

SUPPORTING TEACHER AGENCY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (IN ELTAS) IN LOW-RESOURCED CONTEXTS: REFLECTIONS FROM CAMELTA

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ABSTRACT

Research into ELT teacher development and teacher association research has gained currency over the last decade, yet with limited attention paid to how teachers in low-resourced contexts navigate professional development. The literature on teachers' working conditions and the changing perspectives on ELT has been the reason behind seminars and multiple training activities organised on areas considered necessary for teachers in low-resourced contexts. However, the idea of necessity tends to be judged by the 'experts', who determine what work best for their participants. Current-day professional development initiatives require that experiential knowledge of the participants be made the basis of any professional development activities. This goes beyond basic pedagogic knowledge to the broader context in which teachers find themselves. This paper assesses the relevance of selected ELT seminars in Cameroon to argue against their sporadic nature and training that ignores the participants' work contexts. It analyses teacher engagement in two professional development (PD) projects run by the CAMELTA Research Group to posit the beneficial effects of a systematic set of activities determined mutually by the teachers on common goals. This supposes engagement of the participants in PD activities across a period of time during which a sense of agency is gradually cultivated into automatic behaviour.

Key Words: *professional development, support, agency, context, ELT*

1. Introduction

Teacher agency and professional development (PD) activities in teacher associations (TAS) have been topical in ELT discourse within the last decade (Richardson & Maggioli, 2018). In well-resourced contexts, there are greater opportunities for agency, with a crucial link between agency, professional growth and career profiling. Teachers in low-resourced countries are reported to be working in 'difficult circumstances' (West, 1960; Smith, 2011) and demonstrating disjointed awareness on the pedagogic connection between language and learning, and the socio-cultural implications of language learning.

Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA

Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

Compounding this challenge is the commonly-stated overcrowded classrooms containing low-proficiency learners, limited resources, limited public support, and economic factors. In such a work context, expecting teachers to be involved in professional development activities: develop a sense of agency, carrying out action research, reflecting on their practices in teacher associations (TAs), ‘time-consuming engagements’ that are rated only in terms of professional growth, seem to be received by teachers as just another form of pressure. PD is considered to be the acquisition of experience in learning to teach, which includes processes of appropriation, acculturation, and socialization of ELT professional knowledge into the perspectives of teachers (Barahona, 2018, p. 4). Researching professional development in English language teacher associations (ELTAs) is at its infancy and the role of TAs in such teachers’ professional development remains uncharted (Gnawali, 2016; Smith & Kuchah Kuchah, 2016). A few cases and anecdotes have demonstrated how agency is built up in the professional development (PD) support to English language teachers (Gnawali, 2016; Padwad & Dixit, 2008 for example) through diverse activities ranging from conferences to English language clubs in schools. There is further need to demonstrate how different PD activities lead to the generation of pedagogic principles that build on agency in TAs to be able to propose a realistic framework for PD. The educational contexts in which the teachers have been constructed, which subsequently influence their own pedagogic approaches cannot continuously be ignored. This paper draws on the researcher’s experience running two projects with the CAMELTA Research Group to examine the nature and extent of teacher agency in Cameroon and assesses how teachers in such contexts can be supported to develop a culture of agency. This paper begins by examining trends in PD activities before looking at the nature of support teachers and TAs have received. It moves forward to analyse teacher agency in two locally developed projects in the CAMELTA Research Group to reflect on the form and process of support necessary for teachers and TAs in low-resourced contexts.

2. Trends in PD activities and theoretical considerations

Two polar approaches to PD in ELT reviewed in detail by Barahona (2018) have been identified as common practice in professional development. On the one hand, the apprenticeship and the applied science models, which view teacher development from a top-bottom perspective in which the ‘expert’ contains the knowledge derived from theories and the knowledge is transmitted to the teachers who practice (in ‘safe’ learning contexts) applying the new knowledge in their own teaching contexts. On the other hand, the reflective model views teachers as ecologically situated with a body of knowledge gained from their teaching contexts. Their experience then forms the basis for reflection in the hope that teachers can ‘tackle teaching problems, evaluate past experiences, and design appropriate responses’ (p,4). Eksi (2010) observes that PD activities in Turkey were premised on the idea that teachers were deficient

Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA

Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

in some professional competences to enable them to teach well. In keeping with these one-shot workshops where content and procedures were prescribed on a top-bottom basis became a regular feature. It is worth mentioning that this has been the characteristic nature of PD activities in most contexts. Most content for PD activities have for long been developed by local and international experts, irrespective of the needs of the practitioners. Richardson and Maggioli (2018) caution that PD activities have to be based on diagnostic studies that enable teachers to develop their own competences, needs, goals and collaboratively develop a procedure that can lead them to realize their goals. Higgins et al. (2018) propose the following ways of ensuring relevance in PD activities: appropriate duration; rhythm; designing for participants' needs; creating a shared sense of purpose; and alignment across various activities. To them these are most likely to have a lasting impact on teacher quality and improved student achievement. Teachers' preference for planning and implementing PD programmes based on needs analysis, necessary materials, appropriate place, as well as facilities was found to be beneficial by Tabatabaee-Yazdi et al. (2018).

Deriving from this, this paper holds that the relevance of PD activities can be drawn from the theory of Planned Behaviour. It explains psychological and personality factors that condition an individual's engagement in a task. The theory is understood to predict and explain human behavior in specific contexts (Ajzen, 1991). Ajzen (1991, p.181) argues that 'intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behavior; they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior'. The theory proposes that volitional human behaviour is a basic function of the intention to perform the behaviour and perceived behavioural control (PBC) (Sniehotta et al., 2014). The theory further explains opinion regarding potential human expectations of actions undertaken and an assessment of potential outcomes with a focus on behavioural beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs (Ajzen, 2006).

Behavioural beliefs are explained to determine why people are likely to make certain decisions and how they rate the productivity of such decisions if implemented. As Ajzen notes, behavioural beliefs produce (un)favourable attitudes toward a particular behaviour. Otherwise, people are more likely to develop the will to carry out certain tasks, depending on how they perceive the benefits of engaging in such tasks. Equally, humans are guided by normative beliefs to make valued decisions about certain behaviours. By normative belief is meant what an individual thinks is the expectations of others in the process of undertaking particular actions or tasks and his perception about the way others may rate his behaviour in a given task. This determines someone's interest in a given task and resultantly leads to perceived social pressure or subjective norm (Ajzen, 2006). In making decisions to undertake certain tasks, human beings examine factors that may constrain or facilitate the performance

Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA

Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

of the behaviour and the perceived power of these factors. Factors that may constrain or facilitate someone's engagement in given tasks range from the person's belief about their competence to the availability of resources that can help them in the process. This is not very different from self-esteem, which leads to perceived behavioural control. As a general rule, the more favourable the attitude and subjective norm, and the greater the perceived control, the stronger should be the person's intention to perform the behaviour in question. Equally, given an acceptable degree of actual control over engagement in certain tasks or actions, people are more likely to execute their intentions as the occasions arise.

In a nutshell, people are most likely to consciously make decisions to be engaged in an activity and implement given activities depending on whether they feel the expectations or outcomes of their engagement in such issues are realistic and whether they feel they have enough human and material capital to implement the activities in question. The absence of one of these tends to weaken the will to perform a task. This explains why intentions-to-act are believed to be the greatest predictor in the execution of certain tasks. To this effect, the HCCC (no date) posits that understanding barriers to positive behaviour and considering additional skills that individuals might need to succeed in action is extremely important for behaviour change programme design. There is considerable awareness on the theory in the fields of Health Science (HCCC, no date) and amongst researchers, practitioners, and policy makers (Sniehotta et al., 2014). Given its saliency in education, its orientation in this paper is tilted more towards PD programmes and implementation. The Theory's strength in explaining internal and external control factors in relation to performing a behaviour makes it more solicited in professional contexts such as educational institutions, where both factors may influence teacher's behaviour (Russo et al. (2015). Technological development has ushered in new media through which teachers engaged in PD activities develop renewed interest in online participation in PD programmes. Richardson and Maggioli (2018) are critical of this innovation vis-à-vis the relevance of PD programmes across contexts. This paper draws on this assess how trainers of PD programs with the US Department of State conceive the programmes they offer Cameroonian English Language teachers

3. Supporting ELT teachers in Cameroon

This section briefly describes teacher development support offered to teachers in Cameroon to assess their relevance. ELT teachers in Cameroon in this decade have obtained enormous support through webinars, conferences, and other online platforms from 'experts' based in the Centre. The teacher development series, for example, *American English Live series 6* and *7* and the American English E-Teacher Self-paced MOOCs webinars offered to teachers worldwide through the US Embassy **with modules ranging from the development of digital skills to student-centred learning** have been widely

Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA

Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

available in Cameroon. The prospects of these support programmes are assessed from the following randomly selected few:

Table1: Sample PD support programmes offered by the US Department of State

Programme	Programme Goals
Digital Literacies: Practical Approaches for the ELT Classroom	It will examine benefits and challenges associated with addressing digital literacies in ELT contexts and will share adaptable activities to help ELLs develop the 21st-century skills that will serve them in the classroom and beyond
Task-Based Language Teaching for Designing Grammar-Focused Communicative Activities	The participants of the viewing group will find answers to such questions as What are some differences between "tasks" and "activities" in the ELT classroom? How does what students do and the final outcome differ in each task and activity?
Curriculum Design and Course Development	Participants will gain a clear sense of design choices and decision points to consider and will receive tools and ideas to help them ensure that courses and curricula meet their students' needs.
Connecting to learn: Growing Professionally through teacher-to-teacher Engagement	How do you connect with and learn from other teachers? Think about where, when, and how you connect when answering.

Source: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/american-english-webinars>

The British Council, in collaboration with some universities in the UK- the University of Manchester, for example, has also developed online trainings for teachers with the hope that teachers will become familiar with modern trends in ELT. Through short-term scholarship schemes, some Cameroonian teachers have been selected for training and sponsored to travel to the US for non-degree/diploma programmes in ELT within the *SUSI* scholarship scheme. This is a scholarship programme developed to allow teachers to experience teaching and learning in the American educational context, which is different from their Cameroonian realities. The Hornby Educational Trust is also one of the leading scholarship providers to teachers seeking further studies in ELT in the UK. The long term provision of the *English Teaching Forum* to teachers by the US Department of State to enable English Language teachers to get different ideas on language teaching activities/procedures has also received keen attention from Cameroonian teachers. Publications in the journal are developed by teachers round the world in view of enriching other teachers' professional

Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA

Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

competences in ELT procedures. A more pragmatic approach in use (not exclusively related to English) by the US government is the Peace Corps Volunteers (PCV), who are trained in Cameroon and sent to teach in Cameroonian secondary schools in the hope of influencing pedagogic innovations amongst Cameroonian teachers. Although there seem to be plenty of initiatives, there is little evidence of their longer-term effects on teacher practice and agency. Such effects seem minimal and therefore necessitate responses to queries related to

1. the basis of the designing of the training modules;
2. knowledge of the participants; and
3. feedback processes to the training.

While such trainings are, of course, intended to be useful, it seems important to examine whether they do in fact achieve their aims or goals. Richards & Farrell (2005) cite Eraut (1995) as suggesting that "... each professional development activity has to be resourced and supported at a level that gives it a reasonable chance of achieving its purpose. Distributing resources over too many separate activities is likely to result in none of them being effective" (p. 18). To have a clearer insight into the reflections, a short open-ended questionnaire was designed for the trainers to complete online in view of understanding the whole process. One of the trainers for the *American English Live series 6* was contacted to explain 1) why the trainer decided to train Cameroonian teachers; 2) what the trainer hopes to achieve in the training; and 3) how the trainer will measure the effectiveness of the training and got the following responses;

1. Several reasons - it's part of my career choice to do teacher education (I don't believe we can use the word "training," because unlike factory work, teaching is not something you can train for - it requires a lot more). I like to interact with people from different cultures and learn new ideas to add to my knowledge. Also, since I think task engagement is crucial, and that technology can help, I feel like when I spread the word I might be helping students around the world.

2. Really just raise awareness of task engagement and simple technology uses and get teachers thinking about what they do.

3. Number of participants in general, how much they participate during the webinar, downloads from the Ning site, comments on FB. Since I don't know who the participants are I can't really ask them, but the State Department does their own evaluation and I'm sure they'll share it with me, too. If even ONE teacher emails me for more information, I'd consider that a success.

Regarding the rationale for training, the facilitator's interest in interacting with people from different cultures gives the hope that the facilitator intends to develop procedures that link with the cultural experiences of the participants to ensure that what is done in the webinar is culturally relevant to the different ecologies in which participants find themselves. Unfortunately, the

Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA

Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

interest is built elsewhere: to interact and learn new knowledge. Equally, the intention to spread task-engagement with the aid of technology to help students round the world supposes that task-engagement fares normally in every learning context. Although there is limited literature to challenge the effectiveness of task-based instruction globally, some background knowledge of the participants' school/learning culture and access to technological resources would be more informative to the relevance of the webinar process. My experience using task-based activities with undergraduate learners in Cameroon has met with a lot of resistance not because it is not productive but simply because the learners have had a long educational culture of explicit grammar transmission from primary to high school. Previous learning/school culture is some background knowledge an outsider would require to conveniently manage PD activities in various contexts.

Raising participants' awareness and having teachers to think about what they do (as expressed in respondent's second opinion (2) above) could be an excellent starting point in engaging them in reflective practices and developing their critical thinking skills. Getting them to figure out what their real concerns are, and finding context-sensitive strategies of dealing with the issues help them think about what is possible with the learners and not just simply learning new things from experts. In terms of the outcomes of the webinar, the respondent acknowledges that s/he has no understanding of the participants and, consequently, their work contexts. Success in the webinar is measured through participants' engagements and verbal feedback. A deeper understanding of both the teachers' work contexts, identities, and what their desires are for their teaching and how they prefer to learn seem to be a good starting point for any PD activities. The effectiveness of PD activities goes with participants' abilities to translate knowledge obtained from the activities into their own pedagogic practices.

In contexts of limited and sporadic access to technology, doing a PD activity based on one-size-fits-all may not be necessary and effective support for teachers. Petrie and Darragh (2018) demonstrate that, despite having contacted teachers in rural Nicaragua to find out what their pressing needs were for the preceding five years, and providing need-based solutions through workshops, distance support, suggesting websites for online resources, providing teacher-resource and teacher-education texts, they noticed that these were no appropriate solutions to teachers' local concerns and development. They warn that '...despite their enthusiasm for learning new strategies and approaches, our patchwork efforts failed to assist the teachers very much in this context'. Support in the Cameroonian context and in Africa in general, whether pre- or in-service, has been flawed by stereotypes of power relations and the inappropriate transplanting of a theoretical stance not fully relevant to the immediate realities and needs of the teacher (Kuchah Kuchah, 2008). Some researchers are critical of teacher development programmes that center on the

Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA

Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

lack of opportunity for teachers to act as authentic actors in practice as they believe that such programmes effectively prevent the representation of realistic pedagogical practices or the creation of professional accountability for teaching approaches and students' learning (Barahona, 2018). The top-bottom one-size-fits all orientation to such support programmes seems to be outdated and it is important for teachers to think about what they are already doing and where they want to go next. From a social constructivist position, support procedures and knowledge that are co-constructed in interaction with others are internalized and reconstructed to become a unique personal resource that is used for further, and often creative, problem solving, both alone and in collaboration with others (Wells, 1995; Teater, 2015).

4.1 Any alternative? The CAMELTA Research Group experiment

The CAMELTA Research Group is made up of English Language and Literature teachers in Cameroon who voluntarily came together to reflect ways of researching their classrooms and sharing experiences as a follow-up to the International Association of teachers of English as a Foreign Language, Research Special Interest Group (IATEFL ReSIG) funded initiative in 2013 (see a detailed explanation of the project in Kuchah Kuchah (2015)). It is worth recalling that a good number of Cameroonian teachers are most likely to go for as long as twenty years without having read any article on ELT, and this is generally associated with teacher attrition. They have no push for reflective practices and have generally resigned to robust practices such that asking them to leave that twilight zone may have little connection with their expectations as teachers.

The CAMELTA Research Group experiment reported by Ekembe and Fonjong (2018) develops insights of how Cameroonian teachers, through gradual scaffolding, demonstrate understanding of their work contexts, prioritise urgent classroom concerns, and through classroom research activities, are able to develop new identities as practitioners capable of providing appropriate responses to context-specific pedagogic challenges in the classroom. The outcome of the experiment tends to obscure the cardinal role of the process in developing agency: teachers' engagement in 1) identifying already existing research questions, classifying them and consciously explaining why they chose the questions can be an alternative way of enhancing their cognitive abilities in the process of reflecting about local constraints and possibilities. 2) Reading and analysing peer-reviewed articles related to their work contexts and exchanging ideas in groups not only situates them within the knowledge production and appropriate teaching strategies for their contexts, but engages their critical thinking abilities while refreshing the language input they need as teachers. In PD, it is believed that changes in language teacher cognition have a significant impact on teacher practices and how their reaction to various teaching conditions, including the use of technology, the application of pedagogical methods, and educational reforms (Guo et al., 2019). 3) Designing

Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA

Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

lessons based on situated problems, teaching the lessons, sharing and receiving feedback from peers develop teacher confidence and offer them opportunities to review their previous conception of what has seemed been ‘very effective’ teaching strategies. Deriving from the theory of Planned Behaviour, they may be implicitly engaged in re-conceptualising and contextualising their teaching procedures. Smith and Padwad (2017) offer interesting accounts of teachers developing appropriate strategies to practical problems they face in their classrooms through collegial efforts and mutual assistance. An essential component of PD is the assimilation of teachers, especially those in low resource contexts, into circumstances where they can collaboratively develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to effectively plan and implement the most suitable teaching strategies for specific classroom environments (Barahona, 2018). Arguably, teachers who pass through these stages end up with better working knowledge than those involved in intermittent conference workshops/trainings. Equally, the idea of reflecting and acting on the constraints of their work context is a more reliable bottom-top approach to identifying locally responsive solutions to their problems and is a lot more productive than support strategies based on generalised concepts and procedures that ignore the realities of the context. Smith (2019) cautions “...alternatives need to be developed which don’t involve inviting “experts” from outside to identify what teachers should be doing in their classrooms. We need more bottom-up alternatives which recognize, build on and enhance teachers’ own expertise and self-esteem... .” (p, 4)

In addition to the bottom-top process-oriented support argued for, the CAMELTA Research Group, in collaboration with pre-service teachers from the Yaounde-based college of education- ENS Yaounde, is engaged in another project: developing worksheets for Cameroonian classrooms. The purpose of the task is to provide a solution to a major local concern expressed by the teachers: lack of course materials in Cameroonian classrooms. This is the second of the top three classroom priority needs expressed by the teachers (see Ekembe & Fonjong, 2018). The worksheets are intended to reflect the school curriculum in design and based on teachers’ experience working in Cameroonian classrooms in keeping with their understanding of their learners’ and learning conditions. There is general understanding amongst Cameroonian teachers that the available materials, apart from being expensive for an average Cameroonian, barely connect with the learners’ experiences. The Research Group therefore found it needful to develop supplementary materials that are broadly true to the spirit of the curriculum goals, while being realistically teachable and affordable in Cameroonian classrooms. The intention is to render them available in print and open access versions, so that both teachers and learners can use anytime.

4. 2 The project.

Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA

Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

The school curriculum for the first year of secondary schools was sent out to the CAMELTA Research Group members through our whatsapp platform for them to examine its structure and contents (with guiding questions provided) for discussions on a commonly agreed date. The intention here was to get the teachers familiar with the curriculum, which they too often see as complicated and not worth looking at. There has been a general belief across time that the curriculum is the work of ‘experts’ (Barahona, 2018). Placing teachers in a situation of analysing and uncovering the curriculum reduces the common tension that exists between teachers and the school curriculum. In another online meeting, we discussed the curriculum independently of learners before brainstorming on challenges our learners face interacting in their social environments. In the online discussions, questions to elicit ideas from participants were horizontally constructed to generate interactive discussions. They often were indirect, supported with suggestions to create a safe space for mutual exchange of ideas and preclude any form of suspicion of judgment. The interaction on the forum was later coded, reported on and sent back to teachers on the platform to see if it was consistent with their thinking and discussion during the meeting. See example below:

Figure 1: Coding from CAMELTA Research Group online meeting



In another online meeting, teachers were guided to identify possible classroom solutions to the problems identified in the previous meeting, bearing their learners in mind. The ongoing discussions made no conscious reference

Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA
Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

to the curriculum. In other words, we did not link up any aspect of the ideas generated from the curriculum, which participants had earlier on assessed. The discussions were again coded, reported on and provided to them for their assessment. A framework task based on the coding from the two interactive discussions was provided for participants to key in details from the coding into a table reflecting the various language skills to be developed. See figure below:

Figure 2: Coding from CAMELTA Research Group online meeting into a framework task

CAMELTA Research Group

Framework Task for developing worksheets for beginning EFL secondary school learners
 Complete the table, following the instructions provided
 Below is a summary of all the brainstorming we have had in our two meetings. Select elements from the box that fit in each of the columns in the table. You may add more as you deem necessary

Group Brainstorming: Introductions, politeness; instructions; asking for directions; asking about others, places, complaints; describing people; doing house chores/ the washing up; making new friends, shopping, completing forms, Worshipping and praying, playing, sleeping, watching TV; Toilet, classroom, office, infirmary, staffroom, dining shed, kitchen, bedroom, living room; Teachers, traders, friends, politeness, open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, critical thinking, Team spirit/collaboration, generosity, respect, sincerity & honesty, self-esteem, self-awareness, awareness of environment; Developing the 'self' to interact with other learners, greetings, saying thank you or bye, introducing oneself, introducing a friend, classmate, talking about one's family members; Name titles; exchanging personal information- name, age, nationality; talking about close family members and extended family members; asking for and giving directions, etc.

NB: You must not complete each column as some activities overlap. E.g. Activities for picture analysis can overlap into writing and reading etc.. We're going creative, as we're looking at local life in 'Our Environment'. Do not forget worksheets are activity-based and mostly build on the local experience of the learners especially in the case of young learners.

Everyday Experiences in the Environment	Topic	Spoken and Written expressions	Reading	Listening	Game/puzzle or class activity
Shopping	At the (Makoko) market	How much? 2 liters of... etc.,	Short texts on different commodities sold in various places and in different markets accompanied with pictures. (Note that this could also be pictures/drawings)	Listen to a 'buyam-sellam'; Communicative event between a buyer and seller (Main product here is to have a complete bidding discussion out top press for a member in each group of learners to read aloud to other members of the group who listen to identify where that fits in a real time market scenario)	Where to get it: Here, I will get multiple pictures of small sets of different elements sold in our local markets; Get bigger sized flash cards carrying the labels 'old shirt', 'clothes', 'shop', 'grocery', 'butcher'; group the learners and ask them to pick each picture from a bundle and decide where to place it in groups they decide which is correct

The interest is to get teachers tally their work with what is found in the curriculum in order to keep pace with it by the end of this phase of the scheme. It is hoped that this will give them a greater sense of confidence if they are able to relate the ideas they have generated with what is found in the curriculum. If not, going back to the curriculum to verify their ideas, gives them more opportunities to reconceptualise the curriculum and be able to assess its appropriateness to the Cameroonian context. Either ways, expertise and agency is gradually being cultivated through collegial commitment in the process to achieve a common goal.

Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA

Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

The idea of reflecting, brainstorming, and sharing ideas on what constitutes learners' social problems, examining the problems in the light of the curriculum and factoring those problems into supplementary learning materials for learners will lead to appropriate ways of contextualising teaching and learning. The advantage of this approach cuts across policy and practice as shared by Petrie and Darragh (2018):

1. It assists teachers with noticing and understanding the principles with which the activities are designed.
2. Teachers who use it grow in their understanding of the content in the curriculum and why certain methods have been chosen.
3. Teachers grow in their ability to predict ideas that students may have during the activities and to brainstorm ways of modifying the curriculum.

The teachers at this initial stage of the project discuss the curriculum with a sense of confidence. Teachers making informed decisions on materials and whatever procedures work with their learners are most likely to develop autonomy.

5. Conclusion

The commonly cited problems in low-resource contexts are generally associated with the constraints of the classrooms. This supposes that the classroom essentially offers the most valid ways of measuring teachers' abilities to overcome the constraints. It has not yet been sufficiently demonstrated that teachers' development across time is the result of generalised support. More available evidence rather associates teacher development to experience accrued through testing different procedures in their classroom and through collegial interaction between teachers (Richards & Farrell, 2005). The PD activities reviewed here rather demonstrate outsiders' general knowledge of ELT. It is not realistic grooming professional competences through programmes that imagined to work for all types of contexts (Barahona, 2018). In this connection, Ekembe (2016) advocates the need to situate PD support within the broader educational context rather than the narrow ELT scope. The experiments of the CAMELTA Research Group described in this paper offer ways of developing a framework of PD through a systematic set of activities that culminate in a meaningful whole along which teachers develop through interacting with one another following mutually-determined goals. There is increased sense of agency if this is crafted on a common context challenge and supported through locally-responsive strategies generated by participants collectively working out pathways. Through engagement in the activities, agency is developed, teachers' sense of deficit subverted and attrition checked. Further insights into this could elicit practical details on the form of support necessary in the circumstances imposed by the corona virus.

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Supporting teacher agency and professional development (in ELTAs) in low-resourced contexts: Reflections from CAMELTA

Eric Enongene Ekembe, Ph.D.

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