

## Chapter # 1

### AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MULTILINGUAL EFL CLASSROOMS: COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT & RESIDUAL PRACTICE

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#### ABSTRACT

Many higher education institutions worldwide require that all academic staff have a professional development plan. Teacher professional development has been regarded as one of the most important factors for improving the quality of both teaching and learning. Therefore it is imperative to use a solid framework evaluating professional development. This chapter aims to provide cooperative management as a comprehensive framework for evaluating the impact of professional development on classroom management. Cooperative management is a voluntary, collaborative process in which a school leader, a teacher and a colleague explore and reflect on learning and teaching practice. Specifically, the suggested model emphasizes the dialectic process with a teacher, a school leader and a colleague that represents the core features of effective classroom management. In this process the teacher, the school leader, and the professional colleague act as feedback receivers and providers. In the suggested model cooperative management has described the residual practice as the core feature of the effective classroom management. The residual practice is the experience or practice left over at the end of the teaching process. The suggested model also fosters the members of the learning community because a residual outcome stays with the school leader, the teacher, and the professional colleague for the rest of their lives. In this study the designed model was implemented and the semi structured interviews were given to five EFL teachers who taught in multilingual classrooms as follow-up. The findings indicated that the suggested model helped the participant EFL teachers develop new perspectives in their classroom management strategies and contributed to their professional development. Furthermore, some implications were provided for school leaders as well as for teachers in Cyprus.

*Keywords:* cooperative management, professional development, residual practice.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

We argue that effective teaching contributes to effective learning in educational sciences. While teachers can learn and develop themselves, for the vast majority, teaching will make a significant impact on their classrooms, classroom management, and professional development. As ađanađa (2014) suggests “teachers need to design educational experiences to produce desirable learning outcomes and provide opportunities for them to demonstrate their success in achieving their expectations”. We make the assumption that teachers employed to teach in different programmes will have sufficient knowledge for their teaching - but what of their knowledge of classroom management? How do they want to manage their classrooms and resources, and what facilities and resources are available to them in terms of their professional development? It is assumed that the more the teacher is experienced, the more s/he is good at classroom management.

There is a close relationship between classroom management and professional development.

Recent literature on professional development emphasizes that educational leaders should promote and facilitate professional learning and development in their schools. We have established that effective professional learning is not necessarily confined to intentional development opportunities and events. We have accepted that it is often 'situated' (Hoekstra, Beijaard, Brekelmans, & Korthagen, 2005) and can occur implicitly (Eraut, 2004, 2007), often in unanticipated – and sometimes even unrecognized – ways, through social interaction (Temple Adger, Hoyle, & Dickinson, 2004), including 'communities (of practice)' (Whitcomb, Liston, & Borko, 2009). Marsick and Watkins (1990) and Smylie (1995) refer to this as 'incidental' learning, that 'takes place in everyday experience and occurs without intention, from "doing" and from both successes and mistakes. Besides, it has been realized that in order to understand peoples' behaviors it is essential to understand their thinking (Kaymakamoğlu, 2015, p.2). Therefore, when teachers engage into reflective thinking process, they can become more aware of their thinking and their actions in class.

This chapter tries to provide a new framework for both classroom management and professional development. A new model of classroom management is suggested in order to understand the existing teaching situations and desired requirements in classroom management and its impact on professional development.

The new model which is called *cooperative management* is a comprehensive framework for evaluating the impact of classroom management on professional development. Cooperative management is a voluntary, collaborative process in which a school leader, a teacher and a professional colleague explore and reflect on learning and teaching practice. Specifically, the suggested model which emphasizes the dialectic process with a teacher, a school leader and a professional colleague represents that core features of effective classroom management are based on three aspects; the teacher, the school leader, and the professional colleague as feedback receiver and provider. By reviewing the suggested model, we will examine whether it could be justified as a solid theoretical framework for evaluating classroom management. Although empirical research has been conducted for exploring the relationship between classroom management and teachers' outcomes in Cyprus, to the best of our knowledge, there is no literature which comprehensively describes three aspects which were shown above as a solid framework for evaluating classroom management. Therefore, this framework will help inform further evaluation studies of professional development and the evidence offered through this review of the research will help policy makers implement future professional development initiatives.

### **1.1. Cooperative Management**

Even though scholars have suggested diverse characteristics of effective classroom management, *cooperative management* has described *residual practice* as a core feature of effective classroom management. Cooperative management tries to achieve more effective and equitable systems of resource management. In cooperative management the trio the individual, the successful practitioner, and the school leader should share knowledge, power, and responsibility. It also means fostering free circulation of information within the school. The necessities of cooperative management are as follows:

- supporting each other and getting reward based on trust and mutual help,
- the best interest of teachers should go with the school to increase participation,
- all of the resources, such as financial, technical, administrative should be met to be able to reach the goals.
- human skills and in service training should be the focus of the school to reach the goals.

Cooperative management is not only beneficial from a human and social point of view, but also a key competitive asset for a school. Similar ideas were supported by different writers with different names. For instance, in 1987, Donald Schön introduced the concept of reflective practice as a critical process in refining one's artistry or craft in a specific discipline. Schön recommended reflective practice as a way for beginners in a discipline to recognize consonance between their own individual practices and those of successful practitioners. As defined by Schön (1996), reflective practice involves thoughtfully considering one's own experiences in applying knowledge to practice while being coached by professionals in the discipline (Schön, 1996). The difference between reflective practice and residual practice is the interaction pattern. In this model, not only the individual and the successful practitioner's consonance but also the school leader's contribution is appreciated in order to examine the classroom practice in detail. This trio - the individual, the successful practitioner and the school leader - is explained in greater detail below along with the empirical research that serves as evidence of the impacts of each of the three members.

The residual practice is the experience or practice left over at the end of the teaching process. The residual practice goes around five questions that the teacher is required to ask herself/himself; (1) What did you believe in? (2) What happened? (3) What's left over? (4) What would you do if...? (5) What will you do with what you learnt? In this learning process, both the successful practitioner and the school leader is expected to act as a feedback receiver or provider. It should be highlighted that the degree of formality among these people is required to be equalized by focusing on the actions not the individual teacher personally.

Residual practice is the concept that requires a learning community to recognize and engage difference and acknowledge and articulate their biases. A school leader, a teacher, and a professional colleague are required to take part in a learning community which provides opportunities to develop the presuppositions of the community, as well as a position that is present throughout life. The suggested model also fosters the members of the learning community because a residual outcome stays with the school leader, the teacher, and the professional colleague for the rest of their lives. In this model, the members are required to form bonds with each other and create networks. Schools are expected to build learning communities into their schedules to promote a deeper understanding of the practice the teacher has left over. The trio – the school leader, the teacher, and the professional colleague is expected to meet in regularly scheduled sessions gear toward gaining knowledge. Learning communities can help each other in academic issues if they learn to share their experiences. Such models relieve the trio from the burden of studying and getting ready alone. They may study together, share problem solving strategies and exchange ideas and information. Reflective practice is therefore not always an easy process and the evaluation process should be undertaken with educational supervisors. However, the process is not about writing down a list of dos and don'ts. For this to be a meaningful process the teacher will need to write down what s/he has done in the class and examine the

issues with the other members of the trio namely the school leader and the professional colleague. This form or report is designed to assist the teacher in the process. If s/he is involved in a difficult situation, s/he is required to record the event and the thoughts about it on the reflective practice form. Such a form can be designed as follows:

**Reflective Practice Form**

**Date and venue:**

**Learning event:**

**Member of the trio:**

<b>1. WHAT DID YOU BELIEVE IN?</b>
<b>2. WHAT WERE MY PERSONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS EVENT?</b>
<b>3. WHAT HAPPENED?</b>
<b>4. WHAT'S LEFT OVER? AND WHAT KEY LEARNING POINTS HAVE I TAKEN AWAY FROM TODAY?</b>
<b>5. WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF...? AND WHAT CHANGES WILL I MAKE TO MY TEACHING PRACTICE AS A RESULT OF MY LEARNING?</b>
<b>6. WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH WHAT YOU LEARNT? AND WHAT FUTURE LEARNING NEEDS HAVE I IDENTIFIED AS A RESULT OF MY LEARNING?</b>
<b>7. ACTION PLAN</b>
<b>8. RESOURCES AND SUPPORT NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT MY ACTION PLAN</b>
<b>9. REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN E.G. 6 MONTHS</b>

Adapted from Professional development. (Attwood, Curtis, Pitts, & While, 2005)

The primary benefit of residual practice for teachers is a deeper understanding of their own teaching style and its impact on their classroom management. Another specific benefit may include the professional development process of teachers. Supovitz (2001) suggested that a logic behind professional development is that high-quality professional development will change teaching in classrooms, which will, in turn, increase student achievement. Moreover, recent literature has claimed that teachers' knowledge gained from professional development influences teaching practice (Blank, de Las Alas, & Smith, 2007; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007).

Literature has identified and described an array of management approaches that teachers employ for their professional development. Cooperative management can range from feedback receiver to feedback provider with a continuum of mixed roles in between. The cooperative environment that is required for the management would give the teachers a chance of sharing their reflective thoughts and thus help them achieve better management skills. Therefore it is believed that this dialectic process could contribute teachers develop professionally in teaching and learning.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This study consisted of two phases. In the first phase of the research, the views of the participant teachers and the school leader about the existing professional development activities were sought. The second phase of the study focused on the participants'

evaluations of the new model, cooperative management for their professional development. For this purpose, the following key research questions were designed:

1) What were the participants' views regarding the existing professional development activities?

2) What did participants gain from engagement with the new model, cooperative management process?

For this investigation, purposively selected five novice EFL teachers and a school leader participated voluntarily. Prior to the investigation, the informed consent of the participants were taken. In the first phase of the study, the school leader's and the participant teachers' views regarding the existing professional development activities were sought by interviewing them. The interviews were semi-structured for the purpose of probing whenever needed and every participant was interviewed for 30 minutes.

In the context of cooperative management model here, every participant teacher was asked to keep reflective reports daily. The participant teachers were also asked to keep notes based on their reflective reports, particularly about the classroom management issues and make a "dos and don'ts" list based on their classroom teaching experiences. Weekly meetings were held among the school leader and the teachers to receive and provide feedback to each other for the purpose of benefiting from the cooperative learning environment. During the meetings every teacher shared his/her notes based on the reflective reports she/he has taken with his/her colleagues and the school leader. This process took for 3 months.

At the end of this period, as the second phase of the study, the school leader and the participant teachers were interviewed again to evaluate the new model, cooperative management for their professional development. The second interviewing was also semi-structured for probing purposes if needed. The semi-structured interviews were recorded and later transcribed for the data analysis. The transcribed data were coded by using a broadly grounded approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) where the emerging categories were used for the purpose of comparison. I used a marginal note taking techniques (Patton, 2002, p. 463).

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

• *First Phase: the participants' views regarding the existing professional development activities.*

Analysis of the data showed that all the participant teachers engaged into traditional professional development activities which they did not seem to benefit from. They were required to attend the work-shops and seminars which were organized by some institutions or The Ministry of Education authorities. The emerged themes indicated that the existing professional development activities did not value them as individuals so they did not respond to their needs as practitioners. They also revealed the participants dissatisfaction with the existing professional development activities they engaged. It seems that most of the teachers needed more practical knowledge instead of theoretical knowledge. Janet explained:

"I don't think the training sessions I attended resulted in any change in my teaching. The theoretical knowledge given in the work-shops and the seminars I have attended so far did not provide me practical ideas to solve the difficulties I face in class."

According to Susan: “What I experience in class is important for me and every class differs. What I get in the seminars do not respond to the difficulties I experience.”

Emma stated: “Always the topics of the conferences and the seminars are imposed on us. We are not asked about the topics.”

Emily expressed her view as: “I wish these courses responded to our needs in class teaching. They are always theoretical. What I need is to know how to use theory in practice.”

According to Olivia: “I find most of these sessions boring and time wasting. It is a kind of certificate collection procedure because I cannot find answers to the problems I face in teaching when I attend them.”

The analysis of the data also revealed another theme that in their work context the teachers were required to engage in conventional peer observation with their colleagues and they were not satisfied with it. The peer observation that they got involved in was limited to observing one peer termly and filling in a form to submit to the school leader. It seemed that the teachers did not find this very realistic for some reasons. They thought that it should have been more supportive and constructive rather than judgmental. They did not think that the existing observation scheme was suitable to address all the issues of teaching observation. Besides, they emphasized that the need for a collaborative feedback and sharing environment with colleagues and their school leader.

According to Janet: “I see observation as ticking a form. The forms are filled in and later submitted to the school leader without discussing my views about my teaching. I don't find it fair.”

Susan explained: “We should observe more colleagues and discuss with each other the good sides and weak sides of our teaching. It shouldn't be so simple...just filling in and submitting the forms to the authority.”

Emma said: “Peer observation is something useful I believe...but you cannot learn from observing just once a term and I think it is not fair to judge a teacher just by observing once.”

Olivia stated that “I always feel nervous when I am observed because I am scared of getting a poor observation report. Evaluation of my teaching should have been different. I don't think one observation is enough. It doesn't change anything in my teaching.”

The problems in the existing system for the teachers professional development led to the design of the suggested professional development model, cooperative management.

- *Second Phase: evaluation of the new model, cooperative management.*

The analysis of the interviews conducted with the participants and the school leader revealed some important evidences for the benefits and satisfaction the participants experienced through the suggested new professional development model, cooperative management. Mainly the emerging themes were about the supportive nature of the process rather than judgmental; its positive contribution to their classroom practice; the cooperative environment with the colleagues and particularly with the authority (i.e. the school leader); the feeling of being responsible for self- development and as well as the colleagues.

The participant teachers articulated that it was the first time that they tried to keep reflective reports but they all emphasized their satisfaction with the process. They expressed how keeping reflective reports helped them become more self aware of their classroom practices and their needs related to teaching. They emphasized that this process enabled them to reflect, analyze and evaluate their practices critically which in turn had a positive impact on their classroom practices.

Susan explained that "...at the beginning I found keeping reflective reports after every lesson tiring. So I kept a notebook to note down some key words later to go back to remember what happened in class during the day. After some time I realized that keeping a journal made me think about my classroom experiences in depth and developed a critical look to self." Similarly, Emily stated that "...writing down the things happened during teaching, trying to remember what happened in class made me become more aware of my practices and helped me think of the alternatives I can bring into my teaching."

Emma's views were more focused on how the reflective reports helped her during the discussions with her colleagues and the school leader in their regular weekly meetings. She said: "...keeping reflective reports guided me in our discussions and sharings with my colleagues and the school leader because I was more aware of the points I wanted to get feedback and help about."

The school leader expressed his views about keeping reflective reports as:

"...at the beginning I thought keeping a reflective report would put extra work on the teachers and that they would not continue to keep them regularly because of their heavy teaching loads yet it was surprising to see that every teacher enthusiastically did it. I think they found it meaningful because of the weekly meetings we held because they provided the basis of our discussions for giving feedback and receiving as getting feedback from each other."

All the participants valued the weekly meetings a lot. Their views were all for the positive impact of those meetings on their teaching. They expressed how the meetings provided them a supportive, constructive and positive sharing and learning environment. The meetings did not only provide them a discussion platform but also a social interaction atmosphere for contributing to each other's critical reflection and learning.

Olivia stated that "...the meetings helped me to be in an environment where things are discussed openly without any hesitation that I would be evaluated negatively. We found such a nurturing environment to benefit from each other's views and experiences. I thought at the beginning having the school leader in those discussions would not benefit us but it worked just the opposite. The meetings were held in a very positive atmosphere. I used to be more nervous when I was peer observed because I always had the idea that the peer observation reports would be used for appraisal.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Successfully managing a school is crucial to the success of both the institution and the teachers. It is also crucial to the safety and understanding of processes and skills need for learning a foreign language in EFL classrooms. Research on teachers' beliefs, practices, and experience about teaching and classroom management will help teacher educators determine what experiences and knowledge included in foreign language education and professional development will best facilitate teachers' development of classroom management skills. Further research on the influences of cooperative management, such as the residual practice and collaborative process noted in this study, can provide an understanding of teachers regardless their experiences are supported in effectively managing their classroom and the ever-changing development of a teacher. These insights would be of value to teacher educators and school administrators in that they illustrate the need for administrative support in developing and implementing more dialectic processes to support teachers. Findings from this study also provide insight for school leaders and teachers on management approaches that have been suggested with this study as being effective and how to go about implementing these approaches. Since this study examines a

school leader's and five teachers' understanding and definitions of cooperative management to solve issues related to classroom management, it suggests the need for more extensive research on cooperative management approach in order to continue to examine links between their management style, understanding of classroom management, and teacher retention.

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