching is a job that can be done by a person who is qualified enough in his specialism since I see myself as that one who was among the three best students in my English department. This belief did not last more than the first six months after I was bounded with the spoon-fed theories and methods that I had been taught. These theories and methods constructed my beliefs which in turn affected my practices and strategies in both learning and teaching. Some of these beliefs relate to the nature of knowledge and affect the status of professionalism (Mori, 1999). Indeed, these beliefs can be considered crucial in the development of knowledge (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). The rest of this section will consider the different stages of my professionalism as one of the English teachers in Saudi Arabia.

My early practical experiences that added to my professionalism could be the result of my teaching in the context of my classroom. Although, teachers are encouraged use their agency to develop their personal theories, theorize what they practice and practice what they theorize (Kumaravadivelu, 1994), this might not be the case for novice teachers as me. For example, my limited resources of knowledge make the situation full of difficulties, problems or dilemmas with my reflection practices. As a novice teacher in my profession, recitation, lecturing, apprenticeship and trial-error strategy can be the most used professional methods which can be seen as only full of "action[s] that is [are] merely repetitive, blind, and impulsive" (Dewey, 1933, p. 17, quoted in Fendler, 2003, p. 18). Therefore, the concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Schon, 1987) were seen as my first attempts to understand the way I knew and acted in my teaching. Reflection-in-action links what I know and what I do simultaneously whereas reflection-on-action captures the moments following and preceding my classroom decisions. Although these reflective actions could lead to reflective professionalism where reflective teaching could help us as teachers to think deeply and challenge what we have learned during our schooling to "develop more informed practice, make tacit beliefs and practical knowledge explicit which in turn lead to new ways of knowing and articulating" (Crandall, 2000, p. 40). On the other hand, some other teachers who do not challenge their teaching practice "will be likely to teach as they were taught and, thus, ineffective teaching strategies will be replicated" (Braun and Crumpler, 2004, p. 61). In this stage of my career life, I would judge that reflective strategies were limited for me since I only would reflect on the techniques and the skills I had been taught during my learning journey as well as the theories and methods I had been taught during my bachelor degree journey which can be seen as outside influences. In addition, reflection in this stage can be seen as "a reflection of a retrospective nature, not paving the way toward creativity" (Akbari, 2007). This is not in line with Dewey who defined reflection as action based on "the active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it" (Dewey as cited in Akbari, 2007). For him, reflection might take place if one can replace the personal actions with scientifically practices which in turn could lead to professionalism. On the other hand, for Schon, reflection is an intuitive and natural practice that does not need so much of scientific knowledge. Critically, what I did inside my classroom might not be called reflective actions where most of the actions were based on trial and error which I borrowed from my early taught principles or the studied theories. This is called impulsive action or routine action which is "based largely on authority in a passive, largely unthinking way" (Griffiths, 2000, p. 540). Wright (2010) also asserts that "this raises the spectre of a completely school or classroom-based experience, without the cognitive distancing that an institution-based programme can provide – an experience potentially theorised and possibly unreflective, too" p.288.

However, as a novice teacher, I could see that any reflection could be a positive activity because it gives me an opportunity to discover myself and my shortcomings in teaching because my theoretical knowledge which was seen as more important than the practical knowledge (Johnson, 1996). Thus, the ways to the knowledge and development in this stage were of retrospective character which deals only with what has gone before, not anticipatory reflection of what is going to happen in the future of my practices (Freese, 2006). This can assess the feeling I had that the gain of new knowledge was limited and might be rare. This might be because my knowledge is mainly propositional and conceptual knowledge, not perceptual and practical knowledge (Thiessen, 2000). Another downside of my early reflective experiences is my emphasis on myself. As a novice teacher, the initial preoccupation with self is the first stage that makes the start for teacher development (Burn et al., 2003). This is also stressed by Fendler (2003) who states that "when reflection is understood as a turning back upon the self, the danger is that reflection will reveal no more than

what is already known” (p.20). This means that I wanted to present myself as a practitioner who is an ideal teacher who can appear as professional in his teaching and behaviour. My practices of teaching at this stage were highly affected by my English teacher in the intermediate stage, who could be seen as the ideal teacher for me. This teacher was regarded as ideal as he was my model for teaching once I compared all the theories I studied in my learning journey with his practices.

In a nutshell, the early ways of my professional development were based on the followings: my early schooling beliefs and prescribed spoon-fed theories which were the basement for my reflection. These two channels shaped and constrained my reflective actions because they isolate my practices and treat each situation as similar to the other one and its dependence on reflection of limited resources. Although this enabled me to have the opportunity to exercise judgement in the classroom, this is not enough to qualify myself as having autonomous development for my professional learning. Another characteristic of this stage is the phase of professional identity which was mainly individual and classroom-based retrospective identity. It is based on individual experiences and the context of my teaching in my classroom. Thus, I did not feel any collective identity or collegial identity with other colleagues of my specialist or with the staff of my school. This kind of experience which is one-person communities experience affects our development and characterised by its isolated and fragmented professionalism as it is based on one's own knowledge and experiences. According to Hargreaves (2000), this age of professional autonomy does not help a teacher to cope with their daily practices of teaching. Indeed, this age of isolated and fragmented professionalism can be seen as ironic since the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for teachers' development which has updated and improved English language curricula, has done almost nothing for EFL teacher training and courses (Al Shahrani, 2010; Alhazmi, 2003). Teacher education programs and the needs of the daily classroom teaching still were not in harmony since these programmes depend mainly on top-down strategy in planning teachers' training courses and programmes. These courses are characterised by rigid curriculum and heavy workload sessions.

Beside the prescribed programmes, the ministry has the teacher's guide course book which is compulsory for teachers to follow its methods and strategies. This can show that emphasis here is on educators who were seen as experts and teachers as knowing little in education issues. These experts are the supervisors of English and the head teachers who practise their assessment and observation techniques and neglect teacher' needs and development. As a matter of evidence, I remembered the first day my supervisor visited me in my classroom. After the observation stage, we went together in a private room to discuss what I have done through my teaching stage in the classroom. The supervisor began introducing some theories and methods and advised me that these are the ones that suit the lesson being taught. He advised me also to read three educational books about teaching English. He went then to the head teacher office and wrote a report about his visit to the school. After three weeks, I received a hand-out from the head teacher regarding the training programmes of the English Department in my directorate which is based on programmes, teacher visits, workshops and lectures. I attended some of these sessions because they are obligatory sessions from the directorate. However, I discovered they were only repetition of what I studied during my bachelor study. It lacked any kind of practical-based issues that relate to these methods or theories. Another downside of this stage is the absence of my personality as a teacher in this development as being neglected from building of the materials of the training course based on our needs as the real professional in our classrooms. According to Akbari (2006) these beliefs and experiences could affect the practices and the ways teachers view themselves as professionals.

The policy of neglecting teachers from inclusion in their professionalism and training programmes is pervasive. The training department in my directorate treated teachers as illegitimate professionals who lack knowledge and need a lot of training programmes. These programmes are determined by the staff in the department without dealing with the teacher's needs. In this case, it is a top-down strategy where the department viewpoint of idealism outweighs that of realism (Liton, 2012). This means that they focus more on the methods and theories stage more than that of the practical issues which is the daily life of our profession as teachers. This top-down intervention only gives prescribed methods which can only be specific for some situations and may not be applicable to others. Thus, when teachers' needs are not conducted properly or ignored completely, then this is considered a top-down approach to teacher development. Although Osborne (2004) argues that "academics professional needs cannot always be met effectively on a collective or genetic basis" (p.8), he still advocates promoting professional growth and academics' need to negotiate with their teachers in order address their individual needs within professional development. Thereby moving from a top-down process towards a bottom-up negotiation of teachers' professional development needs is of an urgent importance for the development of the training courses and programmes. Nunan (1989) states that approach to professional development have been moving gradually from a top-down approach, where teachers are presented with a 'ready package' designed by experts to enhance their teaching in different areas such as curriculum plans, syllabus outlines, and methodological procedures. He also argues that although the top-down approaches have many forms, they are still quite easy to recognize as they have one thing in common, which is that only one way exists of learning a foreign language and if the teacher follows the principles and procedures implied by the experts, this way will definitely succeed. On the other hand, it could be argued that how we view professional development depends directly on how we view teachers; when we view teachers as professionals, we will consider their input when planning and designing the teacher development courses.

However, if the ministry does not recognize teachers as professionals then definitely their involvement in professional development programmes will be limited. So, as a summary, I want to argue that the ministry should involve teachers in the design and preparation of the teacher development programmes and should not tailor its professional development programmes solely on the teachers' needs because I believe that the needs of the organisation as well as the needs of the learners should also be addressed.

Actually, the issues behind not including teachers in their professional development programmes were not due to the lack of their theoretical knowledge, but rather to the "the constraints imposed on the teacher within the social, cultural, economic and educational context" (Johnson, 1996). This made the situation difficult in the case that it was difficult to connect the pedagogical and theoretical knowledge with the contextual and social knowledge. More importantly, I found it difficult to find a discourse of development among my colleagues as professionals in our subjects. Wenger (1998) asserts that individuals construct communities of practice by involving them and constructing their identity. This could help them to construct a collaborative identity that helps them to build powerful and reflective experiences. This refers to the process of social learning that happens when teachers collaborate together to share experiences, values and ways practices of development. Each one of them acts as "a member of a professional community who is ready, willing, and able to teach and to learn from his or her teaching experience" (Shulman, 2004, P: 263). Thus, professionalism can be redefined as "a process of learning how to put knowledge into practice through engagement in practice within a community of practitioners" (Schlager & Fusco, 2004, P: 4).

B. Pedagogy of Teacher's Professionalism

To return to the title of this article, the pedagogy of teacher's professionalism in teaching English are either the structured learning experiences provided for teachers, which is called by Leung (2007) the sponsored professionalism, and the more individual oriented education which is independent professionalism which might be termed as the core elements in teacher education.

1. The Sponsored Professionalism:

After the first year of my teaching, the Directorate of Education introduced a package of training courses to the teachers of English all over the Directorate. Among these courses are workshops, lectures, expert teachers-visit and some reading hand-outs. The strategy behind these courses was that one size fits all. The supervisors of English are the responsible figures who determine and control the contents of the training sessions and who are the participants. According to the policy makers of these programmes, this could help to frame the content of professional education programmes. Another goal behind setting such programmes is the strong policy of accountability. I can see that from a critical viewpoint, these programmes are tailored for the public schools in order to cap on the dominance of the use of this language as a lingua franca which is not welcomed by many people at that time.

In fact, the introduction of an extensive theoretical basis is the fundamental strategy in many teacher development programmes (McCullough, 1987; Hoyle & John, 1995). This is how teacher education became known as teacher training (Bullough & Gitlin, 1994). Schon (1987) critically called it the technical-rationality model. Ben-Peretz (1995) says:

The hidden curriculum of teacher education tends to communicate a fragmented view of knowledge, both in coursework and in field experiences. Moreover, knowledge is "given" and unproblematic. These views of knowledge are likely to become quite problematic as teachers gain experience. (p. 546).

This emphasis on expert-knowledge (Reiman and Sprinthall, 1996) is still dominant in the context of training in the ministry of Education. According to Hargreaves (2000) this stage which is the age of the collegial professional "teaching must be framed and informed by professional standards of practice that define what good teachers should know and be able to do and what qualities and dispositions they should possess to care for and connect with their students".

2. Independent Professionalism:

In teacher education, we cannot deny the importance of sponsored professionalism in the field of learning and teaching. Indeed, it can be the tool for accountability that provides measures for control (Broadfoot & Pollard, 2003). The counterpart of the sponsored professionalism is independent learning which is the more individual oriented education. It is a commitment to careful and critical examination of the assumptions and practices embedded in sponsored professionalism with reference to discipline-based knowledge and wider social values, and to take action to effect change where appropriate (Leung, 2007). This resource of professionalism is not noticed as a strategy by the Department of Training in the Ministry of Education as the responsible body for teacher development. Thus, it does not give much autonomy to teachers because the system tends to be a bit top-down, as stated by Pink (1989), and Fullan and Hargreaves (1992). I also did not notice any effort by the ministry of education to help teachers to improve themselves by their independent education by any appraisal system or rewards so far. The situation could be traced due to the pressures on teachers since they need to attend to school from 7:30 am until 2:30 pm. Each teacher should have at least 24 periods of teaching. This makes it difficult for teachers to find time for their development by themselves or in collegial meetings.

From the journey of my teaching and the literature, issues of professionalism both the affordances and the constraints should be addressed by the Ministry of Education in order to develop and build new era of teachers' professionalism where teachers can practice their education and learning in a social community of practice. This will have a positive

impact on Students' learning. To strengthen my reflective inquiry about Teacher's Professionalism in Saudi Arabia, I conducted a study with three English teachers from my Educational Directorate, Alleith.

III. A SMALL RESEARCH INQUIRY

This small scale study aimed to gain an in-depth insight about the practitioner teachers' beliefs and roles in the programmes provided to them for their development. I interviewed three teachers who have been working and still currently teaching English in my directorate. All of the three teachers are English teachers with bachelor degree in English. They are chosen as a purposive sample, who have been teaching for more than five years in order to gain a better perspective over the changes with regards to professional development. They are from three different intermediate stage schools. Pseudonym names were given to them as Ahmed, Ali and Mohammed for their privacy and anonymity. I used semi-structured interviews with my participants to give them space to interact more freely with the researcher (Brown & Dowling, 1998). These interviews were conducted over the Skype. In order to investigate their professional development programmes, I asked the following questions:

1. How do your beliefs affect your teacher education? Do you perceive yourself as a professional?
2. How do you professionally develop yourself as an English-language teacher?
3. Are you involved in any professional development programmes offered to you?

By analysing the data thematically, a large number of themes emerged such as low motivated students and teachers, disempowerment of teachers, weaknesses of teacher's education programmes and lack of teacher role in professional development programmes. However, due to the limited scope of this assignment, I will only cover the major themes that reoccurred in the data most frequently which are teachers' beliefs about their professional development, teachers' role in the programmes and teachers' professional identity.

A. Teachers' Beliefs about Their Professional Development (PD)

One of the ways of recognition and knowledge is the beliefs that one holds about the self as a practitioner. This can show the status of profession and the practices that are being used in their professionalism. The data in this study showed that all of the three participants believe they are always trying to develop themselves professionally and they mention the importance of professional development. This is clear in the following quote from Ahmed:

"I think that professional development is very crucial for me as a teacher. I believe that if I do not try to develop myself, I would not know the new English language teaching methodologies ... I develop myself professionally by attending workshops whenever I can in addition to attending the professional development courses which are held yearly in the department of training".

This sponsored professionalism might be not the only resource to teacher development in this context. By asking Ahmed if he has other ways to develop himself, he said:

"Sometimes I use the internet to find some material for my classes. In addition, I try to attend conferences like TESOL Arabia whenever I can... however; it's very difficult due to the fact that we need to take time off of work".

B. Teachers' Role in the Professional Programmes

The data revealed that teachers had no role in the content of the programmes available to them. They indicated that the top- down strategy of giving programmes is common. Mohammed stated that:

"We lack our voices on what is presented in the professional development. We are forced to attend. We were only told by our head teachers about these training sessions"

This is also indicated by Ali by saying that:

"Unfortunately teachers don't have any saying in the professional development material available to them ... Honestly speaking, if the teachers are not interested in what is presented, then they will not get any benefits from them and let them not attend in the future trainings".

C. Teachers' Professional Identity

Teachers in this study indicated during the interviews that they generally understand what it is to be a professional. All of them understood professionalism as having what it takes to perform a particular job. Ahmed stated that he definitely perceives himself as a professional as he clarified that he holds a degree in Teaching English and has been teaching for over five years. However, he complained that most of the time the training department does not treat him as one:

"I don't think they consider we have the necessary knowledge to continue in our jobs without continuously assessing and supervising us"

The same attitude was held by Mohammed who stated that:

"They treat all the teachers the same way; it doesn't matter how professional you are or what degree you hold".

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Professional development in Teaching English as a Foreign Language has gone through different ages in Saudi Arabia. However, it still concentrates on the sponsored professionalism with little room for independent professionalism

this is due to many factors that can be seen as barriers to its development. Simply put, independent development represents a shift from seeing teachers as individually stable and rigid, to seeing them as members of social and historical context who have the potential to reflect scientifically on their practices.

From the teachers' quotes, it can be clearly seen that teachers consider professional development to be important; however, their understanding appears to be limited to attending conferences, workshops, using the internet, or studying for a higher degree. According to the literature on professional development, this view is considered inadequate as there are many different ways for teachers to professionally develop themselves, such as, to name a few, peer observation and action research. Thus, these modules of professional development should be introduced and teachers exposed to them to enrich their knowledge of the different varieties of professional development that can be adopted.

The discourse of teacher professionalism needs to be carefully researched as it seems to affect the status of the members of the ministry as an official organisation which indeed could have pressures on teachers' identity as professionalism. The data showed that the issue of discourse inside the schools and the ministry as a whole has given evidence that the discourse of professionalism is still in its early stage to enhance teachers to develop their teaching and to reflect in their practices. This means that social relationships are crucial in how individuals are constructed by others or construct themselves. In the context of language teaching, language teachers may experience the everlasting tension between what they choose themselves to be (reflexive positioning) and what others position them to be (interactive positioning) (Pavlenko, 2000). However, although a teacher may be positioned by others in a particular way within a given discourse, the teacher's identity and agency can resist that position. By doing so, teachers investment in the discourse of positioning can be seen as a vital to the construction of identity with their colleagues to form a community of practice which in turn the same needs, values and practices (Wenger, 1998).

The finding of this small-scale study also showed that the Ministry of Education did not consider teachers' needs before designing and implementing the professional development sessions, which indicated that the ministry adopted a top-down approach to professional development. By doing this, it excluded the teachers from having any input with regards to the content or the timing of their professional development programmes. According to Glover & Law (1996), addressing the teachers' needs is an important stage in the designing of professional development programmes. Furthermore, as the data demonstrated, none of the teachers remember being asked to fill out any survey prior to the professional development sessions that were offered, which suggests that the ministry placed more importance on its needs than the teachers' needs. I am aware that sometimes it is not possible to address teachers' needs on a collective or generic basis; however, researchers such as Osborne (2004) argue that some negotiation should be conducted with the participants in order to address both the teachers and institutional needs. The literature also shows that when teachers' needs are addressed in many aspects of professional development programmes, such as the existing knowledge and experience of teachers, their input helps in tailoring the most beneficial PD programmes for the teachers (Starkey et al., 2009). Teachers mentioned that the Ministry of Education tends to treat them the same with regards to their involvement in the design and delivery of in-service professional development programs. This paper argues special consideration and more involvement of experienced and less experienced teachers in the design of those programs. A number of studies advocate for this notion of benefiting from experienced teachers' knowledge by involving them in teacher development programs (Darling-Hammond 1994).

The participants argued that prescribed sessions and programmes usually adopt a top-down approach to professional development in order to pressure their teachers to meet their institutional needs. I argue that not all professional development courses should be top-down. If the course introduces any changes to the syllabus or the methodology required, then it is suitable for attendance to be mandatory. However, it is important to negotiate with the teacher about the contents and the materials to be covered in the programme.

Furthermore, it can be seen that teachers believe that they are professionals, however, all for participants indicate that the ministry is not treating them as they deserve. Participants raised issues such as teacher evaluation, teacher monitoring, working hours, and financial issues as examples of instances which make them feel that the ministry is not viewing them as professionals. To me, it is not surprising to find there is little interest about raising the awareness of Saudi teachers' identity in the context of professionalism in teaching English since the ministry is still neglecting the teachers' voices and indirectly disempower them as being professional in their career.

In conclusion, it is important for the ministry to address these issues that are bothering teachers. Teachers then will feel unsatisfied if they are neglected, which will definitely affect their sense of professional identity and their overall professional development thereby also affecting the quality of teaching. It is also of paramount concern that the ministry of education should lead the transition of professionalism for their teachers in order to be highly reflective on their practices and to be independent professional who always seek to develop their practices and methods to improve their teaching styles and strategies.

V. CONCLUSION

During my teaching journey, sponsored professionalism were the resource for my professional development where my practices depended on my experienced supervisors and expert head teachers, I hold a quite clear belief about my teacher development status. Prior to starting work on this paper, my understanding and beliefs about professional development were affected by the behaviourist pedagogy. I viewed professional development to be attending

conferences and workshops and obtaining certificates or degrees in Teaching English. This is indicated by (Wright, 2010) who confirms that the concept of teacher education has been affected by the behaviourist and constructivist pedagogy and theory. In my case, professionalism is affected by the behaviourist theory where emphasis is on the outset of training and based on the institutional needs whenever needed. However, the constructivist theory where the engagement of teachers and colleagues in their professionalism as social identities who can afford and engaged in the training process seems to be of little practice in my situation. Thus, the literature review opened my eyes to the many different types of professional development and the resources available for acquiring and learning.

From a personal perspective, I believe that at the beginning of this assignment, I was fixated on the importance of teachers having a role and being involved in the designing of professional development programmes, only to realize that many other factors and stages are involved in ensuring the effectiveness of such programmes. Other factors, such as having activities that enable teachers to reflect on their own teaching, are also important (Day, 1997). In addition, the programme content should not consider teachers as empty jars to be filled with knowledge, but instead should be building on the existing teachers' knowledge experience and skills (Crandall, 2000). In addition, Richards (2001) mentions that teachers' needs must be highlighted and addressed when developing any PD programmes. Furthermore, I was initially advocating for a bottom-up approach instead of a top-down approach to professional development, where teachers would have a voice and saying in the planning and designing of such programmes; I was arguing that in the same way students' needs are addressed in the course design, when it comes to professional development course design, the teachers' needs should be addressed because I felt that those needs were being ignored and the programmes are prescribed and spoon fed to teachers. However, I realized that having a complete bottom-up approach to professional development may result in concentrating only on the teachers' needs and neglecting the institutional needs. According to Myers & Clark (2002), both individual and organizational continuous professional development can work together, when teachers would benefit from the programmes that institutions develop to meet their needs and aims.

In regards to teacher's identity in relation to their development, I realise that teachers' professional identities are formed based on their personal beliefs, feelings, values and understandings in addition to background and culture as well as the courses and discourses of teacher's development programmes. This understanding helps me in placing myself professionally, in which I believe that this can help me determine which group of people I would like to be part of during my professional career as an English Language Teacher an educator. Above all, the wide scope of literature about professionalism in teaching gives me depth and breadth in my teaching development and the beliefs I have about it. As regards the contribution of this study to my expertise about professionalism, it has widened my horizons by giving me the chance to practice the knowledge of the issues of different types of professionalism, methodologies, as well as critical awareness and knowledge about the whole professionalism process.

In a nutshell, this reflective study has revitalised both the beliefs that I hold about professionalism in second/foreign language as well as the philosophical and practical knowledge about it. More importantly, it opened doors for future research to implement the professionalism and identity construction as critical in second language teacher development.

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