



THE IMPACT OF TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME ON TEACHING METHODOLOGY: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF NOVICE TEACHERS

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Article Received:16/05/2020

Article Accepted: 14/06/2020

Published online: 18/06/2020

DOI: [10.33329/rjelal.8.2.224](https://doi.org/10.33329/rjelal.8.2.224)

Abstract

This paper explores how teacher education programme can affect the teaching methodology of novice teachers. The basic premise is that novice teachers teach the way they were taught by their teachers in teacher education programme. Teacher education programme such as B. Ed (Bachelor of Education) or M. Ed (Master of Education) is largely responsible for the imitation/replication of the teaching methodologies of novice teachers. At each stage, novice teachers consciously or unconsciously learn different theories/methods of learning and teaching from their teacher educators. These memories, gained from each stage, remain and are reflected in their everyday teaching. Hence, there is a need to make the novice teachers aware of the unconscious impact B. Ed or M. Ed might have on the way they teach. Therefore, the aim of this study is to explore the impact of teacher education programme on the novice teachers' teaching methodology. The study hypothesizes that the novice teachers replicate the teaching methodologies of their teachers/educators. The study answers the research questions: i. Are the novice teachers aware of the impact of teacher education programme on their teaching methodology? ii. What are the ways in which teacher education programme affects the novice teachers' teaching methodology? Seven novice teachers from government schools are the subjects of the study. The research tools used are questionnaire and classroom observation. The results indicate that the novice teachers are aware of impact of teacher education programme on their teaching methodology. The results also reveal that the novice teachers teach the way they were taught by their teacher educators. The replication of their teachers' teaching methodology becomes obsolete and affects current teaching in the classroom.

Keywords: Teacher Education Programme, Teaching Methodology, Novice Teachers

Introduction

Teachers learn, teach and learn to teach. Teachers initially learn the language, teach the language and then learn to teach the language. Hence, it is important to understand learning, teaching and learning individually and learning-teaching-learning as a process in unison. While

learning to teach during a teacher training programme, novice teachers as trainees intentionally and consciously learn to teach from their teacher educators. While observing them closely, certain teaching philosophies, theories, concepts, methods of learning and teaching get stored/remain long in their mind. Such memories

gained from teacher educators will be reflected when they start teaching in the classroom. Lortie (1975) coined the term 'Apprenticeship of Observation' in his book 'Schoolteacher: A sociological study'. He coined the term to refer to teachers who learn to teach by observing other teachers and imitating their teaching traits. After having observed closely, teachers tend to replicate/imitate certain instructional practices of their teachers and teacher educators. The term 'apprenticeship of observation' has since then become synonymous with teachers teaching the way they were taught. One of the consequences of teacher education programme is that the student teachers may fail to realise that the aspects of teaching (positive or negative) which they perceived as trainees represented a partial view or observable behaviours of the teacher's job such as monitoring, correcting and lecturing. Student teachers may in the process fail to perceive the tacit behaviours of the teacher's job (particularly methodology). This tendency of imitation may lead novice teachers to revert to their default model, thus, resulting in teaching the way they were taught. The teacher training programme can, therefore, influence the way (teaching methodology) the novice teachers teach (instructional practices) in the class.

The Research Problem

Teacher as an average learner/student of language spends 13,000 hours in direct contact with classroom teachers (Lortie 1975). Teachers learn a lot from prior language learning experiences, apprenticeship of observation and teacher education. Many of teachers' teaching approaches, actions, interactions, decisions etc are not simply a direct result of their teacher education and teacher training may impact the novice teachers' current teaching methodology positively or negatively. Novice teachers as trainees observe their trainers' approach, strategy and method of teaching, used in the classroom. Novice teachers do not just enter teacher education programmes as blank slates (tabula rasa), but they arrive with prior language learning experiences (having observed their teachers teach them in a certain method/approach), knowledge and certain beliefs

about teaching, apprenticeship of observation and teacher education programme. Student teachers, after observing their teachers and teacher educators closely, imbibe certain teaching styles and methodologies of the teachers observed. These prior teaching experiences of teachers as learners and trainees shape/impact not only the teaching practices but also the beliefs about teaching. Student or novice teachers do take their teachers and teacher educators as role models in the way they teach, in the way, they take decisions and in the way, they manage classroom dynamics. Hence, teacher education programmes are largely responsible for many of the beliefs and pre-conceptions that pre-service, teachers, novice teachers and experienced teachers hold about teaching and learning.

The teaching style and methodology of teachers differ from teacher to teacher depending on whether the teacher is in his/her initial years of teaching (novice teacher) or with many years of teaching experience (experienced teachers). Their current teaching methodology may have been impacted by different theories of teaching learnt at teacher training programmes. Some novice teachers may practise certain teaching approaches, principles or methodologies of their teacher educators. The replication of their teacher educators' teaching methodologies might lead them toward more traditional views and practices of teaching. While teachers' general experiences as learners may, indeed, assert a tremendous influence on who they become as teachers. It was also observed that trainees and novice teachers make decisions about the type of teacher they want to be and the kind of teaching situations they want to foster or avoid based on positive and negative images they have had created during their early teacher training experiences. It was also noted that the trainees or novices' model of good teaching was often reinforced when their positive images of teacher educators bore some resemblance to their own personality traits.

Teachers as apprentices learn not only the theories and concepts but also learn to teach. Teacher trainees and novice teachers are thought to bring with them both positive and negative

images of teaching, from which they create stereotypes of good and bad teaching respectively. For example, it can be noted that the majority of the novice teachers in government schools nowadays did not work with computers throughout their schooling years and teacher education programmes, therefore, their well-established ideas, beliefs, notions and understanding of good teaching would probably not include such technologies (computers, internet, projector etc.,) and the latest teaching approaches. Another example, the majority of ESL teachers in government schools have gone through traditional learning and teaching approaches, thus these persistent notions, ideas and images from the past can make it difficult for them to adapt constructivist/modern approaches to teaching. The present study is thus an attempt. Hence, the purpose of this paper is not to pass any judgement on how negatively novice teachers' teaching methods are affected, but understanding the nature and magnitude of the impact of teacher training on their current teaching methods.

Review of Researches

Novice teachers' personal beliefs, teaching methodologies, teacher knowledge and teaching practice are affected by PLLE, AoO, teacher education programme and teaching experience. Through their teacher education, novice teachers are initiated into teaching profession. This process may sometimes create a tension between choosing old and new teaching methods/approaches. For a better understanding of their personal and professional formation as teachers, investigating novice teachers' biographical background, PLEE, AoO, and the aspects of daily teaching is essential. It is often believed that teacher education courses do affect trainee/novice teachers. Once these teachers enter teaching profession, they may teach exactly as they were taught during teacher education programmes. Novices have fresh memories of their trainers teaching approaches, hence may tend to replicate them in their teaching. However, novice teachers can/do overcome the impact of training programme.

A few research studies support this stand. This is very much evident in the study of Borg, M. (2005) which demonstrates that trainee teacher's pre-course beliefs were influenced mostly by their negative prior language learning experiences. An example of this is the result of CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) course where trainee's belief in an anti-didactic, student-centred teaching methodology, was formed as a reaction to their experience in teacher-centred classrooms characterised by boring teacher-fronted lecturing. Also rooted in their positive and negative PLLEs with school teachers were their beliefs about L2 teachers. The trainee teachers believed that teachers should be positive, patient, empathetic, and respectful towards students; use humour; make their lessons appealing; and create a relaxed, comfortable, and non-judgemental classroom atmosphere while teaching. A trainee teacher, for instance, tended to lecture the learners and to provide negative feedback on the spot to their responses during class hours. Borg claims, however, that by the end of the course trainee teachers were able to bring their beliefs in line with their teaching practice and successfully moved from lecturing to a student-focused lesson with maximum student involvement. The trainee teachers eventually managed to break free from their negative past experiences. This development, which the trainees seem to have experienced, might be because, during the course, the trainees observed and tried alternative teaching practices, which were congruent with their teaching beliefs, as is revealed by the trainees on several occasions.

The influence of the teacher training programmes on teachers' teaching is also reported in Urmston's (2003) longitudinal study about the beliefs and knowledge of thirty pre-service teachers enrolled in a BA TESL course in Hong Kong. Aware of the disparity between the communicative principles advocated by their teacher training course and the teacher-centred and transmission-oriented teaching norms in Hong Kong, the trainee teachers stuck to their pre-existing beliefs and experienced few changes in their perspectives of key aspects of teaching during the course. It has been suggested that, unless teacher-training

courses acknowledge the power of pre-training beliefs and knowledge and encourage trainee teachers to reflect upon their validity, they may do little to help trainee teachers to outgrow their existing rationales and to develop more professional conceptualisations of teaching. Several studies have actually stressed the need to attend to trainee and student teachers' PLLE and some others have even proposed ways to help trainee teachers to move beyond the impact of apprenticeship of observation.

Grounded in the perspective that biography is central to teaching, Rinke, C.R., Lynnet te Mawhinney & Park, G (2014) investigated undergraduate pre-service teachers' educational experiences, views on teaching and learning, and professional plans. The study explored the pre-service teachers' career paths by attending to the experiences of educators when they were students in secondary classrooms. The authors draw upon life history interviews with 40 prospective teachers at three institutions across Pennsylvania, USA. They find that prior language learning experiences are intricately connected with career choice, intended professional path, and pedagogical focus. Their study identified and discussed three forms of modelling – disciplinary, mentoring and empowering, which had influenced pre-service teachers in their teaching practices in the classroom. The study aimed to extend existing knowledge about teachers' career pathways by focusing on those educational experiences that had taken place prior to teacher education and teaching profession. The study captured the life history experiences, particularly those in secondary classrooms, which lead students toward a career choice in teaching. The study had also offered an in-depth enquiry into prior language learning experiences of schooling and illuminated the elements of teacher identity formation present well before teacher preparation.

Smith C (2003, cited in O'Connel Rust 2010) advocates the adoption of an inquiry stance on the part of teacher educators mirroring or modelling the approach to teaching and learning that their trainee teachers should adopt. However, changing the way trainee teachers are taught to teach must

incorporate more than immediate practice and inquiry around that practice. Teacher education must enable prospective teachers to grapple with their own experience as learners. For, it is the long period that stretches from early childhood through college or graduate school that constitutes an "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975). Watching teachers for decades at a time accounts for a significant portion of a pre-service, novice and trainee teacher's development and shapes the tacit images of teaching that shape how teachers teach (Korthagen, et al., 2006, cited in Rust 2010).

Kuzhabekova & Zhaparova (2015) studied whether apprenticeship of observation during a graduate course using active learning techniques has an impact on novice and experienced teachers' attitudes towards active learning instruction. Teacher education candidates participated in the case study. The context of the study is placed in Khazakistan. The study hypothesized that given the life-long nature of education; the influence of apprenticeship of observation should not be limited to the prior language learning experiences. The study elicited data from a survey of students taking the course, which was focused on educational issues rather than methodological training. The results of the study confirms the hypotheses that apprenticeship of observation has an influence on teachers not only during pre-service training, but also at later stages of their teaching, when they become involved in professional development or continuing education. The influence of apprenticeship of observation was especially noticeable for teachers with no or little exposure to professional development. The study also claims that the teachers in Kazakstan lack specialized training in innovative instructional methods. The results indicate that the instructional beliefs and practices of teachers had been negatively affected by the prior language learning experiences as students in a teacher-centred classroom. The results also have shown that the effect of the apprenticeship of observation has been greater for less experienced teachers who had fewer opportunities for professional development than the more experienced teachers did. These less experienced teachers also felt less effective and

knowledgeable in the use of active learning techniques prior to the course and experienced a greater decrease in their self-evaluation of effectiveness because of the course. The results discussed above indicate that the teacher-training programme does affect the way teachers teach in the class. Ultimately, teacher education programmes would determine the current teaching methods and instructional practices of teachers.

From the studies discussed above, it can be stated that there is impact of teacher training programmes upon teachers' belief change, and the transfer of prior teaching methods and techniques, which have bearing on their current teaching practices in the classroom. Teachers prefer a particular teaching approach or method in class depending on the context they teach in. Teachers also replicate a particular teaching technique of a particular teacher depending on the context and need of the learners. Replicating a particular method/approach might have positive results (even if the method is quite obsolete), because learners might be learning better with the help of that particular method or approach.

These studies discussed above therefore bear some relevance to the present research study because the novice teachers in this study also imitate teaching approaches observed in teacher education programmes. Moreover, they enhance the understanding of the nature and impact of teacher training programmes since these experiences entail not only the imitation and conceptualisation of teaching but also the development of teaching methodologies.

Research Methodology

This research study is an exploratory study in nature.

The aim

The aim of this study is to explore the impact of teacher education programme on the novice teachers' teaching methodology.

Hypothesis

The study hypothesizes that the novice teachers replicate the teaching methodologies of

their teachers/educators and it affects their current teaching.

Research Questions

The study answers the research questions:

- Are the novice teachers aware of the impact of teacher education programme on their teaching methodology?
- What are the ways in which teacher education programme affects the novice teachers' teaching methodology?

Research sample

Seven novice teachers from government schools are the subjects of the study.

Table No.1: Profile of Novice Teachers

Teacher	Gender	Age	Education	Teaching Experience
NT 1	F	25	MA, PGDTE and B. Ed	2 years
NT 2	F	27	MA and B. Ed	3 years
NT 3	M	30	MA, PGDTE, and B. Ed	4 years
NT 4	F	27	MSc and B. Ed	2 years
NT 5	F	23	MA and B. Ed	1 year
NT 6	F	28	MA and B. Ed	3 years
NT 7	M	27	MA and B. Ed	2 years

The table also indicates that there are five female novice teachers and two male novice teachers. All of them are aged between 23 to 30. The seven novice teachers are post-graduates and they do have B. Ed (Bachelor of Education). Novice teachers 1 and 3 even completed PGDTE (Post Graduate Diploma in Teacher Education). From the table, it is evident that all the novice teachers are in their initial years of teaching.

Description of tools

Table 2: Description of Tools

Tool	Why	How	Data	Analysis
Questionnaire	To elicit memories	Time was given to respond to the questionnaire	Awareness of their teachers' teaching practices	Mostly qualitative and partly quantitative
Classroom observation	To observe their instructional practices	2 classes of each teacher (a total of 12 classes)	The actual teaching practice	Qualitative Vignettes

Questionnaire

Questionnaire was used to elicit the awareness of the participants about their teacher education programme journey. The participants were encouraged to recollect their experience of teacher training programme. The hunch is that their training could be responsible for teachers' relevant or irrelevant teaching methods in the classroom.

Classroom observation

This tool was a major source of data in this study since it involved the observation of the actual teaching methods of the participants in the

Analysis of Questionnaire

classroom (e.g., their teaching approach, teaching materials, classroom interaction, decisions, actions,). An observation checklist was used in the classroom to make note of the instructional practices of teachers in the classroom. **Data Analysis**

It is an exploratory study. Hence, the data were analyzed mostly qualitatively except for the yes/no questions in all the sections of the questionnaire, which were analyzed quantitatively.

Table 3: Novice teachers' awareness of teaching methodology

Novice Teachers	Teacher Educators' Teaching Method	Teacher educators' Materials	Teacher educators' Error correction	Teacher educators' Classroom interaction
NT 1	Grammar translation method	Textbooks, charts & AV	On the spot	Trainer-trainee
NT 2	Structural approach	Charts & pictures	On the spot	Trainer-trainee trainee-trainee
NT 3	Communicative language teaching	Authentic materials	With examples	Trainer-trainee & trainee-trainee
NT 4	Activity based	Dictionary	On the spot	-
NT 5	Traditional	Textbooks	On the spot	Trainer-trainee
NT 6	Traditional	Course materials	On the spot	Trainer-trainee
NT 7	-	-	On the spot	Trainer-trainee

From the responses listed in table no. 3 above, it can be observed that the majority (6/7) of the novice teachers are aware of their teacher educators' instructional practices. Concerning teaching approach, NT1 stated that his teacher educators adopted grammar translation method,

for NT2 – structural approach, for NT3- CLT, for NT4 – activity based, for NTs 5 & 6 – traditional approach, and NT7 has not mentioned anything. Majority (5/7) of seven novice teachers' teacher educators taught language in a traditional method.

This reveals that they are aware of teaching method of teacher educators.

Concerning teaching materials, NTs1, 2, 5 & 6 mentioned that their teacher educators had used prescribed textbook, charts and pictures. Teacher educators of NT 3 utilized authentic materials. NT4 mentioned dictionary and NT7 has not responded to the question. Majority (4/7) of novice teachers' teacher educators had made use of the prescribed textbook in their classes. This shows that the novice teachers are aware of the teaching materials used by their teacher educators. This awareness would enable the novice teachers to know what teaching materials their teacher educators adopted and realise if they replicate some of the teaching materials of their teacher educators.

Overall, the results from table above indicate that the novice teachers are aware of the instructional practices of their teacher educators. This awareness would enable them to know how they teach and realise if they replicate some of the teaching materials of their teacher educators. As the table indicates, the majority of novice teachers' teacher educators seem to be following traditional methods of teaching and teacher-student interactions, prescribed textbook, on the spot error correction, more TTT and fixed TAZ. Therefore, it can be stated that these novice teachers' instructional practices are influenced by their teacher educators' teaching practices. This is very much evident in the classroom observations where some of the novice teachers too seem to be following the traditional teaching approaches,

prescribed textbook, on the spot error correction, and teacher-student interactions in the class where student-student interaction is the need of the hour as the CCE model textbooks demand CLT method of teaching. Hence, there is a mismatch between the demands of the curriculum and the teaching approaches of novice teachers. This indicates that novice teachers need to overcome the negative impact of teacher education programme.

Some novice teachers (10%) are not aware of the instructional practices adopted by their teacher educators during teacher training programme. If the teachers are aware of how (instructional practices) their teacher educators taught them, then they would know the sources of the negative impact of replicating the instructional practices on their daily teaching. The results reveal that the novice teachers are aware of the teaching methodology, approaches and strategies of teacher educators. This awareness would enable to know how they teach and realise if they imitate the teaching methods of their teacher educators.

Analysis of Classroom Observations

Two classes of each novice and experienced teacher were observed. All observations were carried over a period of two months. Each period for a class was of 45 minutes. The lessons from the prescribed textbook, grammar, writing and pronunciation were taught. The researcher was a non-participant observer. The table below presents similarity of the instructional practices adopted by these novice teachers and their teachers.

Table No. 4 Comparison of instructional practices of novice teachers

Instructional practices	PLLE (teachers of novice teachers)	AoO (teacher educators of novice teachers)	Current teaching (of novice teachers)
Teaching approach	Lecture	Lecture	Lecture
Tasks, activities and materials	No tasks	No tasks	No tasks
Use of textbook	Fixed textbook	Fixed textbook	Fixed textbook
Error correction	On the spot	On the spot	On the spot
TTT+LTT	More TTT, less LTT	More TTT, less LTT	More TTT, less LTT
TAZ	Fixed	Fixed	Fixed

The table above reveals that there is a lot of similarity between the teaching methods of novice

teachers and the teaching methods of their teachers and teacher educators. It is evident from

the table that their teachers and teacher educators taught using lecture method in their classes and novice teachers. From the classroom observation, it is obvious that the novice teachers too teach using lecture method. Hence, it can be concluded that the novice teachers replicate the teaching method of their teachers and teacher educators. The teachers and teacher educators of novice teachers had not used any tasks and activities in their classes. The classroom observation shows that novice teachers too did not make use of any tasks or activities in their classes. This shows that they do imitate their teachers and teacher educators in the way they teach.

The table above further reveals that her teachers and teacher educators had corrected the errors of the students on the spot. From the classroom observation, it is clear that they too correct the language errors of the students on the spot. Novice teachers' teachers and teacher educators utilized only the textbooks in their classes. The same was observed in most of the novice teachers' classes too. Further, their teachers and teacher educators did not involve their students in any speaking activities, which shows that there was more TTT than LTT. Novice teachers too did not involve students in any speaking tasks hence; there is more TTT than LTT in their classes too. From the table, it is vivid that their teachers and teacher educators had a fixed TAZ and the same was so in novice teachers' classes.

Over all, the results from the classroom observation indicate that the novice teachers (4/7) teach the way they were taught by their teachers and teacher educators. Hence, it can be concluded that the PLLE and AoO affect/influence ESL teachers' teaching practice. This answers the second research question concerning the ways (instructional practices) in which AoO affects ESL teachers' teaching practice.

Conclusion

It is evident and accepted that prospective teachers bring with them a wealth of knowledge about teaching and learning to the classroom. Novice teachers would have noticed certain teaching approaches/methods/styles, materials,

classroom interaction of their teacher educators. The understanding and close observation of their teachers and the trainers would unknowingly become the basis for the way they teach in the classroom when they become teachers. Hence, it can be stated that teachers replicate certain methods, materials, and classroom activities of their teachers, which may have impact on their daily teaching in the classroom. To elaborate, teachers learn a lot about teaching from teacher training programme. During their apprenticeship period they observe their trainers closely and develop certain teaching methods/ approaches/ styles, materials and classroom interaction patterns. As novice teachers, their knowledge base about teaching learning would be filled with rich experiences from training. Hence, when these novices start teaching, they would have repertoire of teaching models/methods/approaches to follow. There is, thus, every possibility for novice teachers to fall back on the models observed during teacher education programme. However, replicating their teachers' or trainers' approaches, materials and interactions might not be always fruitful since these may not be relevant/helpful in their current teaching. Therefore, such replication might affect their current practice rather negatively. It is argued that one of the primary sources of teacher knowledge and teaching practice for teachers is gained through their own teacher education programme. In particular, through observations of their own teachers, trainers and mentors, teachers begin to develop knowledge base and teaching methodology. Bandura's (1977) social learning theory of development emphasizes the important role that the observation of others' behaviour plays in the process of shaping an individual's knowledge structures and actions. The importance of close observation of teachers and learning to teach from their (teachers') teaching is echoed in research on apprenticeship, which emphasizes modelling behaviour. The basic premise of this study, therefore, is that novice teachers need to be aware of the underlying positive and negative impact of replicating the teaching approaches of trainers in order to be effective and reflective in their daily teaching.

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