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Reflection for Specific Purposes: the use of Reflection

by Nigerian English Language Teachers

Timi Bekere Hyacinth

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in

English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics
University of Warwick, Centre for Applied Linguistics

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work and that it has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or professional qualification.

Timi Bekere Hyacinth

ABSTRACT

Reflection is yet to be fully understood as a concept, practice and experience in many English language teacher education programmes. The calls for data-led studies to prove its benefits and to make the concept less vague continue against a new argument that academic presentations of reflective inquiry may be flawed because teachers perceive reflection differently. Studies suggest that many trainees, teachers and teacher educators still do not understand reflection, and that rejections or fleeting tolerance of reflection by teachers or trainees may be connected to top-down approaches to teaching reflective practice. In a two year exploratory, interpretive research study of Nigerian English language teachers, the Nigerian ELT context is explored for evidence of reflective inquiry. The study integrates classroom explorations, teacher group meetings, focus group and individual interviews that aim to project the voices of participants. Reflection is identified in the context in teachers who used it intuitively and through those who have participated in a formal reflective international teacher development course. Findings show that reflection is multifaceted, distinctively construed and used for specific purposes. Four types of reflection are identified: learner-centred reflection; teacher-centred reflection; skill-centred reflection and knowledge-centred reflection. By comparing the two groups of participants' perspectives of reflection and their use of reflection, the benefit and potential of reflection to bring change and development in the context is highlighted. The study shows that as participants progress through the spectrum of reflection-in-use that was identified in the study, they make sense of teaching and learning and of themselves as teachers; moving from intuitive encounters of reflection-in-use to the more explicit zones of systematic reflection. The study concludes that because reflection is multifaceted and used in specific ways, teacher educators will need to develop specific and relevant learning tools to teach it in more teacher-centred ways.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AR   Action Research

BA   Bachelor of Art

BANA   Britain Australasia and North America

BERA   British Educational Research Association

CELTA   Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

          (Formerly Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults)

CICTT   Cambridge International Certificate for Teachers and Trainers

CIDTT   Cambridge International Diploma for Teachers and Trainers

CAL   Centre for Applied Linguistics

ELT   English Language Teaching

ELTAN   English Language Teachers Association of Nigeria

FME   Federal Ministry of Education

FRN   Federal Republic of Nigeria

GCE   General Certificate of Examination

JSS   Junior Secondary School

L   Line/Lines

L1   First Language

L2   English as a Second Language

NCE	National Certificate for Education
NCCE	National Commission for Colleges of Education
NECO	National Examination Council
NPC	National Population Commission
NPE	National Policy of Education
NTI	National Teachers' Institute
PGDE	Postgraduate Diploma in Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PLG	Pro Learning Group
R	Researcher (in data)
RP	Reflective Practice
SLTE	Second Language Teacher Education
SSCE	Secondary School Certificate Exams
S-SS	Student to Students
SS-SS	Students to Students
SS-T	Students to Teacher
S-T	Student to Teacher
ST	Student Teacher
STs	Student Teachers
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education

TA	Teacher Association
TEd	Teacher Education
TG	Teachers' Group
TGM	Teacher's Group Meeting
TP	Teaching Practice
TRCN	Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria
T-SS	Teacher to Students
UBE	Universal Basic Education
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
WASCE	West African Secondary Certificate Examination

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Rationale

According to Mann & Walsh (2013: 289) 'while reflective practice (RP) has established itself as a ubiquitous presence in professional education and practice, its current status is not supported by detailed, systematic and data-led description of either its nature or value'. Wright (2010) identifies RP as an element of second language teacher education (SLTE), which requires further explorations and in-depth studies. There also appears to be a need to make the concept and experience of RP less vague and more explicit. Thus Rodgers (2002: 843) says: 'without a clear picture of what reflection looks like, it is difficult to talk about it'. Arguments like this show the need for further research on reflection and reflective practice. This study therefore sets out to carry out data-led descriptions of reflection and reflective practice from the perspectives of teachers in an attempt to characterize it and highlight its nature and value for SLTE. This becomes more important in the light of other arguments that state that teacher educators and teachers perceive reflection differently and that academic presentations of reflection to teachers may be problematic (Lytle and Cochran-Smith 1991, Fendler 2003, Akbari 2007). This study will therefore provide from Nigerian classrooms, clearer descriptions of reflection that are less academic and more practical,

thus making reflection less vague and more accessible to teachers and teacher educators. Another rationale for this study is the need to extend and interrogate previous models of reflection so that a basis will be established for further research by exploring the benefits of their application in real practice.

As a Nigerian English language teacher and teacher educator, I first came upon the idea of reflection in 2005, in a Cambridge CELTA course. While it was an assessment requirement, I could not fully understand the concept as it was not explicitly taught. Because I did not understand what reflection meant within the context of teaching practice, I faced certain difficulties. I could for example, see that my tutors wanted me to be more critical about my teaching. However, I had no clear basis for what I perceived was a compulsory requirement to acknowledge my inadequacies after a teaching episode before my colleagues (other student teachers on the course) and my tutors. I was reluctant to expose myself to this public scrutiny but was compelled to try if I was to pass the course. The problems of integrating reflection into course assessments are highlighted by Hobbs (2007). According to Hobbs (2007: 410) 'when one is asked to reflect on his/her strengths and weaknesses as part of a required, graded course assignment, it seems, then, that genuine examination of self is already a lost cause'. Somehow, I managed to pass the course without understanding the very principles of reflection on which it was built.

In 2006 therefore, I enrolled on a master of education programme in the UK. There, I encountered reflection as both concept and 'practice' albeit within the context of exploring my own learning on the course through weekly reports to my tutor (another course requirement). This time I completed this course, convinced that reflection plays a significant role in teacher development. However, reflection remained for me, a difficult concept to comprehend or explain. In more recent years, as a teacher educator, and accredited programme leader for two courses: Cambridge International Certificate for Teachers and Trainers (CICTT) and Cambridge International Diploma for Teachers and Trainers (CIDTT), I have found myself in the same position as my CELTA tutors who integrated reflection into assessment of teaching practice without being able to **fully** communicate the idea, concept or practice of reflection to me, their student. This may be due in part to the dearth of research that clearly describes reflection from real practice. According to Jay and Johnson (2002: 73) 'if the concept itself seems difficult to characterize, it is even more difficult to teach'. This study will therefore attempt to characterize reflection through the experience and voices of Nigerian English language teachers. By carrying out the study, I hope to provide evidence of reflection as a less vague phenomenon which can be taught in more explicit ways. For me, this will also be a professional development experience which will also fill a knowledge gap in my practice.

In recent years, the general performance of Nigerian students in English language in the West African Examination Council's (WAEC) Secondary School Certificate Exams

(SSCE) has dropped and less than 30% of over a million of these students (taking the yearly exams) have a credit in English language. There are frequent calls for change by government and other stakeholders and in-service teacher education is looked upon as a possible solution regardless of how it is perceived, designed or carried out. As a teacher educator this is a concern. This study is therefore carried out in hope that new ways of engaging Nigerian English language teachers in self-initiated professional development can be identified from the context, including their potential to influence learner and teacher performance in more positive ways. I am convinced that a study of reflection and its use both in practice and in teacher development is significant to this process.

Teacher development often exists in Nigeria as a top-down, non-teacher initiated activity, which largely derives from policy makers' and administrators' perception of what teachers need. Since each teacher's needs are unique and are largely determined by the peculiar context they work in, there is a need to identify alternative ways to in-service teacher education which incorporate bottom-up approaches that are more reflective, teacher-friendly, realistic and feasible with the teacher as the focal point. According to Wright (2005) 'professional knowledge is ultimately personal and forged through experience of professional action' (Wright 2005: 256). The professional knowledge that Nigerian English language teachers need to improve practice will need to emerge from the context if it is to become more appropriate and suitable to support Nigerian practitioners who daily face the challenges of teaching English in difficult circumstances (2.3). A key rationale for this study is therefore, to integrate Nigerian teachers' voices and experience of reflection through exploratory, interpretive research

so that more opportunities will be created for co-construction of knowledge about teaching and learning processes (Field et al 1997). The study will also fill a knowledge gap in the context where reflection and reflective practice are still relatively new ideas which are not explicitly mentioned in the unified teacher education curriculum.

In a bid to make reflection less vague and tangible, through data-led descriptions of its use in classroom practice, the research question is: 'how do Nigerian English language teachers use reflection?' This study will answer this question through joint collaborations and explorations with Nigerian English teachers.

1.2 Study aims

'Reflective inquiry' has been widely advocated for all teachers as a way to improve practice, develop competence and as a teacher development process (Schön 1987, Wallace 1991, Nunan 1992, Fullan 1993, Cole and Knowles 1996). However, in Nigeria, this idea is yet to gain ground and there is a need to create awareness about its possibilities for teaching and learning. To create awareness about reflection in Nigeria, one must provide evidence. Thus this study seeks to provide evidence that illustrates the potential of reflection in classroom practice and teacher development. By demonstrating Nigerian teachers' use of reflection in real practice and its benefits, I hope to provide material for discussion about how reflection can influence individual teacher's need to enhance their practice of teaching, increase their competence and as a result, the quality of their teaching.

Teacher education (TEd) in Nigeria is a focus of the Nigerian National Policy on Education (NPE), which connects the quality of teachers with the quality of the Nigerian educational system (Durosaro 2006: 44). In recognition of Nigerian teachers' many needs for continued professional development, this document states that:

> No matter the efficiency of the pre-service training we give to teachers, there will necessarily be areas of inadequacies. In-service education for teachers will continue to fill these gaps. (FRN 1989: Sub-section 74)

However, this is a process of professional development that needs to be self-activated, as Middlewood et al (2005) suggest. As they say, professional development 'is an ongoing self-activated process of reflection and review that (...) engages with the needs of the individual and the school' (Middlewood et al 2005: 6). It is a process that requires collaboration if it is to be more effective. Through this study therefore, I aim to create awareness about the benefits of teachers reflecting and developing in safe, non-threatening learning communities through collaborative explorations of practice (Hargreaves 2002, Middlewood et al 2005, Richards and Farrell 2005, Wright 2010). According to Breen, within a context, teacher development can evolve over a period of time to make it more accessible and suitable (Breen et al 1989). This development through reflective practice would include the integration of these teachers' needs, including their lifestyles and teaching challenges.

Beyond the Nigerian context, the study also aims to increase awareness of the potential of reflection in collaborative practice by exploring reflection within teacher groups. This is a process that could emerge in specific contexts through professional interactions in

addition to theories about reflection or reflective practice that would then be better understood. As a major rationale of the study is to make reflection less vague, key objectives of the study (arising from these aims) are to identify and describe real processes of reflection in teacher-led, school- based professional development. The purpose is to demonstrate that reflection is a tangible process that shows itself in the specific ways that teachers use it in practice. I also hope that this two-year study would help in some way to make the implicit knowledge and practices of Nigerian English teachers more explicit in order to create awareness of the value of informed practice.

1.3 Significance of the study

This study of the use of reflection for specific purpose would be significant for teachers and teacher educators in all contexts (especially those in English language teaching) because it is an attempt to illustrate what reflection looks like. Within the Nigerian context, it will also be significant for policy makers who provide the frameworks for Nigerian teacher education and educational practice. While the theories of Dewey and Schön have gained prominence in the development of English teachers, neither theorists have provided data-led descriptions of how reflection works or how it is used in practice, in education or professional development. Whereas, in the 1980's and 1990s, there were calls for reflection to be integrated into teacher education, two decades after, the more prominent calls are for evidence of the benefits of reflection in teacher education. This is a result of studies which show teacher resistance to reflection in several teacher education programmes (van Manen 1995, Loughran 2002, Lytle and

Cochran-Smith 1991, Fendler 2003, Richards and Farrell 2005, Russell 2005, Hobbs 2007, Akbari 2007, Otienoh 2009). Current arguments are that the reflection must be evidenced if it is to remain significant in teacher education (Rodgers 2002, Wright 2010, Mann and Walsh 2013). In the light of these arguments, this study will be significant for its contribution of insights about reflection and reflective practice to practitioners through data-led descriptions emerging from real classrooms in the voices and experiences of Nigerian L2 English teachers. As a result, this study makes a departure from theoretical descriptions of reflection to reveal practical descriptions of reflection in practice. Teachers in the study are those who teach in the Nigerian Universal Basic Education (UBE) sector including both government and private school teachers.

1.4 Rationale for including private school teachers in the study

This study, which has been carried out in Nigeria, integrates the views of teachers in both Nigerian government junior secondary schools and private (unaided) primary schools. In the study, the inclusion of Nigerian private primary school teachers is guided by the following factors:

- There may be more children in Nigerian private primary schools than in government owned primary schools (Adelabu and Rose 2004).

- According to Adelabu and Rose (2004) 'there is extremely limited existing literature on private schooling in Nigeria (2004: 47). This view is supported by Tooley et al (2005) who have carried out extensive research on private schools in countries like Nigeria.

- Nigerian private school environments may be more conducive for extended studies because they are less bureaucratic and decisions can be made more quickly without resorting to policy makers at the ministry of education.

- If an intervention in a private school does not work, it is unlikely to work in a government school. However, if it works, the learning experience can be improved upon and used in government schools.

- An incidental benefit of using private schools is the lack of disruptions to the school calendar through industrial action that government schools are known for. At one time when I was looking for government schoolteachers to participate in this study, there was a major teacher strike in Abuja and I had to postpone further action. The stability of the school calendar in private schools therefore improved the chances of collecting data.

In developing countries like Nigeria, private schools are not necessarily for the children of the rich (Watkins 2000, Nambissan 2003, Adelabu and Rose 2004, Tooley and Dixon 2005, Tooley et al 2005, Tooley and Dixon 2006) Adelabu and Rose estimate that '40% of the 2.5 million school children in Lagos State [Nigeria] are in private 'unapproved' schools' (Adelabu and Rose 2004: 50): this claim is supported by Larbi (2004). In their survey of 540 Lagos schools in three local government areas, Tooley et al (2005) identified 65.7% of these as private schools. 34. 3% of these were Government schools. They estimate that about 75% of children in the surveyed schools were enrolled in private schools. There are registered and unregistered private schools in Nigeria. Where unregistered private schools exist in Nigeria, they may not always be of the lowest quality (Tooley and Dixon 2005). In their study of three countries, including Nigeria,

Tooley and Dixon highlight the important roles of private schools in developing countries:

> Private schools, we argue, can play—indeed, already are playing—an important, if unsung, role in reaching the poor and satisfying their educational needs (…) In the "poor" areas of three local government districts (one rural, two urban) of Lagos State, Nigeria, we found 540 schools, of which 34 percent were government, and the largest proportion, 43 percent, were private unregistered. An estimated 75 percent of schoolchildren were enrolled in private schools. We also conducted research in the small shanty town of Makoko, in Mainland, Lagos State [Nigeria], and in the slum of Kibera, Nairobi, Kenya (reportedly the largest slum in sub-Saharan Africa). In both cases, the large majority of poor children attended private, not public, school' (Tooley and Dixon 2005: 1).

The above show that more Nigerian children may be in private schools in Nigeria. It is important therefore to include their voices in a study like this.

This thesis is in seven parts. Chapter 1 introduces the rationale for the study, the aims and significance of the study, including the rationale for the inclusion of private school teachers. Chapter 2 provides a contextual background of the study showing the roles of English in Nigeria and the problems and challenges associated with teaching in Nigeria. Chapter 3 provides a literature review with both a theoretical background on reflection and reflective practice and a review of studies which show the current state of reflection in teacher education. Chapter 4 discusses the research methodology and analysis used in the study. Chapter 5 provides an account of the research process while Chapter 6 shows the research findings. The study is rounded up in Chapter 7 through the conclusions and evaluations, including a summary of findings, my contributions, implications, limitations of the study and proposals for future research. In this thesis, teacher development and (teacher) professional development are used interchangeably and

reflection, reflective practice and reflective inquiry are sometimes used generically in reference to reflection, reflective practice and critical reflection.

CHAPTER TWO

Contextual Background

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to piece together the literature from Nigeria that illustrates the roles of English in Nigeria, problems associated with teaching quality in the context and the challenges that Nigerian English teachers face. The Nigerian English teaching context has its peculiar problems. It is not a BANA country. Therefore, as Holliday (1994: 2005) argues the methodological solutions generated in 'BANA' contexts (i.e. British, Australasian and North American), may be very different in nature from those in countries where English is a foreign or second language. The study begins with an intervention in a private school in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital; home to approximately 14-15 million people who represent about 10% of Nigeria's total population of over 150 million people (NPC 2004). It continues in other Nigerian towns and cities including Bonny, Port Harcourt and Abuja through further questions that arise from the first phase of the study.

According to Mann C. (1991), Nigeria can best be understood as a 'multinational exoglossic state' which is described as 'a state made up of diverse nations in the process of forging a nationality by emphasizing political-operational integration' (1991: 92). Nigeria is 'characterized not only by dense multilingualism, but also by dense

multidialectalism in virtually every State' (Adegbija 2004: 195). There are nearly 500 different languages spoken in Nigeria (Bisong 1995, Kari 2002, Heine and Nurse 2002, Adegbija 2004) and English is the lingua franca which is used at all levels of education and in government. Adegbija (2004: 196) describes English in Nigeria as a 'dominant minority language', spoken by 20% of Nigeria's population, mainly the elites. In Nigeria, there exists another dominant majority language which is 'variously called 'Nigerian Pidgin English', 'Nigerian Pidgin', 'Broken English', 'Broken', or 'Anglo-Nigerian Pidgin' (Adegbija 2004: 192). My findings from an earlier study on the status and function of Nigerian Pidgin English in Nigeria (an undergraduate dissertation) show that more Nigerians speak Nigerian Pidgin as an unofficial lingua franca (Angaye 1989) although with low status. Adegbija (2004) supports this view.

Nigeria has no national language. Three major languages (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) are yet to be conferred with the status of national languages for political reasons. They are often called official languages (Adegbija 2004) although they are limited, each, to distinct regions of Nigeria. Therefore many other Nigerian languages function as an official language at state and local government levels (Adegbija 2004: 183-185). Because of the widespread use of English in Nigerian society, Nigerians consider English as their official language. Mann (1991: 92) discusses his perspective of this when he says:

> Usually a 'national language' is not recognized as a language of world communication. An 'official language' on the other hand is a language formally selected at the national level of all aspects of officialdom, and would normally take precedence over a national language in any formal context (…) In the context of Nigeria, Hausa Ibo [Igbo] and Yoruba are regarded as national languages, while English is regarded as the sole official language (1991: 92).

Whereas Mann C. (1991) gives prominence to English as the sole official language of Nigeria, Jowitt (1991) observes that there is no Nigerian legislation supporting this view of English as an official language in Nigeria. Jowitt says, 'in the absence of any such pronouncement, English continues to perform the functions of a national language as well as those of an official language' (1991: 22). Mann C. (1996: 104) says it is very unlikely for the current position of English in Nigeria to be challenged because of its current roles and status in Nigeria. However, Nigeria is an unpredictable place and Pidgin English continues to gain prominence in Nigeria as the favourite language used by a majority of Nigerians since Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are regional languages, which have not received acceptance in other Nigerian regions. Figure 1 shows the language distribution in Nigeria.
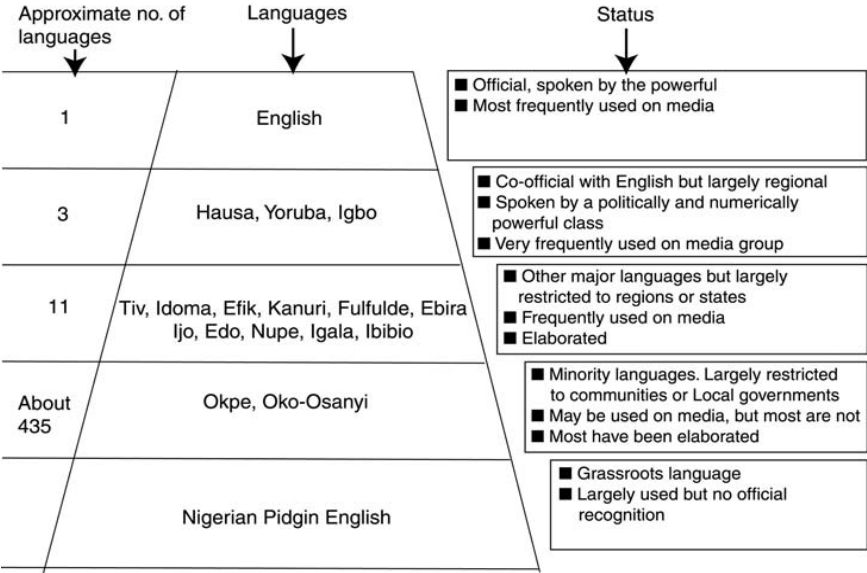
Figure 1 Approximate hierarchical representation of languages in Nigeria (Adegbija 2004: 190)

The fear of domination by any of the major ethnic groups has increasingly caused Nigerians to avoid the debate for (and refused to have) an indigenous national language and English continues to be embraced as a lingua franca even though it is not indigenous to Nigeria. Sowden (2012) explains a contrasting phenomenon among other former British colonies: in the aftermath of independence achieved in the years following the Second World War, many former British colonies sought to repudiate their previous subordination by demoting English, the language of their erstwhile masters, from its inherited position of dominance and replacing it with one or more native languages. While this scenario was the case in countries like India and Malaysia, with dire consequences for example, violent protests in Tamil Nadu (India) and the secession of Singapore from Malaysia (Sowden 2012: 89); in Nigeria, English was never demoted but was rather, promoted to serve a common and convenient purpose of meeting the communication needs of Nigerians. In his answer to Phillipson (1992a, 1992b), Bisong (1995) says: 'it is pointless to suggest that the remedy for English linguistic imperialism is the promotion of an indigenous language' (Bisong 1995: 126). He argues: 'no one who suggests the wholesale revival and imposition of a national language as the solution to the dominance of the English language in post-colonial countries is likely to be taken seriously' (1995: 126). While arguing that English has not replaced any Nigerian indigenous language nor has it replaced Nigerian culture, Bisong reinforces his position by stating that 'Nigerians are sophisticated enough to know what is in their interest, and that their interest includes the ability to operate with two or more linguistic codes in a multilingual situation; Phillipson's argument shows a failure to appreciate fully the complexities of this situation' (Bisong 1995: 131) in countries like Nigeria.

English now has the status of second language (L2) in Nigeria (Adegbija 2004: 183) and has more recently assumed the status of first language (L1) to a new generation of Nigerians who were born after Nigeria's independence. This phenomenon could be attributed to increased inter-ethnic marriages, urbanization and perhaps nursery education. According to Ejieh (2006: 61) 'almost all parents, especially of the middle and high classes that patronise pre-primary institutions, wish their children to be immersed in English language as early as possible because of the advantages that knowledge of the language conveys on such children in the primary and subsequent levels of the Nigerian educational system'. According to Wright (2010: 265) 'learning English is now regarded as a basic educational goal for people in many countries because of its pre-eminence as a global language'. Nigerian parents understand this well.

There now exists in Nigeria, a variety of English, called Nigerian English (Kachru 1992) or as Duruoha (2009: 202) calls it, 'an indigenous lingua franca'. Although it is not taught in schools, it reflects the convenient adoption of English for use by Nigeria, a polyglot nation. Achebe (1975) articulates this convenience when he says:

> I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African' surroundings (Achebe 1975: 62)

Although this new English is acceptable in formal Nigerian education as literature, it is rejected in Nigeria's English language examinations which are still built around British English the preferred language of the Nigerian curriculum at all levels of education.

English is Nigeria's official language of instruction and a curricular subject (Adegbija 2004). As a language of instruction it goes back a few hundred years. In his review of missionary education in Nigeria, Taylor (1984) states that in 1848, Waddell, a Scottish missionary in Nigeria, 'reported that he was teaching 'in English not solely because some knew our tongue a little and all wished to learn it, but also from a conviction of its real importance' (1984: 192). English language in Nigeria is now a compulsory subject from primary school to university. The Nigerian national policy of education (NPE) specifies that from the third year of compulsory schooling, English should be adopted as the medium of instruction. This national policy also provides for the use of local languages for instructing young learners in the first three years of school. However, this policy provision is rarely practised in urban Nigeria where English is used as the language of instruction as early as nursery school. Although English has gained prominence in Nigeria, it exists alongside the more largely used Nigerian Pidgin English, which is widely spoken as an inter-ethnic lingua franca, although of low status (Adegbija 2004). The strong influence of Nigerian English, Nigerian Pidgin and the failure of Nigerian teachers to adequately teach the officially recognized standard variety of English has resulted in high failure rates in English exams at school certificate levels, denying many Nigerians an opportunity to progress to university (without a credit in English language, Nigerian students are denied admission into Nigerian universities even if they have up to five other credits at GCE Levels). Problems like these may be addressed as Nigerian English teachers gain more competence in English language teaching.

2.1 Professional competence

According to the NPE (FRN 2004: 39) 'all teachers in [Nigerian] educational institutions shall be professionally trained'. Earlier, it states that one of the goals of teacher education is to 'to provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations' (FRN 2004: 39). However, this policy statement on teacher professionalization is not explicit. Neither does it state how this will be done. Instead Nigerian teacher education institutions are required to translate the ideals of the NPE into reality in peculiar circumstances. In the 1970s and 1980s there were contradictions in Nigerian policy statements, on the ways that teachers were prepared. Urwick observes that in developing countries, the 'high ideals proposed for teaching as a profession' do not match the low requirements offered for enlisting in primary level teacher education programmes (Urwick 1987: 137). Although this statement was made several decades ago, it still holds true for Nigeria where the low entry requirements for teaching in Nigerian educational institutions mean that academically poorer candidates (usually those reluctant to become teachers) end up in the teaching profession (Adeleke 1999, Garuba 2004, Akinbote 2007). Nigerian teacher training programmes are perceived as continuing to sacrifice quality for quantity (Asagwara 1997). This is further compounded by the entry into the profession of unqualified teachers because there are not enough qualified teachers in Nigerian schools. As Oduolowu says, 'every failed job applicant in Nigeria resorts to teaching while waiting for gainful employment'

(Oduolowu 2009: 330). Brophey and Dudley (1982: 156) provide a historic overview of the origins of these problems:

> In many developing countries teacher-training institutions have been unable to keep pace with the demands of their rapidly expanding education systems. Faced with the difficult choice between reducing the level of school enrolment on the one hand and employing untrained teachers on the other, the governments have reluctantly inclined towards the view that 'poor education is better than no education' (Curie 1973) and have recruited unqualified staff to teach in schools (Brophey and Dudley 1982: 156)

With a population of over 150 million Nigerians (NPC 2004) the Nigerian primary education sector illustrates the problem faced by many third world countries which have current drives to encourage school attendance without corresponding resources or staffing for the population explosion. Between 1980 and 1981, 38% of teachers in Nigerian schools were untrained (Urwick 1987: 137). With the current population explosion in Nigerian primary schools, there is still an acute shortage of qualified Nigerian teachers. This hurried approach to raising teachers has been criticized by Ajayi (2007) who argues that the length of Nigerian teacher education programmes should be increased to make it more like other professions, which dedicate more time to developing professionals.

The World Bank (2007a) explains that approximately 51 percent of Nigerian teachers have obtained the minimum teaching qualification. However, in 2010, the Nigerian minister for education was reported as saying that more than 50% of Nigerian teachers did not have teaching qualifications (Nigerian Tribune 2010). There are many contradictions and counter claims made about the true statistics for qualified teachers in

Nigeria. The following table suggests that the number of qualified Nigerian teachers in Nigerian primary schools may in fact be increasing. A second table published in 2006 (also shown in this section) contradicts this claim, raising doubts about the accuracy of statistical data on teachers' qualification available to the Nigerian government. The table below shows the distribution of Nigerian primary school teachers who have the minimum teaching qualification (NCE) by gender.

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Males	18.3%	17.4%	18.0%	18.3%	19.2%	NA	NA	NA
Female	26.2%	27.3%	28.1%	28.3%	31.6%	NA	NA	99.83%
Total	44.5%	44.8%	46.1%	46.6%	50.8%	NA	NA	76.46%

Table 1 Percentage of primary school teachers with the minimum teaching qualification in Nigeria *(NCE), 1998-2005* (Source: FME, Handbook of Basic Education in Nigeria 2003, FME 2005, cited in FME 2006b: 66).

Table 1 shows the statistics for qualified teachers in Nigeria between 1998 and 2005. It suggests that there are now fewer unqualified teachers in Nigerian primary schools. Going by this data, there seems to be a huge increase in the number of qualified teachers between 2002 and 2005 although no complete records are provided for 2003-2004, and no male records are provided for 2005. However, recent announcements and the following statistics from the Federal Ministry of Education (representing records from 2004 and 2005) contradict these tables. See Table 2.

QUALIFICATION	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	%
Graduate with teaching qualification	15,201	20,205	35,406	5.99
Graduate *without* teaching qualification	5,247	4,486	9,733	1.65
National Certificate of Education (NCE)	99,537	164,443	263,980	44.64
Diploma	22,147	11,317	33,464	5.66
Teachers Grade 2 Certificate (obsolete)	87,676	71,735	159,411	26.96
Teachers Grade 1 Certificate (obsolete)	80	46	126	0.02
Higher Secondary School/GCE A level	335	102	447	0.08
Special teachers	71	27	98	0.01
WASCE/GCE/SSCE O'Level	3,890	2,491	6,381	1.08
Others	55,772	26,483	82,255	13.91
Total	289,956	301,335	591,291	100

Table 2 Teachers by gender and qualification in Nigerian primary schools (Source: FME (2006a) Basic and Senior Secondary Education Statistics in Nigeria: 2004, 2005)

Table 2 reflects more closely the claim by a Nigerian minister for education in 2010 (See above) that over 50% of Nigerian teachers lack teaching qualifications. This mismatch may come from poor record keeping, falsification of state records (for political reasons) and false declarations by teachers of their qualified teacher status.

Table 2 also shows that of 591,291 Nigerian primary school teachers, only 299,386 have graduate or non-graduate teaching qualifications; representing 50.63% of total teachers. While a large number of these teachers (209,216) have non-teaching (or now obsolete) qualifications, another 82, 255 unqualified 'teachers' cannot be accounted for in terms of academic qualifications. Nigerian newspaper reports from interviews with policy makers support the idea that Nigeria still has a large number of unqualified teachers.

S/N	Newspaper/date	Headline	Summary
1.	Punch Newspaper (Editorial) 24/05/2012	'Tackling the problem of unqualified teachers'	North West Nigeria has 180, 748 (84, 617 of these are unqualified, i.e.**46.8%)** North East Nigeria has 90,602 teachers (52,277, i.e.**57.7%** of this number are unqualified) North Central Nigeria has 103, 044 teachers (40, 202, i.e. 38% unqualified) South East Nigeria has 63, 784 teachers (10,646, i.e.**16.7%)** unqualified. South West Nigeria has 93,358 teachers (6, 250, i.e.**6.7%** unqualified). South-south Nigeria has 71, 889 teachers (13,821, i.e.**19.2%** unqualified
2.	Daily Trust 23/09/11 Daily Trust 29/09/11	'25,000 unqualified Primary School Teachers found in Kano State' '80% of Yobe State Primary School Teachers are Unqualified'	'Recent findings by the Kano State government indicate that [in] the state over 25,000 unqualified personnel teach in various primary schools across the state, Commissioner for Budget and Planning Alhaji Yusif Bello Dambatta has said'. 'The Minister of State for Finance, Dr Yerima Ngama has said that 80 per cent of primary schools teachers in Yobe State are unqualified. Ngama, who said this while addressing newsmen in Damaturu, lamented that there are several unemployed NCE graduates, who cannot get teaching appointments in the state'.
3.	Daily Times /24/09/11	'Kano Detects 25,000 Unqualified Teachers'	Out of 25,000 unqualified primary and secondary school teachers, 1,600 of them are teaching in Kano primary schools.
4	PM News/ 08/07/2011	'75% Primary School Teachers in Kano Unqualified'	'The primary school education in Kano, north-west Nigeria, is in (sic) comatose because over 75 per cent of teachers in the sector are incompetent and unqualified, Malam Yakubu Adamu, chairman of the state Universal Basic Education Board, SUBEB, has revealed in the ancient city.'

Table 3 Newspaper reports on unqualified teachers in Nigerian states

Table 3 shows the outcomes of my review of Nigerian newspapers as an alternative source of information about Nigerian teacher qualification statistics owing to my discovery that government statistics are not always accurate in Nigeria. The review shows that many more Nigerian teachers (than government statistics show) are unqualified. Partly because of their lack of adequate teaching qualifications, Nigerian primary school teachers have been described as having poor attitudes to teaching (Adeleke 1999). Teacher quality is viewed as a problem in many Nigerian schools.

2.2 Teacher quality; attitudes and perceptions of professionalism

According to a World Bank report, 'recent research in the United States (…) has reported that teacher quality is the single most important variable in determining student achievement' (World Bank 2007b: 26). Adeleke suggests that low levels of teacher quality in Nigeria are caused by the poor quality of trainees in teacher training institutions and their poor attitudes to teaching, especially at primary school levels (Adeleke 1999). In a 1999 study about trainees' attitudes to teaching, 87% of a group of trainees in a Nigerian university would not like to teach at primary school. However of those who would like to teach at all, 88% would not like to be teachers for a long time (Adeleke 1999). In another study carried out on 1200 teacher trainees from seven Nigerian colleges of education, the reasons for enrolling in a college of education are queried (Akinbote 2007: 8). Table 4 shows the response.

	Reasons for enrolling in college of education	No of students	%	Rank
1	Personal desire to become a teacher	150	12.50	3rd
2	Just to use teaching as a stepping stone [until they find another	372	31.00	2nd

	job]			
3	Because there is no other institution that could offer me admission	525	43.75	1st
4	To satisfy the wish of my parents	45	3.75	5th
5	As a result of encouragement from friends	108	9.0	4th
	Total	*1200*	*100.00*	

Table 4 Reasons for enrolling in a college of education (Akinbote 2007: 8)

Table 4 shows that the greatest proportion of Nigerian teacher trainees (525) in these seven colleges of education entered teacher training colleges because they could not get admission into higher institutions. This represents nearly 50% of the sample (Nigerian colleges of education have a lower entry requirement than Nigerian universities: only 24% of students in this study could meet the university admission requirements: a minimum of five credits). The next proportion (372 trainees) has no plan to remain in teaching for a long time. Finally, as Akinbote tells us: 'as many as 87.5% of all the student teachers in the colleges sampled are reluctant or not good enough for other institutions' (2007: 9). The Adeleke (1999) and Akinbote (2007) studies suggest that many Nigerian teacher trainees who end up as primary school teachers will have negative attitudes towards teaching. Adeleke et al (2011) further highlight this problem when they illustrate the poor subscription to education courses in Nigeria in 2002:

> out of 975,060 candidates who sat for the 2002 University Matriculation Examination in Nigeria, Faculties of Agriculture and Education had the least number of applications with 6,494 and 10,784 candidates respectively. Again, 255,651 applications were received for Faculties of Administration while Faculties of Social Sciences received 185,727 applicants. Faculties of Engineering and Medical Sciences received 152,213 and 142,573 applications respectively (…)

those for the Faculties of Education were grossly under subscribed (Adeleke et al, 2011: 4).

The data above suggests that in 2002, about 1.1% of all university applications were made to Education faculties in Nigerian universities. This reinforces the view that teaching in Nigeria is not the first choice of most Nigerian teacher trainees. Teaching has been described as 'the most bastardized 'profession' in Nigeria with reference to the categories of people that answer the name teacher' (Ojo et al 2007: 1). According to Ojo et al (2007: 1):

> Even among those that possess professional qualifications as teachers, there exist hundreds of unwilling performers, to whom professional ethics means nothing and whose contributions to widening the horizon of education, which is an expected pre-occupation of honest teachers, do not go beyond lip-service (Ojo et al 2007: 1).

Teacher quality in Nigeria was a theme of the 1980 National Seminar on Qualitative and Quantitative Education at Bagauda Lake Hotel, Kano. The Bagauda Seminars which tried to address the problems of teacher quantity and quality in Nigeria concluded that teachers were the main determiners of educational quality and acknowledged that if Nigerian teachers are 'apathetic, uncommitted, uninspiring, lazy, unmotivated, immoral, and anti-social, the whole nation is doomed' (FME 1984, in Oduolowu 2009: 229-230). In an attempt to resolve these problems the Nigerian government set in place a process to professionalize teaching in Nigeria. Ojo et al (2007: 2) argue that although some Nigerian teachers crave for the professionalization of teaching:

> it is not quite clear who would control the professionalization process. Should it be the teachers themselves, the government through its agencies or the society that consumes the services of teachers? (Ojo et al 2007: 2)

This statement omits teacher education institutions as a starting point of the professionalization process (although they are mandated by the NPE to do so). However, the teaching practice element in teacher education institutions which is supposed to start the professionalization process has been described by Oduolowu (2009) as being inadequate:

> the exposure of pre-service teachers to teaching practice is generally unsatisfactory and insufficient. Only three courses are designed for teaching practice. In the second year, pre-service teachers go out to observe[r] what teachers do in school for a week and write a report. In the third and fourth years, the students are expected to go to school for practice teaching for a period of twelve weeks (i.e. six weeks in the third year and six weeks in the fourth year) (...) teaching practice is superficial. They [trainees] are supervised maximum of three times in six weeks (2009: 335).

The inadequate supervision of Nigerian teacher trainees during teaching practice (TP) further weakens the realizations of high expectations and demands made by the NPE on Nigerian teachers. Although the current National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) recommends 26 weeks of teaching practice, TP in Nigeria is still 12 weeks within a 3-year teacher-training programme. This has been identified as too short (Ajayi 2002; Okebukola 2005). Okebukola (2007) highlight: inadequate teaching practice, poor classroom management skills, shallow subject knowledge, lack of self-reliance, poor attitudes and lack of professionalism as the weakness of many graduates from Nigerian teacher education institutions. Ajeyalemi (2002) identifies incompetence in subject knowledge and teaching as a common problem, while Okeke (2001) and Ajayi (2007) argue that the curriculum is too theoretical and lacks a sufficient teaching practice (TP) element. The NCE curriculum was originally designed for raising secondary school teachers and has therefore been viewed as being inadequate as the minimum teacher

education curriculum for raising primary school teachers. In their 2010 Communique, Registrars of Nigerian Colleges of Education (reported in a Nigerian Newspaper) called for a review of the NCE curriculum to make it more effective for the training of primary and pre-primary school teachers, adding that the 'the poor state of basic school infrastructures has also been a major setback in the quest to realize effective teacher education service delivery in the country' (Daily Trust: December 20, 2012).

Emeh and Ogaboh (2010) argue that if Nigeria must fulfill its developmental goals and objectives, then teaching and teacher development must become a necessary focus. According to Emeh & Ogaboh (2010: 66) 'professional teachers are trained not only to solve problems in the classroom, but also to initiate proposals for solving national problems'. Such huge expectations of teachers in Nigeria are not uncommon. Emeh & Ogaboh thus advocate the professionalization of teaching by arguing that:

> the unethical behaviour among teachers (Orubite, 2010), the lack of standardized test scores (…) the poor academic performance of students (Ashibi, 2005; Ikoh, 1995), academic dishonesty among teachers at all levels (Denga & Denga, 1998), the lack of, or the ineffectiveness of regulatory body in the teaching occupation; the poor performance of most teachers and the general institutional weakness in Nigeria are all pointers that teaching should be professionalized (Emeh and Ogaboh 2010: 355).

Statements like the ones above illustrate the high (and perhaps unrealistic) expectations of Nigerian researchers and policy makers towards Nigerian teachers and teaching institutions. Ojo et al (2007: 1-2) also advocate the professionalization of teaching when they question why Nigerian teachers have not made 'teaching a closed system in which only the professionally initiated can practise'. In a study which was aimed at investigating Nigerians' perceptions of teaching as a profession, Ojo et al (2007 1-14)

sought to identify the views of Nigerians about teaching as a profession; assess if Nigerian society was willing to accept teaching as a profession; estimate the proportion of Nigerian teachers who are inclined towards professionalization and suggest strategies for a realistic means of professionalizing teaching in Nigeria. A sample of 225 people (59% were practising teachers) was used. 82.7% of teachers in the study perceived teaching as a profession as did other professionals (respondents). However, 29.6% of respondents would not agree to teaching as a profession unless entry into the profession is controlled and 'rigidly limited to those who are professionally qualified' (Ojo et al 2007: 9). Only 8% of respondents endorsed restricted entry into the profession. This suggests that teacher quality is not a major concern of the sample and that their perception of teaching may be more occupational than professional.

Unclear attitudes towards teaching are said to come from a perception of teaching as a temporary occupation from which teachers switch whenever they get a preferred occupation (Adeleke 1999, Akinbote 2007, Ojo et al 2007, Oduolowu 2009). According to Okobia (2012: 150), 'to a large extent, quality of teachers and teaching depends on the qualification, training and attitudes of the teachers'. Persisting poor attitudes to teaching among Nigerian teachers may show a failure in Nigerian teacher education programmes.

Besides the problems of teacher education in Nigeria, current teacher education practices may still be considered inadequate for realizing Nigeria's five National goals of education which aim to produce, 'a free and democratic society, a just and egalitarian

society, a united, strong and self-reliant nation, a great and dynamic economy and a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens' (FRN 2004: 6). The 2002 Nigerian Biennial National Teachers' Conference sums up its perception of the problems of teacher education in its communiqué, which says:

> The quality of teacher education is at present less than satisfactory. The conventional mode of teacher education is ill equipped and therefore inadequate to cope with the urgent demand for more qualified teachers in the expanding basic education sector. The present structure, content, and mode of delivery of the present teacher education curriculum are too inadequate to meet the challenges of emergent national issues and problems. This is because the curriculum is too centralized and therefore inadequate to accommodate local peculiarities in an increasingly complex and diverse society such as Nigeria (NTI 2002: 2).

The above statement shows the conference's dissatisfaction with teacher education quality in Nigeria and suggests that the problem is from the teacher education curriculum, which is not flexible enough to cope with the needs of modern Nigeria. These inadequacies are identified above as: the structure of Nigerian teacher education programmes; the content of the current teacher education programme(s), modes of delivery of these programmes and a 'centralized curriculum' (one size fits all) which cannot meet local needs in the diverse Nigeria society.

In a report on Nigeria, (World Bank 2000) some of the following problems were identified as being associated with teachers and teaching in Nigeria. Some of these are: shortage of primary school teachers, 'is some instances schools have operated with a teacher-pupil ratio of 1: 76' (World Bank 2000: 8); the low numbers of graduates entering the profession; problems of unequal teacher quality across Nigeria; marginalization of teachers through poor resourcing and salaries; inappropriate teacher

preparation programmes; poor leadership; unqualified teacher educators and a decline in the number of male teachers in some Nigerian states. These problems still persist thirteen years after the report and there is still a perennial shortage of primary school teachers in Nigeria.

Although the World Bank (2000) suggests an oversupply and under supply of teachers of particular subjects, English language teaching is not identified as one of the shortage areas. In 2011, I wrote to the Teachers' Registration Council Nigeria (TRCN) to request the number of qualified teachers (who are registered with TRCN) with an English language teaching qualification. From a database of over 700,000 registered teachers, the following data was provided showing the distribution of qualified English language teachers in Nigerian primary and secondary schools. See Appendix 1 for a comprehensive breakdown of the data base.

	Total number of teachers registered with TRCN	Total Number of qualified English language teachers registered with TRCN	Percentage of English language teachers registered with TRCN
Primary School	575160	6666	1.16%
Secondary School	251866	4241	1.7%

Table 5 Qualified English language teachers in Nigeria

Table 5 illustrates part of the problem. There are not enough qualified English language teachers in Nigerian primary and secondary schools and teachers without English language qualifications may not be adequately prepared to teach English which is a

compulsory subject and the language of instruction. English language teaching is a cause for major concern in Nigeria as student achievement has dropped in the subject (as well as in other subjects). Teacher-student ratios are still not appropriate nation-wide and Nigerian teachers are viewed as needing to be more effective (World Bank 2003). However, in government owned classrooms where there is at least one teacher to 76 pupils, the ability of an English language teacher to effectively teach any of the four basic skills is questionable.

Many policy makers and researchers have blamed Nigerian teachers for the myriads of problems in the Nigerian educational system. However, Egbo (2011) takes on a different view, stating that the problem stems from the need for capacity building of Nigerian teachers. Egbo argues that there is a connection between capacity building and effective teaching and learning in Nigeria. She argues that: 'disregarding the professional needs of teachers is, in effect, inimical to the progress of Nigeria's educational system' (Egbo 2011: 13-15). Egbo defines capacity building for Nigerian teachers as:

- Policy, training and pedagogy: a reworking of policy on teacher development and preparation and approaches to teaching.
- Availability of 21st century infrastructure: providing materials, resources and 21st century 'tools' that enhance teaching and learning, including reducing the current large classes that make teaching young learners an impossible task.
- Teacher welfare and empowerment: raising teacher moral and motivation by providing adequate remuneration and recognition.

Egbo (2011:15) also observes that 'effective capacity building means that all those who are charged with educating the nation's children and, subsequently implementing educational policies at the micro-level must be treated in ways that are commensurate with principles of social justice'. Udofot agrees. According to her:

> Nigerian teachers are the most traumatised and the most de-motivated in the world from the primary to the tertiary level. They are [...] de-motivated right from the time they are recruited into the profession through their training to the period of deployment. Even when they retire from the service they are not paid their retirement entitlement (2005: 73).

Arguments such as these suggest that Nigerian teachers are not solely responsible for falling standards. By showing these weaknesses of the Nigerian educational system, they introduce teacher motivation into the discussion. Egbo (2011) provides a model of capacity building for Nigerian teachers:

EDUCATION SYSTEM
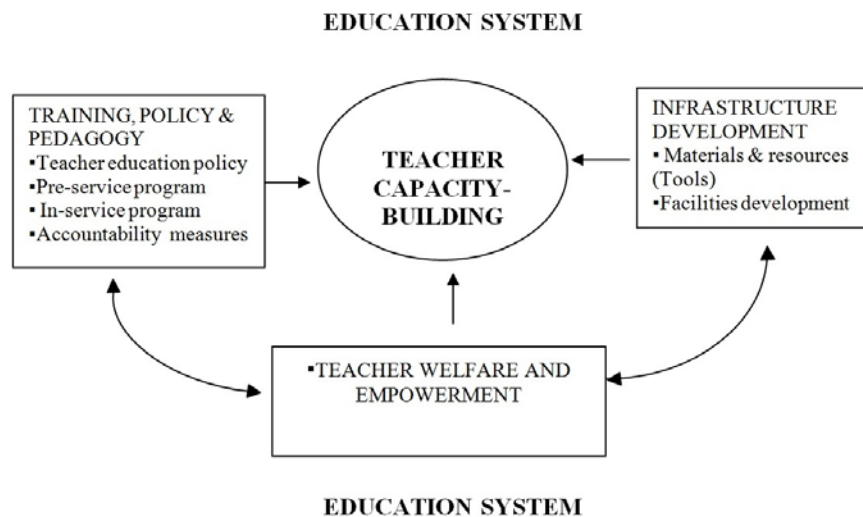
Figure 2 A Nigerian model of teacher capacity building (Egbo 2011: 15)

The model above suggests that there is a relationship between the three highlighted factors: policy, training and pedagogy, infrastructure development and teacher welfare

and empowerment. These three interact to create capacity building which as Egbo (2011) argues, has the potential for providing 'transformative teaching and learning' in Nigeria. While Egbo raises fundamental questions, the model appears to advocate for a top-down approach by excluding teachers' input although it attempts to put the teacher at the centre of capacity building. In the following section, I discuss the problems associated with teaching English in Nigeria.

2.3 Challenges faced by Nigerian (English) teachers

In a 2010 interview in Nigeria, Jowitt, a native speaker of English and professor of English in one of Nigeria's universities identifies some of the problems of teaching English in Nigeria thus (as reported by a Nigerian newspaper):

> the poor quality of teachers of English. Teachers are not well trained as they should be. You find out that in so many cases, people teaching English in schools are people without the qualification. They don't have a degree in English or English education. They have a degree in say mass communication or sociology. If we must get better set of qualified English teachers in Nigeria, which we desperately need, then we must make sure that they are properly trained. If they haven't qualification by the time they begin, then there must be in-service training courses, which basically fall into funding (Leadership Newspaper: November 4, 2010).

From Jowith we can identify some of the problems associated with teaching English in Nigeria, as: poor quality of English teachers, poor training and teaching without English language teaching qualifications. Although he calls for in-service training to address these problems, there are other fundamental problems which Nigerian English teachers have in common with other Nigerian teachers.

From 2.1 and 2.2, two summaries can be made from the Nigerian literature about challenges associated with teaching English in Nigeria. The first of these puts the blame on Nigerian teachers:

- Reluctance to join the teaching profession

- Poor attitudes to teaching

- Poor entry qualifications to teacher preparation programmes

- Problems of incompetence and poor subject knowledge

- Poor perceptions of professionalism

- Poor commitment to the profession

(Asagwara 1997, Adeleke 1999, Ajayelemi 2002, NTI 2002, Garuba 2004, Akinbote 2007, Oduolowu 2009, Emeh and Ogaboh 2010, Adeleke et al 2011, Okobia 2012). However, there are other factors that show that Nigerian English teachers like their counterparts in other subjects are not entirely to blame for the falling standards in Nigerian education. These factors from the literature are beyond their immediate control:

- Inadequate teacher preparation

- Shortage of English language teachers

- Poor motivation (poor salaries, lack of recognition, poor working conditions)

- Lack of teaching resources

- Over populated classrooms (with possible teacher-pupil ratios of 1: 76)

- Poor support from government (described as lack of capacity building)

(Urwick 1987, World Bank 2000, Okeke 2001, Udofot 2005, Ajayi 2007, Egbo 2011). In an inaugural lecture Afe (2002) observes that one of the challenges Nigerian teachers face is low social status. For example, he points out the reluctance of Nigerian parents to allow their daughters to marry teachers because they are poorly paid. Afe (2002) also argues that poor teacher morale, the inability of Nigerian teachers to raise educational standards or to control entry into their profession, are limiting factors. In a nut shell teaching in Nigeria is very challenging. With little support from government, Nigerian English teachers must find other ways to support themselves. This study therefore explores how Nigerian English teachers use reflection to support their teaching as well their development of teaching competence.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical Background

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the role of English in Nigeria and provided a background of teaching in Nigeria and Nigerian teachers' challenges. As this study explores the use of reflection by Nigerian English teachers, in this chapter, I review the literature on reflection, from two perspectives: the theoretical and from recent studies. Therefore I will discuss the theoretical perspectives of Dewey, Schön, Brookfield and and also discuss contributions from other influential writers from studies which give voice to the call to make reflection more explicit. There are four parts in this chapter. The first three provide a theoretical background for the study by discussing reflective thinking, reflective practice and critical reflection, while Part 4 discusses reflection in the context of teacher education.

3.1 Reflective thinking (Dewey's framework of reflection)

Dewey is acknowledged as having originated a modern concept of reflection, having drawn ideas from philosophers like Confucius, Plato and Aristotle to describe concepts that now guide reflective practice. As a key contributor to this concept, he highlighted the importance of reflective thinking in education as a way of 'knowing

what we are about when we act' (Dewey 1964: 211). This is a departure from other models of learning that were mostly didactic and theoretical. Dewey believed, 'there is no intellectual growth without some reconstruction, some reworking' (1938: 64). He explains that reflection is a step-by-step process, which involves engaging from the point of doubt or perplexity to exploring possibilities and finally deciding on a course of action (Dewey 1933: 107). For Dewey reflection is a deliberate and cognitive process, which generally aims at problem solving. A significant feature of Dewey's description of reflection is that it engages the teacher through a self-initiated process of thinking and action. Essentially Dewey identified two types of reflection: reflective thought and reflective action. Reflective thought is defined as 'active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends' (Dewey 1933: 118). When this process is applied to real action it can be called 'reflective action'. Dewey did not consider all thinking as reflective and makes clear that 'routine action' which is guided by impulse, authority and tradition is not 'reflective action' (Dewey 1933: 17), which, as Zeichner and Liston (2010) observe involves 'intuition, emotion, and passion' (Zeichner and Liston 2010: 9). However, Dewey does not restrict reflection to formal learning or professional situations only. For Dewey reflection is emancipatory (Dewey 1933: 17).

In TEd and in the context of teaching therefore, teachers need not limit themselves to routine, traditional or recommended practice, nor do they have to be guided by compulsion but by careful consideration of practice. Three important notions support

reflection. Dewey identifies these as characteristics which need to be embraced by all teachers. Farrell (2004) explains them:

> *Open mindedness* (willingness to listen to more than one side), *Responsibility* (Careful consideration of the consequences of our action) [and] *Wholeheartedness* (commitment to seek every opportunity to learn) (Farrell 2004: 14).

Open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness are attitudes which could be taken for granted in a teacher education programme based on an assumption that they are attributes and therefore need not be taught in a formal way. They are however, significant because they require teachers to be less narrow-minded in their approach to teaching and learning and be more willing to embrace change. Zeichner and Liston (1996) provide a description of <u>open-mindedness</u> as: 'an active desire to listen to more sides than one, to give full attention to alternative possibilities, and to recognize the possibility of error even in beliefs that are dearest to us' (Zeichner and Liston 1996: 10). <u>Responsibility</u> on the other hand, which Farrell (2004: 14) describes as 'careful consideration of the consequences of our action', is said to be consequential at three different levels: *personal* (consequences for pupils' self-concepts), *academic* (consequences for pupils' academic output), and *social and political* (consequences that relate to pupils' life chances) levels (Pollard and Tann 1993, Zeichner and Liston 1996). When responsibility is discussed in the light of teacher education (especially in developing contexts like Nigeria), these could be translated to consequences for teachers' *personal* development, consequences for their *professional* development and consequences for their *social and political* development/involvement in the Nigerian context (full self-acceptance of their status and position as teachers and society's full

acceptance of teachers as professionals including their potential as original contributors to national growth and development). Finally wholeheartedness which Dewey's identifies as important for reflective action, is described by Zeichner and Liston (1996) as a process whereby teachers: 'regularly examine their own assumptions and beliefs and the results of their actions and approach all situations with the attitude that they can learn something new' (1996: 11) from others. The three characteristics of teachers who embrace reflective action (identified above) have the potential for building a foundation of reflective practice – the basis for the experience – and could provide teachers (who may be unfamiliar with reflective practice) with a starting point; to prepare them for reflective practice. These characteristics also reinforce notions of teaching as a social activity, which requires active interaction, careful consideration (which van Manen 1995, calls 'tact') and commitment to continuing professional development. They may be more particularly relevant for teachers who need to embrace a Vygotskian view of learning (Vygotsky 1978) as both a cognitive and social process. According to Dewey learning is a process of learning to think, albeit in a reflective way (Dewey 1933). As he says:

> While we may speak, without error, of the method of thought, the important thing is that thinking is the method of an educational experience. The essentials of method are therefore identical with essentials of reflection (Dewey 1916: 192).

Dewey makes clear from the above that it is not ordinary thinking that develops people, but how people think. This is described as 'the method of an educational experience' (Dewey 1916: 192). To further develop his position on reflection, Dewey identifies five different phases of reflective thinking or thought, which are:

1. Suggestions, in which the mind leaps forward to a possible solution.

2. An intellectualization of the difficulty or perplexity that has been felt (directly experienced) into a problem to be solved, a question for which the answer must be sought

3. The use of one suggestion after another as a leading idea, or hypothesis, to initiate and guide observation and other operations in collection of factual material.

4. The mental elaboration of the idea, or supposition as an idea or supposition (reasoning, in the sense in which reasoning is a part, not the whole, of inference).

5. Testing the hypothesis by overt or imaginative action (Dewey 1933: 107).

The above are an attempt by Dewey to describe reflective thought processes in an explicit way. It is interesting that most of these processes can be articulated or carried out through diary or journal records, collaborative group discussions or dialogue between learners (through collaborative explorations) in less private forms. Dewey provides a health warning about these phases by saying they are not to be followed as rigid step-by-step processes (Hermanowicz 1961, Lyons 2010). However, Dewey's translation of these phases into more pedagogic language has been viewed as being too prescriptive (Hermanowicz 1961: 300) and there is the possibility that attempts to follow a 'prescriptive' reflective process would be far from emancipatory. Dewey (1916) provides a simplified version of his perspective (5 phases of reflective thought) in what appears to be a prescription for reflective learning or teaching children:

1. That the pupil have a genuine situation of experience-that there be continuous activity in which he is interested for its own sake.
2. That a genuine problem develop within this situation as a stimulus to thought.
3. That he possess the information and make the observations needed to deal with it.
4. That suggested solutions occur to him which he shall be responsible for developing in an orderly way.
5. That he have opportunity and occasion to test his ideas by application, to make their meaning clear and to discover for himself their validity (Dewey 1916: 192).

While these processes appear to be prescriptive and may limit learning if adopted as linear, step-by-step processes, a quick review of key points show that Dewey highlights the following processes as being in the practice of reflective thinking (these, would be relevant to modern TEd):

- Integrating real experience in an ongoing activity;

- Situated problem identification (to stimulate thought);

- The possession of relevant information (or previous knowledge/received knowledge);

- Application of relevant information or previous knowledge (on problems to observe new possibilities);

- Identifying a clear structured solution;

- Testing new ideas by applying them to real situations (to make the implicit explicit and to gain ownership as well as validate one's own learning).

Dewey's contribution to learning has been interpreted by many scholars. His ideas transformed positions about learning and teaching in the 1950s and 1960s becoming the basis for influential scholarly writings in during this period. Some of the new ideas or proposals, which grew from this period, are in curriculum development and teaching (Kilpatrick 1936, Alberty 1953), action research (Cory 1953), problem solving (Cronbach 1955), etc. They represent Dewey's influence on modern day education. According to Hatton and Smith (1995: 34) four major issues about reflection can be identified from Dewey's works and its interpretation.

- Is reflection mere thinking about action or is it bound up in action?

- What are the time frames associated with reflection?

- Is reflection problem-centred or not?

- Does the reflecting individual consciously consider wider socio-political beliefs and values in the solutions being sought? (Hatton and Smith 1995: 34).

In the following pages I reframe Hatton and Smith's (1995) perspectives and direct quotes as questions and try to answer them through Dewey's framework of reflection discussed above or by other interpretations of his work:

3.1.1 Reflection as thought and action

- Is reflection 'limited to thought processes about actions, or is [it] more inextricably bound up in action' [?]

The above question reflects Schön's contribution about reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, which is a distinction which Dewey does not make. A careful analysis of Dewey's five phases of reflective thought (Dewey 1933: 107 see 3.1) show that there are no time limitations set by Dewey. Thus one could not say that reflection is limited to thinking about action or thinking in action. The two possibilities are implied. For clarity, I use quotes from Dewey [emphasis mine] to illustrate these two possibilities. These represent Phase One and Five of Dewey's five phases of reflective thought.

That the pupil have a genuine situation of experience-that there be continuous activity in which he [the pupil] is interested for its own sake (Phase One: Dewey 1916: 192).

The above illustrates a possible process of reflection within activity or action and illustrates Dewey's views that thought could be bound up in action. When the pupil is interested in the activity he could think about the activity, which is in process in more critical ways.

That he have opportunity and occasion to test his ideas by application, to make their meaning clear and to discover for himself their validity (Phase Five: Dewey 1916: 192).

The above statement is not explicit about when the thought process could occur. However, when Dewey says 'that he have <u>opportunity</u> and <u>occasion</u> [emphasis mine] to test his ideas by application', it suggests a process that may not be immediate or spontaneous. It is a process that is determined by opportunity and occasion. Therefore thought in this activity may not be bound up in action, but could be a process of thinking about action.

3.1.2 The role of time in reflection

- Are the time frames 'within which reflection takes place (…) relatively immediate or short term, or rather more extended and systematic' [?]

Dewey does not limit his concepts of reflective action to specific time frames nor does he clearly write about time frames. However, by acknowledging that the five characteristics should not be viewed as a rigid or sequential process he opens up possibilities for how reflection can be used within time frames: 'Dewey did not believe

that there was a strict order to these phases. They were likely to be more fluid' (Lyons 2010: 12). Kilpatrick (1936) drew from Dewey's writings and in a teaching unit which he develops for teachers he identifies five different processes similar to Dewey's five characteristics of reflective thought, the last of which is mentioned as a hypothetical process: 'if the plan works, the perplexity is resolved. If the plan does not work, he [the pupil] may go back through the various activities again and again until some solution has been reached or else the individual abandons the situation' (Kilpatrick 1936: 1-47). This extension of Dewey's work suggests that Dewey does not limit reflection to time frames. From his definition of reflection we can infer that reflection may be relatively immediate, may be short term or 'extended and systematic' (Hatton and Smith 1995:34). As Dewey says; reflection is: 'active, persistent, and <u>careful consideration</u> [emphasis mine] of any belief or supposed form of knowledge <u>in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends</u> [emphasis mine]'(Dewey 1933: 118). Careful consideration can be extended according to the need of the person who is reflecting. The inclusion of the second underlined statement above suggests that reflection is a logical process (structured). And as Dewey confirms in his pedagogical translation of the five characteristics of reflection, the one reflecting needs to develop the solution to a problem [or perplexity] in an 'orderly way' (Dewey 1916: 192).

3.1.3 Reflection as being problem centred

- Is reflection 'by its nature problem-centred or not' [?]

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In more recent times, reflection has been commonly accepted as being problem centred (Calderhead 1989, Cutler et al 1989, Adler 1991, Loughran 2002, Boody 2008). Hatton and Smith (1995) observe that another argument exists that reflection is not as problem centred as it is, thinking about action. Both perspectives can be clearly identified from Dewey's works. According to Dewey reflection which is central to intellectual growth, uses doubt and perplexity to explore other possibilities (Dewey 1973). When put to use it has the ability to change an existing situation 'in which there is experienced obscurity, doubt, conflict, disturbance of some sort, into a situation that is clear coherent, settled harmonious' (Dewey 1933: 100). These all suggest that reflection is largely problem centred. However, when viewed against the backdrop of the attitudes that Dewey (1933) suggests reflective teachers should embrace (open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness) the focus changes from problem solving to thinking about action. For example: the open-minded teacher listens (opens up) to multiple perspectives and applies their reconstructed knowledge to real situations and not necessarily problems. In addition, attitudes of responsibilities may not be connected with problem solving but with considering consequences of professional action. While wholeheartedness, is an attitude that looks for learning opportunities where ever they are found, whether through problems or other sources, e.g. a colleague's experience or perspective. These attitudes demonstrate the description of reflection as 'active, persistent, and <u>careful consideration</u> [emphasis mine] of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends' (Dewey 1933: 118). Dewey (1933, 1916) emphasizes problem solving in his descriptions of the five characteristics of reflective thought and his pedagogic translations and examines reflective thought

both from the point of abstraction and problem solving and as a process of engaging through action (activity, situation and experience).

3.1.4 Critical consciousness

- 'How consciously does the one reflecting take account of wider historic, cultural and political values or beliefs in framing and reframing practical problems to which solutions are being sought'? (Hatton & Smith 1994: 3)

The above quote refers to a more critical form of reflection that connects individuals to their socio-cultural and socio-political contexts (this could be individually or collaborative). From Dewey's five characteristics of reflection we know that reflection is situated in real experience. According to Loughran (2002: 35) 'experience alone does not lead to learning; reflection on experience is essential'. The experience needed for some forms of reflection may be historical, cultural or political and we can assume that a person who is reflecting is actually already immersed in some socio-political, cultural or historical experience that they may be consciously or unconsciously aware of. However, how one connects to this immersion may be a function of the type of reflection practised; the depth or extent of it and the answer sought for. As Dewey says, the process of applying experience and wider context to problem solving or perplexity is necessary for the 'intellectualization of the difficulty or perplexity that has been felt (directly experienced) into a problem to be solved, a question for which the answer must be sought' (Dewey 1916: 192). In countries like Nigeria, some of the problems associated with teaching and learning situations, originate from the places where

teachers have little influence or control (from government and policy makers). These determine in some ways how teaching will be carried out, with or without basic resources, in pleasant or unpleasant environments with teacher-student ratios that could be up to 1: 76 in primary school (world bank 2000: 8) They are situations that will need to be consciously problematized so that Nigerian English teachers will not be overwhelmed by difficult circumstances but find solutions to their common problems.

Dewey's contributions to reflective practice are immense. Lyons (2010) identifies these as: 'his understanding of the role of the doubtful, conflictual situation as the cause of reflective thinking, his identification of the actual phases of reflective thought and his identification of the necessity of adopting attitudes that were the actual methods of inquiry' (Lyons 2010: 12). These are still relevant today, and hold great possibility for teachers in contexts where doubt and conflictual situations are common features of practice. Integrated into teacher education, Dewey's contributions represent two perspectives that practitioners need to be acquainted with. I suggest these are: engagement with self (reflective thought) and engagement with context (reflective action). They represent a change agenda, which is needed to reformulate and challenge ideas in teacher education programmes that suggest that reflective thinking is unfamiliar to teachers (discussed in 3.4).

3.2 Reflective practice (Schön's modes of reflection)

Schön (1983, 1987) draws from Dewey's contribution and extends the idea of reflective thinking into professional learning. While Dewey is acknowledged as being an

influential theorist of modern day reflection, Schön is acknowledged for making reflection prominent and widespread in modern times. Schön studied the ideas of Dewey in his PhD thesis and extended them into professional learning. He believed that the kind of learning found in professional education was not suitable for professionals (Lyon 2010: 13-15). According to him much would be achieved if professional learning makes a departure from the type of learning, which was based on positivist traditions of learning, which he described as 'technical rationality'. Schön, believed that professionals have tacit knowledge, which needs to be reformulated into relevant knowledge (Eraut 1995, Schön 1983, 1987). Schön who drew greatly from the writings of Dewey, appears to reflect Dewey when he says that: 'our descriptions of knowing-in-action ['knowing what we are about when we act': Dewey 1964: 211] are always constructions' (1987: 25). Developing this position significantly, Schön (1983, 1987) identified the need for professionals to make explicit the implicit knowledge gained from years of experience and practice. For Schön this process is best developed by reflection, which he argued is essential for developing professional knowledge (Schön 1983, 1987). According to Eraut (1995), Dewey emphasizes that 'technical rationality' is inadequate for developing professional competence 'both as a prescription for and as a description for professional practice' (Eraut 1995: 10) and 'offers instead an alternative epistemology based on professional practice whose main distinctive feature is the process he describes as reflection-in-action' (Eraut 1995: 10) arguing that 'a reflective practicum' is more suited to supporting this process (Schön 1987: 157). In this way Schön acknowledges context as a key ingredient in reflective practice for professional development.

Distinctions have however, been made between Dewey and Schön's ideas about reflection. According to Akbari (2007: 196) 'when Schön uses the term reflection, what he has in mind is knowledge which is the direct result of practice, not the type of knowledge which has been based on scientific approaches advocated by Dewey'. Akbari also argues that Dewey and Schön's views about professionalism are different because Dewey believed that the source of professional knowledge is science and scientific methods, while Schön believed otherwise; arguing that professional knowledge is 'intuitive, personal, non-rational activity' (Akbari 2007: 196) which is derived from practice. Schön thus describes reflective practice as a 'dialogue of thinking and doing through which (...) [professionals] become more skilled' (1987: 31).

Schön introduces two new forms of professional learning, which he calls: 'reflection-in-action' and 'reflection-on-action' (1983, 1987). In his review of Schön's ideas, Eraut suggests that there is no clear departure from 'technical rationality' in Schön's works. Thus in his analysis of Schön's new epistemology (Eraut 1995) clearly identifies four types of academic knowledge (in Schön's writings), which can be found in institutions which provide forms of professional education:

> (1) Scientific knowledge which claims to have been empirically validated according to positivist criteria (Schön incorporates this without challenge in his discussions of engineering).
> (2) Stylistic conventions of the kind used to describe schools, movements or aesthetic approaches (Schön illustrates this with examples from architecture).
> (3) Theories whose prime purpose seems to be conceptualisation and which guide situational understanding and thinking about appropriate forms of interpretation (Schön illustrates this with examples from psychiatry).

(4) Appreciative systems used by professional communities to formulate goals and judge what constitutes good or acceptable professional conduct (Eraut 1994: 10).

Although there appears to be some conflict, Eraut's observations do not detract from Schön's position, which is that professionals develop competence when they reflect 'in' practice and 'on' practice. The new epistemology Schön argues for is an epistemology of practice where the practitioner develops new meanings and understandings from practice which in turn increases competence. This new epistemology differs from scientific epistemology because it is neither generalizable nor rational, but rather, contextual. Eraut argues that it is not a new epistemology but that Schön actually retains these older and more conventional forms of learning identified above and simply adds to it a 'knowing in-action' which he describes as a 'form of practice-based know-how' (Eraut 1995: 10). This is also described as tacit knowledge, the type which professionals have, which needs to be clearly articulated. As Schön says:

> I shall use *knowing-in-action* to refer to sorts of know-how we reveal in our intelligent action—publicly observable, physical performances like riding a bicycle and private operations like instant analysis of a balance sheet. In both cases, the knowing is *in* the action. We reveal it by our spontaneous, skilful execution of the performance; and we are characteristically unable to make it verbally explicit. Our descriptions of knowing-in-action are always *constructions*. They are always attempts to put into explicit, symbolic form a kind of intelligence that begins by being tacit and spontaneous (1987: 25)

Here Schön simplifies his new epistemology of 'knowing-in-action' in a peculiar way by comparing two processes: the more open process of riding a bicycle and the more closed process of instantly analyzing a balance sheet. He suggests that both are implicit although they can be revealed in spontaneous and skillful performance. Thus Schön says:

We are in need of inquiry into the epistemology of practice. What is the kind of knowing which competent practitioners engage? How is professional knowing like and unlike the kinds of knowing in academic textbooks, scientific papers and journals? (Schön 1983: vii)

Out of this quest comes an inquiry about the difference between practitioner knowledge and theoretical knowledge. Practitioner knowledge which Schön describes as reflection-in-action and reflection-on action is discussed further below.

According to Schön (1983, 1987) **'reflection-in-action'** happens when reflection and action happen simultaneously: As Schön explains reflection is the 'spontaneous, intuitive performance of the actions of everyday life' (Schön 1995: 29), which develops the kind of knowledge that professionals use. In a classroom setting, teachers who are teaching learners reflect simultaneously as they teach, thus increasing professional learning in the process. According to Schön:

> Reflection gives rise to on-the-spot experiment. We think up and try out new actions intended to explore the newly observed phenomena, test our tentative understandings of them, or affirm the moves we have invented to change things for the better (…) What distinguishes reflection-in-action from other kinds of reflection is its immediate significance for action. (1987: 28-29).

As an active process that is immediately relevant in the classroom, it shapes teachers' thinking and methods while drawing teachers to take risks by on-the-spot experiments which ultimately affect their practice. Schön explains:

> When someone reflects-in-action, he becomes a researcher in the practice context (…) he does not keep means and ends separate, but defines them interactively as he frames a problematic situation. He does not separate thinking from doing (…) because experimenting is a kind of action, implementation is built into (…) inquiry (Schön 1983: 68-69).

Above Schön illustrates the possibility of professionals becoming researchers through a process of reflection-in-action. He presents this possibility through an intricately woven process where thought is not separate from action and where the way one reflects and acts is not necessarily separated from the outcome. It is presented as a seamless process of 'knowing-in-action'. This knowing-in-action is not only derived from ordinary practice but from research or other sources:

> Competent professional practitioners often have the capacity to generate new knowing-in-action through reflection-in-action undertaken in the indeterminate zones of practice. The sources of knowing-in-action include this reflection-in-action and are not limited to research produced by university-based professional schools. (1987:40).

Two ideas can be highlighted from the quote above: the relevance of knowledge from research and knowledge from 'knowing-in-action' (knowledge derived from practice). However, Schön argues that research from universities is not enough to deal with the problems that professionals encounter in 'indeterminate zones of practice', where there is: 'uncertainty, uniqueness, and value conflict'. This is because these problems 'escape the canons of technical rationality' (1987: 6). In other words, technical rationality (an over dependence on knowledge generated from university research) cannot help professionals cope with these challenges. Nevertheless, Eraut observes that no new knowledge is created by Schön's described process of 'reflection-in-action' and so it cannot be described as a new epistemology but as a process of knowledge creation (Eraut 1995). He wonders why Schön did not further investigate the process of 'knowing-in-action', which appears to hold more possibilities. Schön (1987) provides three characteristics of 'reflection-in-action.' I underline some parts of this quote for emphasis:

1) <u>Reflection is at least in some measure conscious</u>, although it need not occur in the medium of words. We consider both the unexpected event and the knowing-in-action that led up to it, asking ourselves, as it were, 'What is this?' and, at the same time, 'How have I been thinking about it?' <u>Our thought turns back on the surprising phenomenon</u> and, at the same time, back on itself.

(2) Reflection-in-action has a critical function, questioning the assumptional structure of knowing-in-action. We think critically about the thinking that got us into this fix or this opportunity; and we may, in the process, restructure strategies of action, understandings of phenomena, or ways of framing problems.

(3) <u>Reflection gives rise to on-the-spot experiment</u>. We think up and try out new actions intended to explore the newly observed phenomena, test our tentative understandings of them, or affirm the moves we have invented to change things for the better... What distinguishes reflection-in-action from other kinds of reflection is its immediate significance for action. (1987: 28-29).

The above description of the spontaneity of reflection-in-action is quite elaborate and does in fact appear to conflict with Dewey's position that reflection is: *'active, persistent, and <u>careful consideration [emphasis mine] of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends'* (Dewey 1933: 118). This description from Dewey can be interpreted to mean that reflection cannot be carried out spontaneously as Schön suggests. However, the rigorous process described above by Schön (of reflection-in-action) is a cause of academic debates. Van Manen (1995) questions teachers' ability to practice this kind of reflection while teaching in a spontaneous and sometimes chaotic environment as a classroom. Nevertheless, more experienced practitioners may be able to engage in this semi-spontaneous process where 'reflection can occur during the action' [as] (…) 'practitioners attempt to frame or solve problems' (Zeichner and Liston 1996: 14). Szesztay's (2004) study confirms this. While 'new knowing-in-action' may be gained from the process (of 'reflection-in-action') it still remains tacit until reconstructed after

the experience through 'careful consideration'. This brings us to Schön's other mode of reflection called reflection-on-action.

'Reflection-on-action' is different from reflection-in-action. It requires the practice of looking back on previous action, which has been carried out by the practitioner. For example teachers teach their lessons and reflect on the experience afterwards. This second model of reflection is widely accepted for professional development, being useful for both competent and novice professionals (including teachers and trainee-teachers). Reflection-on-action is not an immediate process but involves some looking back at past action. It requires a process of stepping back to re-examine practice with the aim of improving practice (Boud, Keogh and Walker 1985, Buchman 1990, English 2005). It is a process which allows for more contemplation and deeper explorations of practice (Gore and Zeichner 1991:14). According to Zeichner and Liston, reflection can be viewed against a backdrop of two different time frames. It can happen before an action or after an action. It is a conscious and deliberate process.

Through either modes of reflections described by Schön, professionals will need to review their actions, try new things, explore the familiar or unfamiliar and challenge their thinking (Schön 1983) by doing what they think in a reflective way. This process would involve self-explorations and an in-depth analysis of teachers' actions and purposes, in and out of practice. It is a process that will connect experience with practice, because without reflecting on practical experience, the learning that draws

from past experience is limited (Boud et al 1985, Edge 1993, Loughran 2002). Whether by reflecting-in-action or by reflecting-on-action, the possibilities of teacher learning are endless.

As we consider the concepts of Dewey's reflective thinking and Schön's reflective practice, we receive further insight into how professionals can make significant progress by the ways they think or think within practice. Furthermore, through reflection, trainees and teachers (like other professionals) will have new opportunities for testing their assumptions about teaching and learning because reflection 'focuses on uncovering assumptions' (Brookfield 2010: 216). Teacher collaboration in learning communities which aim for co-construction of knowledge about teaching and learning would no doubt enhance this process (Field 1997). To examine the change potential of reflection especially in the context of teaching in difficult circumstances, I discuss critical reflection mainly through the perspectives of Brookfield.

3.3. Critical reflection (Perspectives from Brookfield)

Brookfield (1995) is quoted widely for his perspectives on critical reflection: a type of reflection where we deeply question assumptions in the context of power relations (Brookfield 1995: 8, 30). According to Brookfield, assumptions are: 'the taken-for-granted beliefs about the world and our place within it that seems so obvious to us as to not need stating explicitly (…) in many ways we *are* our assumptions'. Three types of assumptions are identified by Brookfield: 'paradigmatic, prescriptive and causal'

(Brookfield 1995: 2). Paradigmatic assumptions are described as assumptions that we use to structure our world into categories, while prescriptive assumptions refer to what we think should happen in a situation. Causal assumptions are assumptions that may show how our world works through conditions that we perceive can bring about change; for example, assumptions that lead us to create contracts with our students in the belief that this will enhance their students' effectiveness. Without critical reflection, Brookfield tells us that we stand the risk of making poor judgments and wrong decisions. He argues that all experience is best subjected to critical analysis otherwise it becomes unreliable. According to Brookfield reflection is not critical unless it is helps us to explore power relations that distort educational processes and interactions or it questions the very assumptions that we are comfortable with. These, according to him, are assumptions that we believe make our lives much easier, but are actually contrary to our long-term progress (Brookfield 1995: 4, 7, 8). Thus, critical reflection is not necessarily caused by a deeper type of probing, but by awareness of power relations in practice and of the contrary roles our assumptions play and their tendency to mislead us.

Brookfield believed that the probing of self and practice to explore assumptions is not always a simple process: however, if it is carried out critically, it will 'confirm or challenge existing power relations,' for example a teacher's power relations with students (1995: 30). He therefore identifies four critical lenses through which teachers can challenge their assumptions in critical ways:

- through their autobiographical lens, as learners and teachers
- through their students' eyes

- from their colleagues' experiences

- From theoretical literature

The first lens mentioned above, involves a process of self-exploration of teachers experience both as learners and of their classroom action. According to Brookfield (1995) exploring our experience as both learners and teachers helps us to 'to uncover our most deeply embedded allegiances and motivations as teachers' (Brookfield, 1995: 32). Lortie (1975) confirms that teachers' long experience as learners under other teachers influence their actions as teachers.

The second lens involves looking at practice from the perspective of learners through learner feedback. According to Brookfield 'the most fundamental metacriterion for judging whether or not good teaching is happening is the extent to which teachers deliberately and systematically try to get inside students' heads and see classrooms and learning from their point of view' (Brookfield, 1995: 35). He adds, 'of all the pedagogic tasks teachers face, getting into students' heads is one of the trickiest. It is also the most crucial'(1995: 92). The attempt by teachers to gain more perspective through their learners' eyes is a deliberate process and systematic process. It is not intuitive. Brookfield suggests that good teachers will engage with the first two lenses from self and learners' however, excellent teachers will engage with not only the first two but with colleagues and share understandings of practice through their experience. Thus the third lens is crucial and collaborative. It involves exploration of self and practice through points of views that are not essentially ours but from colleagues. This requires

teachers looking to other colleagues for feedback, mentoring and advice. The fourth lens involves interaction with the higher education literature, carrying out research, presenting papers, publishing and participating in peer review. This involves forming a wider perspective and understanding of practice from the point of view of the higher education literature and in the process challenging longstanding worldviews that limit practice.

Ideas like these are significant within the Nigerian context as Nigerian teachers may need to question the assumptions that lead and challenge their practice. They need to become excellent teachers who have broader perspectives of practice and the wider teaching and learning context. By engaging critically, they embrace the possibility of wholesome change that affects their worldview as well as their perspectives of learning and teaching at levels beyond their immediate practice. Through the four critical lenses teachers can make significant advancement in their profession by breaking the culture of individuality, thus consciously making the progression into the wider learning community where colleagues and researchers contribute broader perspectives. Thus they become more aware as excellent teachers that growth and development are shared.

3.4 Reflective practice in teacher education

In earlier sections of this chapter, I discussed the theoretical frameworks of reflection, reflective practice and critical reflection by exploring the contributions of three

influential theorists: Dewey, Schön and Brookfield. In this section, I continue the discussion through a TEd perspective that asks new questions.

3.4.1. Is reflection problematic?

Despite the integration of reflection into teacher education, it is still considered a vague and elusive concept (Rodgers 2002; Lynch and Metcalfe 2006; Akbari 2007, Zwozdiak-Myers 2012, Mann & Walsh 2013). It is considered problematic because there is not enough research to show data-led descriptions of reflection and its value for teacher education (Rodgers 2002, McClure 2006; Wright 2010; Mann and Walsh 2013; Nelson and Sadler 2013). Rodgers explains: 'over the past 15 years, reflection has suffered a loss of meaning. In becoming everything to everybody, it has lost its ability to be seen' (Rodgers 2002: 843). According to Nelson and Sadler (2013: 43) reflection 'remains problematic, due in part to differences in how it is defined, implemented, and measured'. Four ideas support Rodgers (2002) idea that reflection is problematic:

- 'it is unclear how systematic reflection is different from other types of thought'

- 'What exactly are we looking for as evidence of reflection?'

- 'Without a clear picture of what reflection is, it is difficult to talk about it'

- 'without a clear sense of what we mean by reflection, it is difficult to research the effects of reflective teacher education and professional development (…) on teachers' practice' (Rodgers 2002: 843).

These four issues raised by Rodgers in some ways reflect new questions raised about reflection. Because reflection is not a visible entity it is difficult to describe. The idea that reflection is thought and action (Dewey 1933; Schön 1987; Freire 1978) does not make this any less difficult. Socrates (cited in Grimmett 1988) captures this complexity of knowing when he says:

> But how will you look for something when you don't know what it is? How on earth are you going to set up something you don't know as the object of your search? To put it another way, even if you come right up against it, how will you know that what you have found is the thing you didn't know? (Plato, Meno, trans. 1964, cited in Grimmett 1988: 80)

As Socrates believed that knowledge comes from within an individual's mind, he stated that it is a teacher's responsibility to draw it out of learners by encouraging them to be more reflective (Gutek 2005). Our current focus however, is teacher education and our interest is to encourage teachers and student teachers to become more reflective and thus make the progression into sustained reflective practice. This, however, is not always easy, as studies have shown. This has been connected to poor or negative attitudes towards reflection which come from perceptions of reflection as being un-meaningful, time wasting or imposed (through assignments, activities and journals) other limitations are the reluctance of teachers or STs to reveal their personal thoughts or perceived weaknesses as teachers to their trainers through assignments or journals, the weight of reflective assignments too early on a course or insufficient to develop reflective thinking (Zeichner and Liston 1987, La Boskey 1993, van Manen 1995, Roberts 1998, Hargreaves 2004, Farrell 2004, Smith and Lev-Ari 2005, Hobbs 2007, Otienoh 2009, Akbari 2010). However, Akbari argues that the reflections expected in training institutions may be different from the type that teachers use (2007). Akbari (2007)

argues that reflection is indispensable in teaching experience and that teachers have always reflected on their work in classrooms. This reflects van Manen's (1995) view that pedagogy is by its nature reflective and Zeichner (1996) who argues against ideas that suggest that teachers are unreflective. Thus Akbari questions the trend in teacher education where teachers or STs are expected to reflect in academic ways. According to him:

> It seems that when the term "reflection" is used in the professional literature, only academic reflection or academically sanctioned reflection is approved of and promoted; teachers' voices are not heard at all in texts that promote reflective practice (2007: 200).

The idea that teachers' own reflection types are not given credence in teacher education programmes is supported by Lytle and Cochran Smith (1991) and Fendler (2003) who also argue that most teacher education programmes introduce reflection based on an assumption that teachers are not reflective. However, Wright and Bolitho argue that 'new learning builds on the foundation of existing knowledge and practice' (2007: 79), while Kolb theorizes that all learning is re-learning (Kolb 1984). These suggest that the knowledge base of teaching must start from where participants are (Wright and Bolitho 2007: 81). Unless this is acknowledged, resistance to reflection in teacher education programmes may continue until the voices and experiences of teachers provide a basis for teaching the concept.

In their study of trainees' and teachers' journal writings, Bean and Steven (2002) suggest that teachers and trainees' reflections may need to be scaffolded to provide the required focus. Their study also shows that although 'scaffolding helped the students to

formulate and articulate their personal belief system (…) [it] did not substantively help them to challenge larger discourses of teaching, learning, and students' (Bean and Stevens 2002: 205). Attempts like this and others, suggest that teachers and trainees do not have sufficient understanding of what reflection is or what it means to reflect. Or, they do not know the kind of reflections expected by their educators. This calls for taking a second look at the practicalities of reflection from the perspective of the familiar and to start from points of awareness that make reflection in teacher education more plausible and thus, more accessible.

In spite of the differences on opinions about the presentations of reflection in TEd and the causes of resistance or the difficulties associated with adopting the required kind of reflective practice, there is a general agreement that reflective practice is still important for teacher learning (Day 1993, Zeichner and Liston 1996, Grimmett and Erickson 1998, Russell 2005, Mann 2005, Wright 2010). The discussions above suggest that the absence of a common definition for reflection is significant. However, It may be a question of how differently reflection is perceived by academics and practitioners. It may also be related to the arguments about how professionals should be developed: by technical rationality, which uses a top-down approach, or by a new epistemology of practice (professional development), which theorizes knowledge from practice through a bottom-up approach. Ur (1992) argues that academic and the professional are two parallels of TEd, which are equally valuable. She identifies the academic as being: 'primarily engaged in the discovery of more or truer knowledge; whereas the professional is concerned with bringing about change through action' (Ur 1992: 75).

However, Ur concedes that trainee teachers are dissatisfied with courses that are based on technical rationality and view such courses as insignificant in their professional development.

3.4.1.1 Systematic or intuitive reflection?

Rodgers questions how 'systematic reflection is different from other types of thought?' (Rodgers 2002: 843). The use of the term 'systematic reflection' by Rodgers to problematize reflection may itself be problematic because reflection as a way of thinking (Dewey 1933) may not always be systematic. According to Wheatley (2006) all humans have the ability to reflect (Wheatley 2006), while Moon (1999: 10) calls it 'a basic mental process'. Studies show that reflection can be intuitive (Lytle and Cochran-Smith 1991, Atkinson and Claxton 2000, Mason 2002, Fendler 2003, Lynch and Metcalfe 2006, Akbari 2007, 2010) and not necessarily in the structured ways advocated for professional practice. Zeichner and Liston (1996) have highlighted that reflection involves emotion, intuition and passion, which are also familiar experiences. Kinsella (2007) states:

> Schön suggests that, in practice, reflection often begins when a routine response produces a surprise, an unexpected outcome, pleasant or unpleasant. The surprise gets our attention. When intuitive, spontaneous performance yields expected results, then we tend not to think about it; however, when it leads to surprise, we may begin a process of reflection (Kinsella 2007: 108).

Above, Kinsella (2007) identifies reflection as possibly beginning from a response from an intuitive or spontaneous performance, perhaps a response to routine practice, which has been discovered to be successful. Indeed it is not unusual for teachers who carry out

routine actions and stumble upon unexpected outcomes. In his arguments against technical rationality, Schön (1983, 1987) advocates for spontaneous and intuitive performance (Schön 1987: 25, 1983: 49). Dewey also suggests that reflection can be spontaneous or impulsive when he uses the expression: 'the mind leaps forward to a possible solution' (Dewey 1933: 107). However, Day (1993) observes that 'reflection will need to be analytic and involve dialogue with others' (Day 1993: 86). Although Dewey advocates rigorous thinking he acknowledges that there is some intuition in reflection when he says:

> ideas, as we have seen, whether they be *humble guesses* or dignified theories, are anticipations of some continuity or connection of an activity and a consequence which has not as yet shown itself. *They are therefore tested by the operation of acting upon them'* Dewey (1916: MV 9: 167). [Emphasis mine]

Thus we can infer that reflection may begin from an unstructured process, e.g. 'humble guessing' or intuition. Yet, we must test them as we should also 'dignified theories' by 'acting upon them'. As Dewey says, 'while we cannot learn or be taught to think, we do have to learn how to think well, especially how to acquire the general habits of reflecting' (Dewey 1933: 35). This way of thinking is a process of education. Grayling (2003: 179) stresses the centrality of reflection in the education enterprise when he says that 'the best thing any education can bequeath is the habit of reflection and questioning'. However, while we seek to introduce teachers and trainees to reflection, we may be beginning a little too late. Reflection could start from where Dewey first explored: from young learners (Dewey 1916, 1933). It could be integrated in all learning processes and not begin only at professional levels. In teacher education, while we argue for systematic reflection and its benefits, trainees and teachers may need to be allowed

to start their reflections from more familiar grounds where emotion, intuition and passion (Green 1986, Zeichner and Liston 1996, Liou 2001) lead the quest until they learn and value the more structured kind of reflection that comes with regular use. Cheng and Brown (2010) argue that conscious and intuitive knowledge need to be integrated into learning experience. This is an outcome of their study of young learners. According to Confucius: 'by three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest.' Thus Confucius presents reflection as a desirable thing, which is not farfetched, confirming the idea that reflection should be the beginning of an educational experience.

Lynch & Metcalfe (2006: 8) argue that it may be important to distinguish between what they call: 'intuitive reflection' and 'concept reflection'. While 'the former involves reflection without an explicit and formal process of selecting and considering the concept (idea, stance) that is to be used to reflect on a past sensory experience', the latter 'involve selecting a specific concept against which to reflect'. Lynch and Metcalfe observe that: 'when an unusual, unexpected or complex situation takes place, almost by definition, intuitive reflection no longer suffices; there is need to recognise the switch to using explicit concepts reflection, or reflection-on-action as Schön calls it' (2006: 8). The extent, depth or purpose of reflection may therefore determine the roles of consciousness and intuition in exploring doubt, perplexity or curiosity through reflective inquiry.

3.4.1.2 The use of reflective inquiry in teacher education

Teacher educators have now embraced the call to use reflection as a bridge between theory and practice (Loughran 2002: 34). As discussed in previous sections, studies show that many attempts to introduce or integrate reflection into teacher education programmes have been scoffed at, questioned or complained about by both teachers and their trainers (van Manen 1995, Lytle and Cochran-Smith 1991, Fendler 2003, Akbari 2007, Hobbs 2007, Otienoh 2009). It is likely, that some teacher educators do not understand what reflection means (nor do they practice it). According to Halliday (1998)

> it is understandable that the notion of reflective practice has been eagerly seized upon by beleaguered teacher educators seeking to do something emancipatory and authentic in the act of hostility towards theory, moral deliberation and contextuality in teaching practices (1998: 598).

The effects of this rush towards reflection that has not been backed by corresponding research or appropriate actions may have inhibited the development of reflection in teachers and STs. Still studies show the integration of reflective inquiry by various means: through journal writing (Hobbs 2007, Otienoh 2009, Farrell 2004); mentoring programmes (Malderez et al 2007, Roe et al 2010, Koc 2011, Hourani 2013), narrative accounts (Clandinin and Connelly 1987), Portfolios (Johnson 2002) and through action research (AR) (Gore and Zeichner 1991, Knight 2002, Pollard 2002, Noffke 2005, Somekh 2006). These are sometimes successful and at other times not so successful (Hobbs 2007, Otienoh 2009). Many attempts at integrating reflection into TEd programmes do not take into account that there are different frameworks for understanding reflection, nor that studies show that reflecting can happen in stages (Zeichner and Liston 1996, Stanley 1998, Baxter Magolda 1999, Rodgers 2002, Jay and

Johnson 2002, Farrell 2004, Ward and McCotter 2004, Lee 2005, El Dib 2007). STs and teachers are therefore overloaded with reflective assignments or activities too early in a course (Hobbs 2007, Akbari 2007) with dire consequences. Still, research shows that reflective inquiry needs to be taught (Schön 1987, Day 1993, Hatton & Smith 1995, Bean and Stevens 2002, Griffin 2003, Russell 2005, Bates et al 2009) because it is yet to be understood by those for whom it is meant, including teachers and teacher trainees (Otienoh 2009, Hobbs 2007, Russell 2005). I discuss this idea in the following sub-section.

3.4.1.3 Should reflective inquiry be taught?

Convery (2001) suggests that there are teachers who claim allegiance to Schön's reflective practice and yet remain 'locked into limited and immediate problem solving'; these are inflexible teachers who follow routine rather than creative practice. Indeed there are teachers who remain in 'reactive rather than reflective practice' (2001: 135) who are advocates of a practice they do not understand. New attitudes of openness, trustworthiness and responsibility may need to be taught as Dewey (1933) suggests alongside reflection and teachers can be encouraged to engage with themselves and with their socio-political reality. According to Freire:

> every human being, no matter how 'ignorant' or submerged in the 'culture of silence he may be, is capable of looking critically at his world in a dialogical encounter with others. Provided with the proper tools for such encounter, he can gradually perceive his personal and social reality as well as the contradictions in it, become conscious of his own perception of that reality, and deal critically with it (Freire 1990: 13).

Above Freire argues about the capability of all persons to critically look at their world, but suggests that people have to be provided with the right tools to do so. The idea that people need the right tools for reflection is supported by Russell (2005) when he says: 'fostering reflective practice requires more than telling people to reflect and then simply hoping for the best' (Russell 2005: 203). He argues that reflection needs to be taught. Loughran is more explicit and argues that reflection is 'a meaningful way of approaching learning about teaching so that a better understanding of teaching, and teaching about teaching, might develop' (2002: 33). It is clear therefore, that reflection will need to be guided for novice teachers or trainees and be taught in all TEd programmes in more explicit ways. However, Jay and Johnson (2002: 73) remind us that it is difficult for novices to learn what their own trainers cannot describe. This suggests that teacher trainers need to fully understand what reflection is before they begin to use the techniques with their own students.

Although reflection appears to be a complex phenomenon, it is accessible and easy to carry out if one recognizes that all humans have the ability to reflect (Freire 1990, Moon 1999, Wheatley 2006). However, Wheatley (2006) suggests that reflection is not what most people tend to do. Here lies the problem of teacher education. The challenges of reflecting are clearly articulated by Wheatley (2006) when she says:

> It's hard to look at modern life and see our capacities for reflection or meaning-making. We don't use our gifts to be more aware or thoughtful. We're driven in the opposite direction. Things move too fast for us to reflect, demanding tasks give us no time to think, and we barely notice the lack of meaning until forced to stand still by illness, tragedy, or job loss. But in spite of our hurry, we cannot stop life's dynamic of self-reference or the human need for meaning. If we want to

influence any change, anywhere, we need to work *with* this powerful process rather than deny its existence. (2006: 147).

The comments above may illustrate the contradictions in the practice of teaching and teacher education. We are often too busy to reflect. However, we will reflect intuitively when the need arises.

Akbari (2007) decries the paradox of teaching teachers that reflection is emancipatory, yet requiring that it be carried out in the ways that are prescribed by academics and researchers. However, reflection will may to be taught. This need for reflection to be taught is emphasized by Ward and McCotter (2004: 255) when they say:

> We have often asked our students to reflect on field experiences without ever discussing the qualities of good reflection, often with disappointing results. Students do not automatically know what we mean by reflection; often they assume reflection is an introspective after-the-fact description of teaching. Reflection, meant to make teaching and learning understandable and open, has itself been an invisible process to many of our pre-service teachers. (Ward & McCotter 2004: 255).

According to Ward and McCotter, the inability of trainee teachers to reflect comes from an assumption that in a teacher education context, trainees will naturally know how to reflect with little or no input from educators about reflection. The structures and rigours which are demanded for qualitative reflections, will need to be taught more explicitly. To enhance the use of reflection in teacher development, new ways may need to be identified for peculiar contexts. In the following sub-sections I discuss briefly about some of the important processes, which can be used in developing reflection in teacher education programmes.

3.4.2. Experiential learning

According to Dewey, education 'must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience (…) the process and goal of education are one and the same thing' (Dewey 1897: 79). This perception of the importance of experience in reflection and educational practice by Dewey informs Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning which he defines as: 'the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience.' (Kolb 1984: 41) Kolb's experiential learning theory emphasizes 'the central role that experience plays in the learning process, an emphasis that distinguishes experiential learning theory from other learning theory' (Kolb et al 2001: 227). It is built on six suppositions:

1. Learning is best conceived as a process, not in terms of outcomes
2. All learning is *re*learning.
3. Learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed modes of adaptation to the world.
4. Learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world.
5. Learning results from synergetic transactions between the person and the environment.
6. Learning is the process of creating knowledge (Kolb and Kolb 2005: 193).

Kolb's ideas about learning are not in opposition to AR or RP and are, rather, complimentary because they view learning as a social transaction that is contextual, dialectical and, a process of knowledge creation. Ultimately, experiential learning theory like AR and RP all come from the same conceptual framework traceable to Plato, Aristotle, and Confucius and in recent times, Dewey. To further explain his theory, Kolb (1984) developed the experiential learning cycle to illustrate the ways experience can be

integrated with learning through reflection. It is essentially a process of reflecting on action through different cycles as Figure 5 shows. However, I adapted this model following Wright and Bolitho (2007: 33) to clearly show that it represents a process of reflective inquiry.
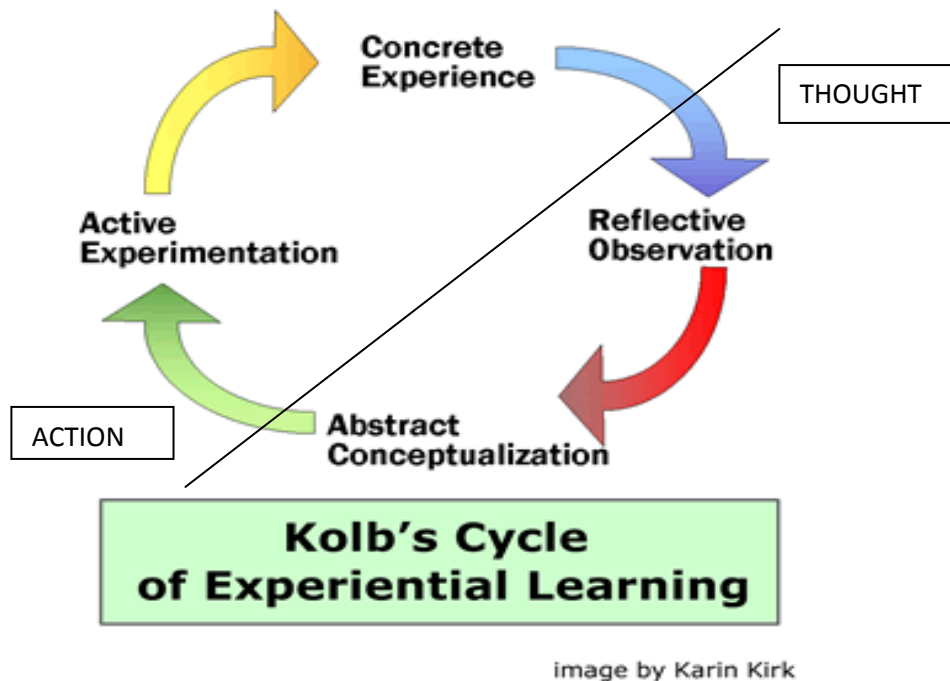
Figure 3 Adaptation of Kolb's Experiential Cycle

When a diagonal line is drawn across Figure 3 from top to bottom; separating active experimentation and concrete experience from abstract conceptualization and reflective observation, it splits Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning into thought and action, thereby illustrating how the two are inseparable (Dewey 1933) but significant in practice. Kolb's cycle can be used in TEd programmes to generate discussions about reflection, including what might be considered as starting points: theory or practice. It also shows the interconnection between theory and practice and the possibilities for

reflective thinking, reflective practice and critical reflection. The experiential cycle is also useful for explaining learning processes to teachers who overlook the importance of learning process in classrooms because they are more used to content-led approaches to teaching. In addition Kolb's cycle of experiential learning can be used to explore and challenge teachers' personal theories, beliefs and assumptions. Thus an understanding of teacher cognition is important.

3.4.3. Teacher cognition

That teachers are influenced by their beliefs, knowledge, and assumptions about teaching (Woods 1996) is not in dispute. It is however, a complex phenomenon that may be better understood within a framework of teacher cognition. According to Borg (2003: 81) teacher cognition refers to 'unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching what teachers know, believe, and think'. Lortie (1975) and Brookfield (1995) show that this is not only influenced by teacher education, but also greatly influenced by their experience as learners. Teachers' cognition is shaped by several factors such as: their perspectives, beliefs, attitudes, metaphors, assumptions, conceptions and knowledge about teaching and learning. There is a constant interaction between teachers' cognition and their practice as they both inform each other (Borg 2003). According to Richardson (1996) STs bring in their beliefs about teaching into teacher training programmes. Johnson and Golombek (2003: 730) posit that teacher learning comes through a 'process of reshaping existing knowledge, beliefs and practices rather than simply imposing new theories, methods, or materials on teachers'. From their evaluation of many studies, Wideen et al

conclude that 'teaching itself is seen by beginning teachers as the simple and rather mechanical transfer of information' (Wideen et al 1998: 143). This simplistic view about teaching that novice teachers hold will need to be challenged by reflective teacher education programmes which encourage STs or experienced teachers to reflect on previous knowledge and experience as well as classroom practice. According to Kettle and Sellars (1996), teacher development efforts which acknowledge the influence of teacher cognition on trainees and address them in pre-service education courses are more likely to be more effective at influencing the beliefs, knowledge and assumptions of trainees, than those that ignore them. This is also relevant at in-service levels of teacher education. Figure 4 illustrates the major components, which influence teachers' cognition.
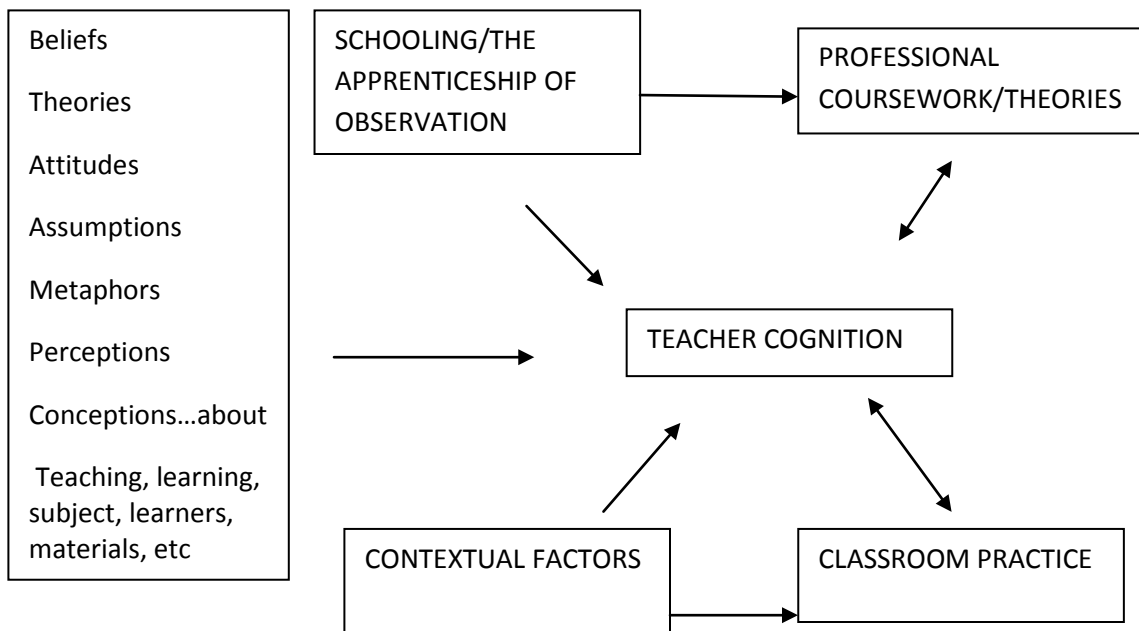
Figure 4 Teacher cognition; classroom practice, schooling and professional education (An adaptation of Borg 2003: 82)

Figure 4 shows the interactions between teacher cognition and other immediate factors in the teachers' sphere of practice. Their experience as learners informs cognition and feeds into classroom practice. For example, the process whereby learners 'learn how to teach' from observing their own teachers for periods as long as a decade and more has been called the apprenticeship of observation (Lortie 1975: 61) and influences the practices of many teachers. Other interactions are between theoretical or professional knowledge, cognition, context and classroom practice. This ongoing interaction determines teachers' approach to their work, the decisions they make in their classrooms and the views that guide them. In the Nigerian context an exploration of these factors may identify the root cause of teachers' lack of motivation, commitment and the perceived apathy to their profession (NTI 2002). According to Woods (1996), in order for people to take appropriate action, they need to understand; and to understand they will need knowledge about the world and the situations they are in (Woods, 1996). This knowledge can be received or experiential (Wallace 1991, Kolb 1984). Wallace 1991 describes both as the two types of knowledge that are needed by foreign English teachers. While received knowledge is often research-based knowledge taught in TEd programmes, experiential knowledge is practice based and relevant in the context of reflective practice.

3.4.4 Teacher knowledge

Teacher knowledge is an important focus of professional development. For English teachers this would include knowledge about language (Trappes-Lomax & Ferguson

2002). From Mann (2005) we can identify four broad components of teacher knowledge:

- Received knowledge (from teacher development/education programmes)

- Personal knowledge/Individual knowledge (the individual teacher's construct about teaching and learning)

- Experiential knowledge (knowledge which has been gained from practice)

- Local knowledge/contextual knowledge (knowledge of the local teaching and learning environment or context).

These and other smaller categorizations of teacher knowledge show from studies that teachers' knowledge is a complex strand that has a reflexive relationship with teachers' practice (Canagarajah 2005, Clandinin & Connelly 1987, Wallace 1991, Allwright 2003, Woods 1996, Wright 2002). These need to be considered in teacher development efforts, which must also seek to challenge teachers' thinking. By encouraging teachers to carry out classroom explorations, through reflective practice, teachers can be helped to engage with their knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning so that change and improvement can come into their practices.

3.4.5 The use of reflection by teachers

For too long, the emphasis of many studies has been on the integration of reflective practice in formal teacher education programmes. These have highlighted how teacher

educators can integrate reflective inquiry into programmes but not highlighted the ways that teachers themselves suggest. Unfortunately, many studies have not centred on how teachers themselves use reflection in their own practices and on what they perceive as its benefits in doing so. However, the benefits or outcomes of reflection are important because they present to teachers new ways of learning about their work as teachers including new ways of coping and new possibilities for teaching and learners. As I close this Section, I return to Rodgers (2002) who wonders what we might be looking for as evidence of reflection since it is both a vague and intangible concept. Boud et al (1985) provide an insight on the possible outcomes of reflection:

> The outcomes of reflection may include a new way of doing something, the clarification of an issue, the development of a skill or the resolution of a problem. A new cognitive map may emerge, or a new set of ideas may be identified. The changes may be quite small or they may be large. They could involve the development of perspectives on experience or changes in behaviour. The synthesis, validation and appropriation of knowledge are outcomes as well as being part of the reflective process. New links may be formed between previously isolated themes and the relative strengths of relationships may be assessed. Again, a significant skill in learning may be developed through an understanding of one's own learning style and needs (Boud et al (1985: 34).

From Boud et al, we see that the outcomes of reflection are diverse but they are realistic and arguably represent the needs and experiences of teachers in classrooms all over the world. The outcome of reflective inquiry is change. Not only in teachers but in classrooms; change in learners, change in the larger professional context and ultimately change in praxis.

Summary

In this chapter, I explored the theoretical frameworks of three influential theorists: Dewey, Schön and Brookfield and the use of reflection in teacher education. I also engaged with ideas about the vagueness of reflection and its current application in teacher education. I am convinced that the best way to study reflection is to explore how teachers use it in practice. This study therefore explores the use of reflection by Nigerian English language teachers from their own perspectives. The data will speak for itself through their own voices. In Chapter 4, I describe the methodology used in this study to answer the research question: 'how do Nigerian teachers use reflection?'

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Methodology

Introduction

Scott and Morrison (2005) describe methodology as the theory of 'how researchers gain knowledge in research contexts' (2005: 153). This is achieved by integrating perspectives, methods, tools, techniques and other considerations. There is usually a theoretical perspective behind a chosen methodology, which both draws from and constitutes a researcher's epistemology and ontology (Crotty 1998). In this chapter, I describe my research methodology, the epistemological and ontological roots from which they draw and my beliefs about knowledge and how it is constructed. My research design will be discussed, including: the different research processes, methods and techniques. The study is qualitative because it studies human elements within the contexts of their everyday lives. In my study, I seek to understand reflective practice, by integrating a range of research methods (Richards 2003) like observation, individual and focus group interviews in a study of a small group of Nigerian primary English teachers. Although the chosen research methodology is qualitative, a quantitative instrument (a semi-structured questionnaire) was used for data collection. However, it only played a minor role in the qualitative study. The study uses exploratory, interpretive research in collaborations between researcher and participants to explore reflection in order to describe reflection so that it can be less vague and more accessible to teachers.

4.1 Research

Research is 'systematic and sustained enquiry, planned and self-critical' (Stenhouse 1981: 113). It is also described as 'rigorous inquiry' or an investigation that facilitates the understanding of phenomena or problematic events (Stringer 2007: 4). Richards (2003) describes this process as being embedded in the everyday life styles of different people: in the broadest sense 'research boils down to finding out about something' (2003: 2). However, it is not random but purposeful and is led by a deliberate attempt to make some relevant claim after carrying out a set of rigorous procedures, analysis and interpretations. The researcher's epistemological and ontological positioning affects the design and analysis of any study. There are several approaches to research carried out in different traditions.

4.1.1 A descriptive study?

According to Wright (2005: 429) earlier studies in educational research were dominated by 'prescriptively-driven research,' which aimed to provide policy makers and academics with justifications of their theoretical positions and 'prescriptions of classroom action'. Wright (2005: 429) argues:

> in Applied Linguistics, theoretical knowledge has tended to precede classroom action (…) and there are adherents to the *experimental* tradition of finding out if a new idea is being used as prescribed (…) This prescriptive tradition also supports *interventionist* studies in which new ideas are tried out in specific contexts, and is employed in support of the transfer of knowledge developed in one context to another. (Wright 2005: 429)

Wright (2005) argues that pilot studies which use control groups are done in the 'prescriptionist' tradition. He suggests that 'descriptions of classroom life' are an 'effective basis for both interventionist and developmentally oriented research' (2005: 429). The current study adopts a descriptive approach to classroom research by beginning from classroom observations to better understand participants' classrooms. The study avoids prescription and aims for collaboration. It is developmentally oriented, and involves a form of intervention. However, the purpose is to identify and describe processes of reflective practice in school-based teacher-led teacher development. The collaborative study aims for co-construction of knowledge (Guba and Lincoln 1994, Richards 2003, Richards and Farrell 2005) about classroom practice and reflection.

4.1.2 Methodology

Methodology involves the specific decisions and choices that researchers make in the research process of gathering information, analyzing and interpreting data (Crotty 1998, Richards 2003). For a researcher, this process is directly linked to their perceptions of the world and how knowledge is constructed. Guba and Lincoln pose another question: 'how can the inquirer (would be knower) go about finding out whatever he or she believes can be known?' (Guba and Lincoln, 1994: 108) This is a question of methodology. It is however, evident that any given method would not be appropriate for all types of inquiry. The researcher stance which one takes will guide this process in determining an appropriate method for a particular study. This will draw from a specific epistemological perspective and ontological view of the world. My research

methodology is exploratory, interpretive research. I explain this in the following sub-sections.

4.1.3 My researcher stance

As an educational researcher, I have become aware that my worldview comes from a personal schemata which is constantly being built, reviewed and updated as I am introduced to 'new knowledge'. I am constantly being influenced by who I am, where I am, and how I am perceived by other people (Hallowell et al 2005). Exploring my own beliefs about knowledge and how it is created will therefore help me to constantly question my assumptions even though it is inevitable that 'value-free research is impossible' (Ortega 2005: 21). As a researcher, I am bringing in the perspective of a teacher and trainer and my whole schemata into my study. However, I understand that these cannot lead the study, as they are not perspectives of research participants. I will therefore need to be self-reflexive and check my interpretations with participants and allow the data to speak for itself. In my analysis this is a process I have adopted. For example after observing eight participants' classroom practice, I shared my perceptions with them a few months later. Participants disagreed with my interpretations of what I perceived to be teacher-centred classrooms. They observed that one look into their classrooms was not enough to take this position. In addition they noted that it was the beginning of term and they were introducing new topics, which as they said, necessitated more teacher talk. We may not have agreed on perspectives but we agreed on why one classroom observation was not enough to make accurate interpretations of a

teachers' practice. I acknowledge that our collaborative research must become a new voice, which is co-constructed (Richards 2003, Richards 2009, Mann 2011).

My research is exploratory and interpretive. It is guided by the perspectives which I have described above which takes account of the individual perceptions of research participants including their subjective views about the phenomenon being studied. As a researcher, I believe in the importance of doing research with people and not on people (Galtung 1975) and that in the search for meaning and new understandings, truth is relative and is jointly constructed as individuals interact with their environment (Richards 2003, Crotty 1998). Crotty (1998) puts it more succinctly: 'there is no objective truth waiting for us to discover it' (1998: 8). As a researcher, I understand that I will benefit from this process of 'creating meaning'. My choice of a research methodology which is exploratory, interpretive research, therefore falls within the constructivist paradigm of educational research, which aims for 'understanding meaning and action' (Carr and Kemmis 1986: 83). The exploratory study has been carried out through teacher and researcher collaborations including classroom observations, teacher group meetings, and individual and focus group interviews. These reveal my perception of knowledge as relative and context bound. As will be shown in the next chapter, this process challenges my assumptions.

The study provided me with an opportunity to co-construct knowledge with small groups of Nigerian primary and secondary school English teachers through an

exploratory, interpretive research methodology. I am aware that at the end of my study:

'the reader cannot be compelled to accept (…) [my] analyses or (…) arguments, on the

basis of incontestable logic or indisputable evidence [as researchers] we can only hope

to be persuasive and to demonstrate the utility of our position' (Guba and Lincoln 1994:

108). My aim is to create new understandings within the context which will guide

participants and researcher in our daily practice. This reflects my choice of a qualitative

approach to inquiry and the use of an exploratory, interpretive research method.

4.1.4 Why a qualitative study?

Qualitative research suits my current study which seeks to identify and describe

processes of reflective practice in teacher-led professional development because it uses

methods which enable educational researchers to get 'close to practice' and which aim

for 'a first hand-sense of what actually goes on in classrooms, schools, hospitals and

communities' (Eisner 2001: 137). Thus qualitative research incorporates conversations,

interviews, field notes, memos, recording, and photographs for inquiry (Denzin and

Lincoln 2005: 3). According to Denzin and Lincoln, qualitative research is:

> a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of
> interpretive, material practices that make the world visible (…) [and] involves an
> interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world (Denzin and Lincoln 2005: 3).

As the observer, I began my study in a Nigerian primary school, which provided natural

settings for exploring reflection, which I studied for about two years. Qualitative

research suits this process as an approach, which is 'of specific relevance to the study of

social relations' (Flick 2009: 12). My research design reveals how these social relations

will be studied. Qualitative research methods like those mentioned by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) above provide the advantage of:

- Enabling the researcher to study people in their natural settings

- Helping the researcher to understand the meanings of people's actions from their own individual or collective perspectives

- Using a small sample

- Integrating a range of methods and analysis features to provide different perspectives and a clearer interpretation of the same phenomenon (Richards 2003: 10).

- Encouraging reflexivity for the researcher from the interaction between researcher and participants and emerging data (Flick 2009: 16)

The use of qualitative methods derives from an understanding of research as people-centred, an approach which is appropriate for investigating studies in English language teaching (Richards 2003: 9).

4.2 The research design

A research design is the overall research plan which gives a rationale for the study and how it will be carried out (McNiff and Whitehead 2010). For Scott and Morrison it is a schema (or plan) that constitutes the entire research (Scott and Morrison 2005). A research design is created with participants and the research context in mind. It involves

'the careful management of research activities so that stakeholders can jointly construct definitions of the situation that are meaningful to them' (Stringer 2007: 41). The theoretical frameworks, ontological and epistemological perspectives of the researcher, influence a chosen design. In the following sections I discuss my design and the different elements that constitute this plan.

My research integrates me as a **participant observer,** because I am not only instigating reflection through an exploratory, interpretive research method with participants from different Nigerian schools, but I am also developing my own learning as a Nigerian teacher educator. According to Campbell et al (2004) participant observers are 'insiders', who may do either of two things: understand events as they take place or not notice 'new' events as they take place because of an overt familiarity with 'day-to-day' routines (Campbell 2004: 94). I hoped that by sharing perspectives and understandings with other participants in the study, I would be ensuring transparency and validity.

4.2.1 Rationale and research question

The rationale for this study is a need to interrogate and extend previous models of reflection as a basis for further research. It is also a response to current calls for further data-led research on reflection to show its relevance for TEd (1.1). The study also comes from a need to find more appropriate ways to integrate reflection into TEd programmes (see 3.4). While it is also guided by my need as a teacher educator to understand reflection in the context of English language teacher education, it also rises from a need

to find teacher development efforts that can be individually or collaboratively sustained by Nigerian teachers. Currently, teacher education in Nigeria has two major forms: pre-service teacher education which is provided by Nigerian colleges of education, universities and the National Teachers Institute (NTI) and in-service teacher education which in Nigerian terms largely refers to the upgrading of unqualified teachers to qualified teacher status through part time programmes, which are either run at distance or during school holidays. The pre-service teacher education providers mentioned above all contribute to this effort, especially the NTI, which has a mandate from the Nigerian government to provide in-service teacher education. My explorations of the context and the Nigerian literature show that growth in the profession would need to come from teachers themselves through development efforts that are school-based and teacher-led. A study like this will show what Nigerian teachers are capable of doing when they look critically at their professional actions with learning and learners as a focus. Therefore the research question is: 'how do Nigerian English teachers use reflection?' By answering this question, I hope to add Nigerian English teachers' voices to discussions about the reflection and reflective practice.

4.2.2 Research aims revisited

By setting out to identify and describe processes of reflective practice among Nigerian English language teachers; I aimed to:

- Describe reflection from the perspective of use in ELT.

- Fill an intellectual gap in Nigeria where there are few studies (if any) on reflective practice in-service teacher education.

- Create awareness about reflective practice in Nigeria, within a context of school-based, teacher-led professional development to make the implicit practices of Nigerian English teachers more explicit.

- Identify reflective processes through the study, which can be integrated into other studies for pre-service and in-service teacher education.

In the next few sections I discuss my plan as I implemented it.

4.2.3 Participants

In describing my research plan, it is important to examine the research purpose. Greene (2000) asks: 'whose interests are being advanced?' (Greene 2000: 991). Stenhouse says 'all researchers are beset by temptations of interest which may blow them off course' (Stenhouse 1981: 109). It is true that all researchers advance a measure of their own interest, and in this regard, I am no exception. However, educational researchers have other interests. According to Ortega 'the value of research is to be judged by its social utility' (Ortega 2005: 21). This suggests that a researcher's personal interest should not be paramount. What is more important is how participants in the context will benefit from the study. These questions guide my choice of exploratory, interpretive research as a research methodology that will provide immediate benefit to the context.

4.2.3.1 Participants in Phase 1 of the study (Group A)

In Phase 1, there were originally eight female participants in the initial research context from a private school of about 300 children in Western Nigeria: seven of the eight taught English; three, without English language qualifications. One of these teachers was a French language teacher who opted to participate in the study (she also has an English language qualification). About a year after, five other female teachers joined this evolving teacher group without informing me (even though I mentioned that my focus was on participants who taught English). Although they were not teaching English language, they participated in weekly meetings, which included efforts to develop a primary school English workbook. This decision was entirely theirs. The choice of female participants in this research group was not deliberate; but reflects the dominance of female teachers in the primary schools' sector (Robertson 1992: 45). Participants in this research group were between the ages of 33 and 45 years. At the beginning of the study, the least number of years of teaching experience was 3 years while the longest was 18 years. Participants had between 9 and 23 young learners in their classrooms. Most of these participants were married. Most had qualified teacher status, (one had only a BA in English language) and had all participated in some professional development events in the past few years. None of them belonged to a teacher association. By collaborating with them during the study I hoped that they would be able to deepen their understanding of the social processes that take place in their classrooms and thus develop strategies that would result in improving their practice (Noffke and Somekh 2005: 90). This group contributes primary and secondary data to the study

through individual interviews, their teacher group meetings, and two focus group interviews. Table 6 shows members of this group by pseudonyms.

S/N	NAMES	AGE	YEAR GROUP TAUGHT	EXPERIENCE	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
1	Ona	40	5 & 6	18	NCE, BA English
2	Rihanna	39	4	5	BA English, ongoing PGDE
3	Angela	37	3	6	HND Accounting, PGDE
4	Anne	33	1	10	BSC (ED) Mathematics, Dip Computer Science
5	Akon	42	1 & 6	7	NCE, BA French and English
6	Adelaide	36	6	10	BSC Statistics, PGDE
7	Ariel	45	1	15	BA (ED) History
8	Katherine	33	2	3	NCE, BA (ED) English

Table 6 Overview of teachers in Study Group A

4.2.3.2 Participants in Phase 2 of the study (Group B)

Phase 2 of the study took place in the second year of the study when it expanded to include other participants (English language teachers) across Nigeria: 26 colleagues from ELTAN and 72 government secondary schoolteachers in Abuja. These were questionnaire respondents (Questionnaire A: Appendix 2). They provided perspectives of teacher development from the wider ELT context in Nigeria. These questionnaire respondents are classified as group B in the study. They are anonymous. My interaction with them and the administration of questionnaires with this group is discussed in 5.2.

4.2.3.3 Participants in Phase 3 of the study (Group C)

In Phase 3 of the study, I carried out 13 interviews that provided primary data for the study (with participants in Abuja, Port Harcourt and Bonny, one participant from Study Group A and a focus group interview with Group A). During this period which took place between July and November 2013, I turned to former course participants whom I had taught in two international teacher development programmes between 2008 and 2011. They had either taken the 3-6 months part-time course (CICTT) or the 12-24 months course (CIDTT) or both, prior to the study. Both programmes integrated reflective practice, and participants were required to reflect on different classroom and other professional experiences in course assignments that formed the basis of the award of certificates or diplomas. These participants shared their experience of reflection through a qualitative instrument with open-ended questions (Questionnaire B: see Appendix 3) and through individual interviews. Although 12 course former participants filled Questionnaire B, only 6 of them were interviewed.

I also reached out to five junior secondary school teachers in Abuja. Four of them were from the same government secondary school. They were also members of the Pro Learning Group (PLG), a teachers' group (TG) which was started by Kenny, a participant in the study (5.3.2). Table 7 shows participants who are classified as group C in the study. They include members of Group A, who participated in Phase 3 of the study through an individual interview (Rihanna) and a focus group interview.

S/N	Name	Gender	Type of school	Study Phase	Association with researcher
1	James	Male	Private JSS	Phase 3	Member of ELTAN Abuja
2	Kenny	Male	Government JSS	Phase3	Member of ELTAN & PLG Abuja
3	Grace	Female	Government JSS	Phase 3	Member of PLG Abuja
4	Jordan	Female	Government JSS	Phase 3	Member of PLG Abuja
5	Mary	Female	Government JSS	Phase 3	Member of PLG Abuja
6	Manny	Male	Private primary	Phase 3	Former course participant, Bonny
7	Sylvia	Female	Private JSS	Phase 3	Former course participant, Port Harcourt
8	Lola	Female	Private primary	Phase 3	Former course participant, Port Harcourt
9	Nicky	Female	Private primary	Phase 3	Former course participant, Port Harcourt
10	Gloria	Female	Private primary	Phase 3	Former course participant, Port Harcourt
11	Delores	Female	Private primary	Phase 3	Former course participant, Port Harcourt
12	Rihanna	Female	Private primary	Phase 1	Participant from Group A, Lagos
13	Group A		Private primary	Phase 1	Participants from Group A, Lagos

Table 7 Participants in Study Group C

4.2.3.4 Summary of participants in the study

In all, 12 participants from Groups A and C were interviewed individually in Phase 3 between July and November 2011. Group A also participated in a second focus group interview during this period. Group A and B participants were between 30 and 50 years old. This diverse group of participants included four government schoolteachers from a junior secondary school in Abuja, one junior secondary teacher from a private school in Abuja, four private primary schoolteachers; and three private secondary school teachers.

Besides the government schoolteachers who taught in the same school, all other teachers mentioned above were from nine different schools including the one in Lagos. In all, three men and nine women were interviewed individually. All of these twelve participants studied English language in Nigerian colleges or universities. They therefore had similar teacher training or college/university experience. They differed largely in their practice in nine different private Nigerian schools and a government school. The private schools where these teachers taught were of different levels: from medium range to high profile. However, they all catered to Nigerian children who (from a Western perspective) would be considered as coming from lower and upper middle class homes. Their classrooms were smaller, with up to 25 children. In comparison to the government teachers who taught in large classrooms with up to 120 children per teacher, their learning environments were more comfortable and more manageable. They also had more access to resources than the government schoolteachers including Internet at school. Conversely, the government schoolteachers taught in very uncomfortable environments, and they complained about their inability to adequately reach each child because of the large numbers, especially when teaching writing. The children they taught were largely from poor families or were dependents or servants of people who were higher up on the social ladder. Although teaching was more stressful for these government schoolteachers, they had job security as an advantage. The private school teachers largely lacked job security and had to work extra hard to prove their competence to their employers or risk losing their jobs at short notice. In terms of confidence in their statuses as teachers, both groups of government and private school teachers showed significant levels of confidence with their statuses as English teachers;

the government teachers, more so. The government teachers had had wider interactions with other colleagues through teacher development efforts by government that could involve hundreds of teachers in one programme. Nigerian private school teachers interact with smaller groups during external and mostly internal teacher development programmes. Figure 5 illustrates the diversity of research participants in the 3 phases of the study.
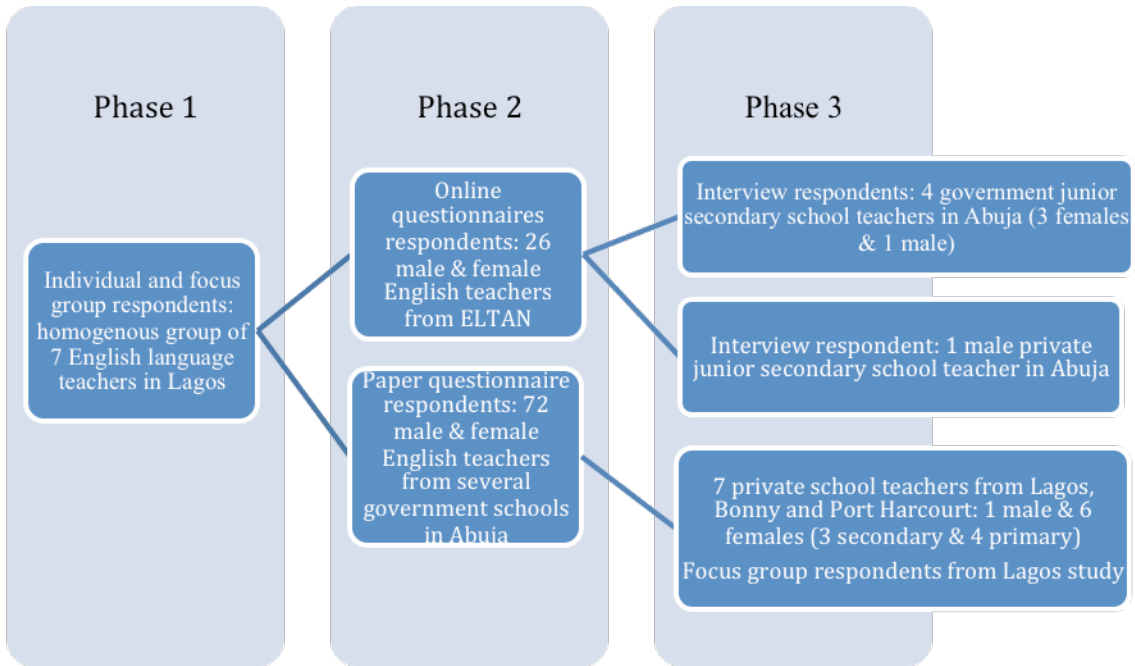
Figure 5 Participants in the 3 study phases

All participants in the study were assured of confidentiality and gave informed consent. Pseudonyms were used to protect their identities.

4.2.4 Ethical considerations

According to Edwards and Mauthner (2002), 'ethics concerns the morality of human conduct. In relation to social research, it refers to the moral deliberation, choice and accountability on the part of researchers throughout the research process' (2002: 14). A lot has been written about the considerations, which researchers need to carry into the field. These reflect their moral positions and may be influenced by funders of research. These issues have gained more prominence in academic research in recent years (Johnson and Altheide 2002: 59, Robertson and Dearling 2004: 33). They not only question and inform the types of relationships we form with participants, but also influence and guide our research processes (Richards 2003, Denzin and Lincoln 2003). Researchers are required to make ethical decisions, which are 'a result of a weighing of a myriad of factors in the complex social and political situations in which we conduct research' (Piper and Simons 2005: 56). For me this was a necessary process of self-evaluation (Brydon-Miller 2008: 204) and weighing of my intentions with ethical considerations, which, in action research, 'recognizes the improvement of life as a goal' (Noffke 1995: 4).

According to Howe and Moses (1999: 56), 'to be truly ethical, educational researchers must be prepared to defend what their research is *for*'. For me, the study was not just an academic one that would confer on me some status, but a study of the context that would feed back into my practice, mine and others' professional development needs in the immediate research context and into the teacher development context of my country, Nigeria. I had a singular purpose, which is to create new understandings of reflective practice for my students; the larger Nigerian ELT context and myself. I hoped this

process would bridge an intellectual gap in the context and inspire further studies. My behaviour as a researcher was guided by ethical standards from BERA (BERA 2000) and the University of Warwick and by the literature on research ethics which demand that I provide **informed consent** (provide continuous and relevant information about my research throughout the study) and **confidentiality** (Richards 2003, Denzin and Lincoln 2003, Marshall and Gretchen 2006, Fine et al 2000) to all the different groups of participants in the study.

Confidentiality is described by Piper and Simon (2005) as 'a principle that allows people not only to talk in confidence, but also to refuse to allow publication of any material that they think might harm them in any way' (2005: 57). I therefore use pseudonyms for all participants in the study: PLG is also a pseudonym for the TG of government teachers in the study. In securing both processes for participants, I applied for ethical approval from the University before proceeding to the field. All participants were provided information about the proposed study. Participants from the initial research group each signed two consent forms, including a video consent form (Appendix 8 & 9). Parents of children in the first research phase signed consent forms to allow the use of video in their children's classrooms in advance of the study. One child however, was asked to sit behind the video camera because his parents did not give consent. The video recording was used as an 'aide memoire' to reconcile the content of field notes, my personal observations and perceptions at the research site. It is not shown in the study. Other interview participants in the study also signed consent forms.

I understand that there are power issues in educational research and researchers often have the advantage of being more 'powerful' than participants. It is important therefore for researchers to be open with their participants so that potential tensions can be diffused. Cameron (1992), a white researcher studying a black community, states that researchers need to be open about their agenda; negotiate with participants at every stage of the study; acknowledge and integrate the perceptions and knowledge of participants into the study; and share information and present research findings to participants in a form that is accessible (Cameron 1992: 128). This may be one way of addressing power issues. Behar (1993) notes: 'we ask for revelations from others, but we reveal little or nothing of ourselves; we make others vulnerable, but we ourselves remain invulnerable' (1993: 273). Researchers need not distance themselves from participants but need to view participants as equals. My position as a PhD student studying in the UK no doubt conferred on me a perceived higher status, likewise my experience as a teacher educator and mentor which conferred on me the status of an expert. To diffuse this possible imbalance in the research, I shared my beliefs about how knowledge is constructed with participants: that it is a co-construct of researcher and participants. I also informed them that one of the purposes of the study was to draw from the knowledge resource that they collaboratively constitute.

4.3 Research method

A research method includes the procedures which researchers use in a study (Scott and Morrison 2005: 152, Crotty 1998: 7). In qualitative research, the researcher could use a

range of methods to carry out the study (Campbell et al 2004: 81). In carrying out this study, I preferred an eclectic approach and therefore chose observational and non-observation methods (Burns 1999: 79) and structured and non-structured research instruments. Because educational research needs to be as reliable as possible (Nunan 1993a, 1993b), I carried out classroom observations, held conversations with teachers, initiated teacher group meetings, administered structured and semi-structured questionnaires and carried out individual interviews. This was also an attempt to view data from different perspectives through a process of triangulation (Altrichter et al 1993). This was also used to enhance accuracy in data collection, to facilitate the identification and resolution of any gaps or inconsistencies in the data (Dey 1993: 74). A wide range of research instruments including: a video camera, field notes, voice recorder, maps and researcher diary, enhanced this process. Figures 6 and 7 show my proposed research design and the final design in the three study phases. The diagrams illustrate the research tools, techniques and method used in the study. They show the research design as it was originally planned and as it emerged within a two-year research period. As the study was exploratory, the design was adapted in every phase of the study. All emergent elements in the study (design) are underlined. In 4.3 I discuss the methods and instruments used in different phases of the study.

Proposed Research Method: Exploratory, interpretive research

Proposed Research Participants: 5-6 Nigerian English language teachers in a Nigerian private primary school in Lagos

Proposed Research Instruments:

Phase 1: Field note, maps, audio recorder   *Phase 2:* audio recorder, reports, and teachers' diary entries   *Phase 3:* field notes, maps, audio recorder

Investigation forms/report   field notes   teachers' (Ts') diary entries

Technique: Observation, feedback   focus group, individual interviews   observation, feedback, individual interviews

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
December 2009	March 2010	June 2010
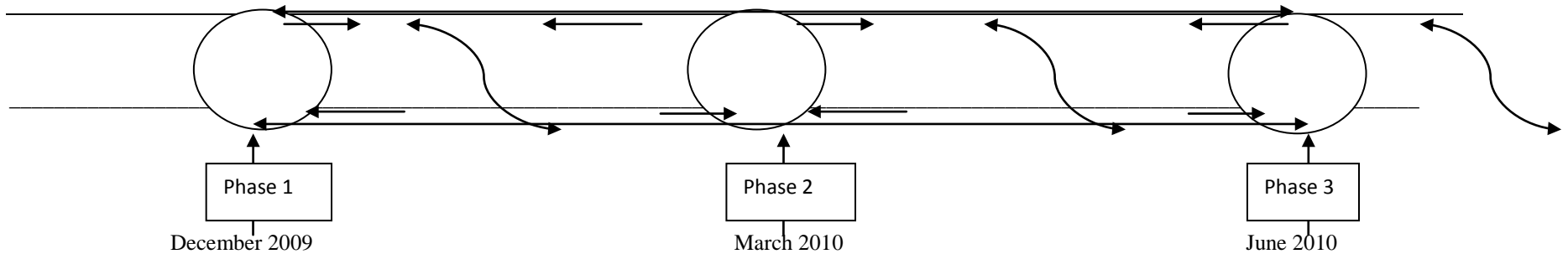
Method: Classroom observations/feedback to teachers   (1) Reports from classroom explorations   *R does classroom observations/feedback
Teacher explorations of own classroom practice   (2) Workshop on reflection   to observe changes in Teachers'
    (3) Teacher group meetings with games   *Ts' share experience of study with school
    (4) Further explorations of classrooms   focus group interview

Purpose: Question Ts' understanding of the familiar   to gain more insight into reflective processes   Seek for evidence of new perspectives/development
& to instigate reflection   Describe reflection from the data

*R=researcher   *T=teachers

Figure 6 Proposed research design (October 2009)

Research Method: Exploratory, interpretive research

Research participants & questionnaire respondents: 98 English language teachers from several schools across Nigeria.

Research Instruments:

Phase 1: Field notes, maps, audio recorder   *Phase 2:* Internet: www.survey monkey.com & email   *Phase 3:* audio recorder, telephone (2 interviews)

Video recorder, reports   *Structured & semi structured questionnaires*

Technique: Observation, feedback   Researcher-administered hard copies of questionnaires   Individual interviews & focus group interviews

 Individual interviews   Researcher emailed semi-structured questionnaires

	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3

January-September 2010   January-June 2011   July-November 2011
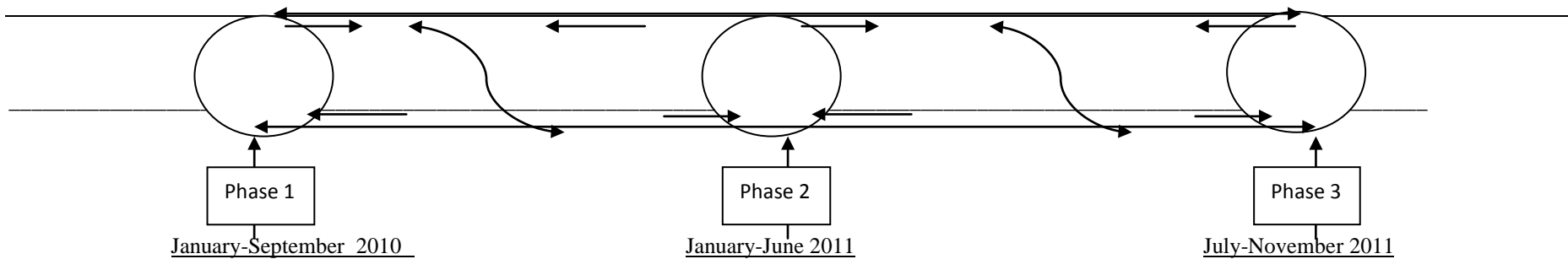
Method: classroom observations/feedback   Online survey at www.surveymonkey.com   2nd Focus Group interview with Group A
Individual teachers' classroom explorations and reports   Researcher-administered questionnaires at a workshop   Individual Interviews of Group C &
Rihanna
Teacher group meetings, workshop on reflective practice   e-mail questionnaires to former course participants
1st focus group interview   Free workshops on reflection in Abuja: ELTAN & govt. teachers
Purpose: to instigate reflection   Identify awareness about reflection in the wider ELT context
                            Create awareness about reflection in Nigerian ELT   Describe reflection from the data

Research Questions: 'How do Nigerian English teachers use reflection?'

Figure 7 Actual PhD research design (emergent elements are underlined)

Figures 6 and 7 provide graphic descriptions of my research design, including time lines, instruments and methods used. According to Dörnyei (2007) a variety of methods can be used to collect data, including documents, interviews, field notes and images. During the first phase which lasted longer than anticipated, participants from the private school took more ownership of the study (see Chapter 5 for a narrative account of the study).

4.3.1 Method

In Phase 1, I carried out 8 observations within 3 days to observe participants' practice. As a researcher I was privileged to observe social encounters between these teachers and their learners. According to Wright (2005) 'schools and classrooms are places where children experience a range of social encounters' (Wright 2005: 92). Research instruments used in this phase are: *video camera, audio recorder, field notes and maps.* In the following sections I explain my data collection methods and the triangulation used in the study (with this group) to view data from different perspectives (Altrichter et al 1993: 117). A data analysis section of this chapter (4.6) provides a summary of all data sets in the study (table 9). In the following sub-sections I describe the procedures followed to collect data. In the descriptions all research instruments used are italicized.

4.3.1.1 Observation

According to Freeman (1982: 21) 'observation is a fundamental, yet often disregarded tool in in-service work with teachers'. It is also a useful instrument for researchers. Wajnryb (1992: 1) says that 'being in the classroom as an observer opens up a range of experiences and processes which can become part of the raw material of a teacher's professional growth'. The same can be said for researchers. I sat at the back of the classroom during each observation. My focus was on the teacher and the response of learners to her actions. I used *field notes and drew maps* (Appendix 4) to personally record what I saw, felt or heard. The school's administrative assistant who was chosen so that we could minimize the number of unfamiliar persons in the classroom operated the *video camera* used to record the classroom session. Laycock and Bunnag (1991: 46) say: 'no video record – especially of a class of sixty learners -can be completely full; and a degree of subjectivity must be involved, in that someone has to decide when the camera points where'. The classrooms observed were small, as were their learning groups. This was an advantage in providing me with a more comprehensive image from the back of the classroom. *Field notes* were used to supplement video images and vice versa. An *audio recorder* was placed close to the teacher in front of the class; it was used as backup, in case the *video camera* failed.

The eight classrooms observations lasted a total of 390 minutes (six hours, thirty minutes). The first steps in my observation was to quickly draw a *map* of each classroom (Appendix 4) to indicate children's seating positions according to gender and

then attempt to track the teacher's movement while quickly recording other observations of classroom activities. I posed questions in my *field notes* as I went along and wrote them out for the teacher to read after each lesson. My purpose was to instigate a measure of reflection by giving some of these questions in advance. To safeguard any attempt to prepare ready-made answers during the interview, I told the teachers who received these questions that I would ask some of these questions along with others. Three teachers were not given advance questions. I mentioned to one participant that the videos might be a good source for participants to collaboratively discuss practice during the study. She expressed reluctance; she said she was not keen on watching herself on *video.*

Freeman (1982) discusses three approaches to teacher development with a focus on observation. One of these is described as a 'non-directive approach to observation' (Freeman 1982: 24). In this approach the objective is not to evaluate or judge the teacher but to understand and to clarify what one observes. The understanding and clarification process was part of my interview with each teacher. However, I did not follow the procedures, which are described in Freeman (1982). Each observation lasted as long as the lesson, which was usually one hour, although three were 30 minutes each. After leaving the research location, I used the videos as an aide memoire to rebuild my field notes into carefully structured memos that recorded the events and processes that I saw in each classroom.

4.3.1.2 Post observation interviews

In studies like this one, qualitative interviews are used to 'investigate participant's identities, experiences, beliefs, and orientations' (Talmy 2010: 111). This process facilitates the co-construction of knowledge between the researcher and interviewee. According to Mann (2011: 10) 'the importance of co-construction is that it inevitably requires more attention to be paid to what the interviewer is bringing to the processes'. In post-observation interviews, I aimed to bring new insight to participants by asking them simplistic questions that could make them take a second look at the familiar things they have taken for granted in their classrooms. These interviews were carried out at times selected by individual participants. Most participants chose a period after school; three others chose free periods during school. I used an *audio recorder*. The eight interviews lasted between about 13 and 18 minutes each (a total of 116 minutes). They were precise and straight to the point. They were however, directive and served a general purpose of stimulating reflection and to start a guided process of self-selected exploration of classroom practice. Time was an issue in the study and probably shaped my decision to be more directive in the interviews, because interviews were carried out during school hours or immediately after school which was not very convenient for participants. I could not request for weekend interviews because I was yet to develop a relationship with participants that could justify such a request. Most interviews were done in the order illustrated below. However, one or two interviews did not follow the order but contained each element which I was able to identify from a post interview analysis of the eight interviews: I started with an introduction in which I addressed each

teacher by name and expressed my appreciation to them for allowing me into their classrooms.

1. **Relay:** where I relayed what I had seen them do (during my classroom observations) without making judgments. According to Gebhard (2005: 4) 'exploration is enhanced when we take a non-judgmental stance'.

2. **Questioning the familiar**: here I asked specific questions, using what I thought would be a 'making strange' technique, however, from my reflections and audio records these were not as strange as I thought they would be. However, they appear to show a genuine interest in wanting to know, understand or clarify. They were nevertheless effective for making these teachers look again at what they do in classrooms (as some participants admitted during the interview). Fanslow (1988) informs us that the aim of teacher development through explorations is for teachers to see teaching differently. He advocates for collaboration when he says that when teachers carry out explorations on their own it is 'like trying to use a pair of scissors with only one blade' (1997: 166).

3. **Joint exploration**: I carried this out by 'questioning the familiar'. Here I either asked them how they felt about their response to the questions I gave them in advance (if I did) or to the kinds of questions I was asking them. This stage involved subtle probing for reasons why they did the things I saw in their classrooms, and/or what resources they drew from to answer my questions or to teach in their current classrooms. According to Edge (1992) by cooperating with others teachers can gain more understanding of their opinion and experience.

4. **Identification**: Here I asked teachers if they would like to explore a particular aspect of their classrooms. Each teacher agreed to do this, and when I asked if they would like me to help to facilitate this process, they concurred. I had hoped that these teachers would eventually be able to carry out a process of AR during the study. However, they could only explore their classrooms in simpler ways.

Six individual classroom explorations were carried out by members of Group A between February and March 2010, after I had returned to the United Kingdom.

4.3.1.3 An Intervention through a teachers' group meeting

When I returned to Nigeria, in April 2010, I suggested a book project for Group A. They agreed to design a Year 1 English workbook (their choice of year level). My aim was to intervene in the context by initiating a teachers' group (TG). I hoped that the TG would evolve into a reflective experience as participants engaged in the book project. I hoped that through this intervention, which was preceded by my first attempts to trigger reflection in participants through post observation interviews, participants would develop new understandings and practice of reflection with support from their colleagues. The book project was added to the original idea for a TG as a way of sustaining the TG through specific tasks and responsibilities which member assigned to themselves. I donated a few English workbooks to Group A to support the process. Participants agreed to meet once a week throughout the study and agreed to record their meetings with a recorder which I had provided for this purpose. Thereafter, I showed 2 participants how to use the *audio recorder.* I could not meet with this group until after

the summer holiday of 2010 (they were too busy to spare the time). By September 2010, I discovered that meetings had been irregular and were hardly recorded. I called for a meeting, as I was no longer sure if participants were interested in the study. Their school administrator intervened by offering them the weekly departmental meeting days for their TGM. I suggested that they could opt out of the study but they chose to continue the study. The following year when I interviewed Group A through a focus group interview, I discovered that members of this TG had bonded, and collaborated by sharing ideas and by supporting each other's practice. More importantly they spoke more freely and could articulate their experience of reflection.

4.3.2 Individual and focus group interviews

Researchers advocate the use of interviews to generate an understanding of phenomena through a co-construction process (between researcher and interviewees) that is methodological (Richards 2009, Talmy and Richards 2011). Talmy & Richards argue that interviews should not be perceived as neutral instruments but as active representations of the 'whats' and 'hows' in interview process (Talmy and Richards 2011). Because interviews are 'not merely the product of what the participants talk about but also how they talk', they can also be seen as a joint construction between the interviewer and interviewee (Talmy & Richards 2011: 2). In this study, the quest for interview data was to get a more precise view of reflection through the perspectives of Nigerian English teachers in different Nigerian English language teaching contexts

(primary, junior secondary, government and private schools). Thus theoretical sampling was used to provide a range of perspectives within interview data (Fox 2006). This was achieved in the study by using a range of participants across Nigeria, with primary school, secondary school, private and government school experience. The sampling type could also be described as a non-probability sample, because of the selection of specific groups within the context as Table 8 shows (Ritchie et al 2003). The details of the type of participants that would be appropriate for the study and the questions needed to be asked emerged during the study (Seidman 1998). Two types of interviews were integrated into the study design: individual interviews and focus group interviews. Each served a distinctive purpose. While individual interviews were used to obtain personal experience and perspectives in a more anonymous way, focus group interviews were aimed at getting a group perspective of the phenomenon, based on the integration of a TG in the study (an intervention) and the attempt to identify more collaboratively the experience and benefits of reflection within the teacher group. The approach used for both types of interview mentioned above was 'conversation with a purpose' (Burgess 1984: 102). Thus interviews were semi structured in the sense that they sought to probe participants' experience of reflection in a more direct way, albeit with some conversation style.

4.3.2.1 Individual interviews

Twelve individual interviews were carried out with a range of participants. This was not a random sample but a theoretical sample (Fox 2006). Each individual interview aimed to identify, participants' perception, constructs and beliefs about reflection, with a focus on its use in classroom practice. Participants were contacted through my personal network. The sampling criteria for interviews were that teachers should have some experience of reflection, no matter how small. This was determined by their participation in the intervention group, a teachers' association (TA), a teachers' group (TG) or formal course. I was fortunate to have been able to identify participants who were part of a TA, TG and were former course participants on a course. There were four government schoolteachers and eight private school teachers (4.2.3.3: Table 7). Of this number seven teachers worked in junior secondary schools while five teachers were primary school teachers. Two teachers in the group were members of English Language Teachers' Association (ELTAN), an association that I am a member of. These are Kenny and James. Rihanna who was from the intervention group (Group A) where she had already participated in two previous focus group interviews was included in individual interviews. She was selected for her successful exploration of her classroom which showed some evidence of reflective inquiry. She was an active member of the intervention group that had by the time of interviews met for about 18 months. Six members of Group C who were interviewed, were former participants on a reflective course that I led. The four government schoolteachers in Group C, who were also interviewed, were members of a TG (the Pro Learning Group).

4.3.2.2 Focus group participants

Focus group interviews aimed to get a collective response or a group story (Morgan 1998) of the experience of reflection. This interview method provides some insight into peoples' thinking within a broader social context where interaction reframes ideas (Lewis 2003). It is ideal for between 4 and 12 participants (Greenbaum 1998, Ritchie, 2003). Focus group participants were from Group A. This group was originally made up of eight teachers who had different teaching qualifications but a common experience of English language teaching (4.2.3.1: Table 6). One teacher resigned from the school during the study. Group A invited 5 other subject teachers to join their TGM.

4.3.2.3 Structure of interviews

I used open-ended and semi-structured interviews to probe participants' experience of reflection. My aim was to collect rich data that would enable me gain an insight to what reflection meant to these participants in terms of their personal constructs, beliefs, opinions and use of it in their individual practice. However, individual interviews were more extensive and in depth. Most interviews were semi-structured and were carried out face-to-face. I aimed to deepen understanding not gather information (Richards 2003). Two interviews were however, carried out by phone between UK and Bonny, Nigeria and between Abuja and Lagos. All participants had informed consent and had signed a consent letter. I lost one potential participant who was willing to give me an interview

but declined when I asked her to sign a consent letter. She preferred to have the interview without signing but this went against the guidelines of BERA and so I declined to interview her. All responses were recorded and transcribed before analysis. In transcription the symbol (.) is used to signify a micro pause. In transcription extracts pseudonyms are used for participants. 'R' signifies the researcher.

4.4 My researcher role

As a researcher, I set out to study a phenomenon, which was also a professional development experience for me. I tried to minimize the power differences between participants and myself by informing them about my desire to learn from them. In a focus group interview, I say:

```
24          R      I'm a teacher (.) I'm a trainer (.) so we have similar experiences (.) my
25                 specialty is English language teaching like you (.) so please be at
26                 liberty (.)  make comments (.) observations (.)  contributions (.)  tell me
27                 what you think because we have what is  called a body of  knowledge
28                 and what you think (.) what you know (.) what's your  experience adds
29                 something to that body of knowledge and  we all  learn together
```

Words like those expressed above may have helped, but I understood that I needed to build a relationship with these participants as the study continued. Stringer's (2007) statement about the role of researchers guided my actions in the context:

the role of the researcher is not that of an expert who does research but that of a resource person. He or she becomes a facilitator or consultant who acts as a catalyst to assist stakeholders in defining their problems clearly and to support

them as they work toward the effective solutions to the issues that concern them (Stringer 2007: 24).

As I interacted with teachers and administrators in the initial research context, I found myself taking on, or being given new roles besides being a catalyst. I became a facilitator and enabler, to help participants carry out educational research as researchers (Kemmis 2008: 124). It was clear that the school administrators saw me as a consultant and they took every opportunity to have a professional development related conversation with me. They also asked me to identify areas for possible improvement in their school. I responded by telling them it would be unethical for me to evaluate participant practice on their behalf. However, when it was clear that they were not interested in individual teachers but whole school improvement, I suggested that they may need to build on three general areas of whole school improvement, for example; that children would benefit more if they were encouraged to interact more in their lessons (my observation from the classroom observation process). During the study, I volunteered a three-hour workshop for all the teachers in the school, assuming the role of teacher educator within the context, teaching them about active learning. This workshop was carried out before school resumed (after the Easter holidays in 2010). The workshop was titled 'Active learning' and involved a power point presentation and group and whole class discussions. One of the activities in this workshop was asking teachers to reflect on their learners and build a simple profile of them. Although I was a researcher, my most prominent role during the study was that of a teacher educator. I created awareness about reflection and teacher groups in the third phase of the study, when I interacted with teachers in Abuja and gave several free workshops to members of

ELTAN, government teachers who responded to my questionnaire and members of the

PLG. To each participant group, I had different primary roles (see Table 8).

Research Group	Summary	Researcher role	Comments
A	8 language teachers in Lagos (7 taught English language)	Researcher, resource person, consultant for school administrator	These teachers interacted with me but with some reserve at first because we were not connected by a TA or any previous relationship. They graciously accepted to join the study and volunteered their time. They were however too busy to give me more contact time. Although I would call them my colleagues, they perceived me differently as a PhD student from UK of higher status.
B	98 Members of ELTAN	Colleagues from ELTAN	They were gracious and understood that they could support my PhD study by responding promptly. However, they could not collaborate with me because they were too busy. As government teachers I found them more confident than the teachers in a Lagos private school.
C	4 members of PLG James, a member of ELTAN	Resource person & colleague	They were very confident and may have perceived me as an equal. They perceived me as a researcher looking for answers. James attended one of my free workshops in Abuja.
C	Participants from my practice. 6 of them were interviewed.	Former programme leader/colleague and mentor	They also acted graciously towards me by offering their time even though it was not always convenient to for them to do so. They were respectful but free with me.

Table 8 My roles in the 3 research groups

While I do not exactly know what all participants perceived as my researcher role, I

would like to see myself as having opened opportunities and possibilities for these

Nigerian English language teachers by supporting or affirming their own explorations of

practice carried out individually or collaboratively, before and during the study.

4.5 Limitations of the study

A limitation of the study is the subjectivity of participants' and my own experience including our interpretations and perceptions. I acknowledge also the subjectivity of my researcher experience viewed through the lens of my peculiar worldview. For example my interpretation of participants' classroom practice differed from theirs (4.1.3). However, For Corbin and Strauss:

> if one cannot achieve objectivity in qualitative research, then perhaps one can have sensitivity (…) Sensitivity enables a researcher to grasp and respond intellectually (and emotionally) to what is being said in the data in order to be able to arrive at concepts which are grounded in data. Later when it comes time to write findings, that same sensitivity enables researchers to present participants' stories with an equal mix of abstraction, detailed description, and just as important, feeling (Corbin and Strauss 2008: 41).

In my study I aimed to bring sensitivity to participants and the data analysis and interpretation process. I was not seeking an absolute truth but a collaborative construction of knowledge about reflection, which would be relevant for the immediate research context and might provide more insight that will call for further studies. Another limitation of the study is that it is impossible to tell if what a participant says they did is a reflective process or not (this would be a limitation of all researches on reflection). Hobbs (2007) suggests that in the context of assessment, reflective reports can be forged. Nonetheless, several researchers argue that teaching is reflective (van Manen 1995, Zeichner 1996, McLaughlin 1999, Akbari 2007) and as Zeichner says, 'there is no such thing as an unreflective teacher' (1996: 207).

While I have tried to design a study which aims to provide an insight into reflective practice and to find more appropriate school-based professional development for Nigerian English language teachers, I recognize that I have limitations. My study is based on my joint explorations with a few teachers who are only a minute sample of the profession. However, this small number may in fact be more suitable for the study because it fits into the concept of teacher development through teacher collaborations and/or groups (Richards and Farrell 2005). In addition, the understanding derived from the study is not intended to be 'generalized understanding' but 'situated understanding' (Allwright 2003: 121).

Time was a major limitation in the study. For example, Group A was sometimes too busy to hold regular TGM or to meet with me (see 4.3.1.3). While time was a constant issue during the study, my own personal difficulty was the inability to sustain a continuous relationship with participants in Group A since they were too busy to respond to my emails or to take lengthy phone calls. Time was also an issue when I tried to initiate another TG for government schoolteachers in Abuja. Although some teachers were willing they were too busy to commit themselves. The extended time line of the study actually allowed for the development of reflective practice in Group A. It also increased my interactions with English language teachers in Abuja where I spent more time, when I was in Nigeria.

Another limitation of the study is the use of a gender-exclusive group in Group A. This was not deliberate, the English teachers in the study site were all women; a situation I cannot change. However, there were three male teachers among the twelve teachers interviewed individually in the study. Keeping in touch with research participants from the initial research group was a herculean task as I was not resident in Nigeria. I tried to keep in touch by phone and by sending individual text messages or email. To guard against the total isolation of participants in study Group A, I encouraged them to keep in constant touch with each other. This group had a coordinator selected by teachers in the group. As their schedules could not be easily matched with mine I could give very little support to them. During the 2-year study, I travelled to Nigeria 6 different times during which I also practiced as a teacher educator.

4.6 Data analysis

Most of the data used in the study is qualitative and required a process of analysis and interpretation. Some quantitative data (questionnaire) was used to provide background information about the wider Nigerian ELT context. Because of the subjective nature of qualitative data, it was viewed from different angles with comparisons made between data collected at earlier and later phases of the study. Most data were stored in electronic form and backed up. Table 9 shows these data sets.

S/N	Type of data	Phase/Group	Length of recording	Comments
1	8 Video recordings (Secondary data)	Phase 1 Group A	360 minutes	I personally carried out these classroom observations
2	8 Post-observation	Phase 1	116 minutes	I carried out post observation

	interviews (Secondary data)	Group A		interviews after classroom observations
3	Field notes (Secondary data)	Phase 1 Group A	Several pages	My notes during classroom observations
4	8 Maps of the 8 classrooms observed (Secondary data)	Phase 1 Group A	8 maps	Illustrations of classroom layout, children's sitting positions by gender and teachers movement/activity within eight different classrooms
5	6 TG meetings (Secondary data)	Phase 1 Group A	The longest recording was 19 minutes	Recording was done by participants, it was not properly done.
6	2 Focus group interviews (Secondary and primary data)	Phase 1 & 3 Group A	120 minutes (60 minutes each)	The first was in Phase 1 of the study and served as secondary data. In Phase 3, a second focus group interview was used as primary data.
7	6 Reflective reports (Secondary data)	Phase 1 Group A	From participants in Group A, after individual classroom explorations	
8	98 Structured questionnaires (Secondary data)	Phase 2 Group B	Administered as hardcopies and through: www.surveymonkey.com. To identify professional development experience and awareness of reflection.	
9	12 Semi-structured questionnaires (primary data)	Phase 3 Group C	Former course participants from my own practice filled these questionnaires which were sent by email or given as hard copy. This questionnaire probed for participants' understanding and experience of reflection.	
10	12 Individual interviews (Primary data)	Phase 3 Group C	889 minutes	
11	NCE curriculum & FME 2006 Nigerian Newspapers (Secondary data)	Throughout the study	These documents were analysed. When statistics were found to be contradictory, I turned to Nigerian newspapers for policy statements on teacher qualifications.	

Table 9 Data sets in the study

Table 9 shows the different data sets in the study. According to Dey (1993) data analysis is a process that involves breaking down of data into bits and at the same time analyzing it as a whole. It's a process in which data is considered within the context that it has been gotten. Thus the data was examined for varying contextual factors including personal and shared values (Harggarty and Postlethwaithe 2003). It involved a process of comparisons, categorization and the identification of relationships between categories. For researchers, according to Dey 91993) there are a number of paradoxes related to the authenticity of their data to deal with:

> we want to be comprehensive, but also selective. We want to analyse singularities, but also to generalize. We want our accounts to be accessible, but also acceptable. We want to be rigorous, but also creative (Dey 1993:265).

In other words, researchers have to be sensitive to the data by seeing beyond the obvious to discover new meaning (Corbin and Strauss 2008). Five types of analysis were used in the study for secondary and primary data: document analysis, a thematic analysis, statistical analysis (of Questionnaire A), a grounded theory approach and a discourse analysis approach to data. Below I describe the process.

4.6.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is considered as the most common approach to qualitative data analysis. It looks for patterns. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) it is 'the first qualitative method of analysis that researchers should learn, as it provides core skills that will be useful for conducting many other forms of qualitative analyses. I used

thematic analysis mainly for secondary data (also used to explore primary data) from post-observation interviews and field notes which were analysed for patterns. The aim was to aid my understanding of the study context and to guide further research actions. Two types of thematic analysis are identified by Braun and Clarke (2006): inductive analysis which uses an inductive approach without any pre-existing code frame and theoretical thematic analysis which integrates existing theoretical frameworks that the researcher subscribes to. I used an inductive approach which was data led. Figure 8 shows how I started the process of coding to identify the broad themes from post-observation interviews which were carried out with Group A.

Figure 8 The coding process used to identify broad themes in secondary data.

In the above sample, I used a latent approach to thematic analysis, which looked for ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations that were hidden in the data (Burr 1995, Braun and Clarke 2006). For example, from the above sample, I was able to identify the

influence of the school on Angela's practice (T1-3 and T5), her beliefs about classroom management (T8-T10) and her disposition to teaching (T14-T17). As this was secondary data it only provided a background for the study. Chapter 5 describes some of the outcomes of my preliminary analysis in the context, which used this approach.

4.6.2 Questionnaire analysis

Two types of questionnaires were used for the study. Questionnaire A was a semi-structured questionnaire (see Appendix 2) with ten questions and instructions on how to answer them. It was used for secondary data and analysed in terms of frequency. Results were compared and contrasted to aid my understanding of the research context and to make interpretations, which guided the study (Chapter 5). Questionnaire A was administered online and as hard copy. Its aim was to get perspectives (about teacher development) from a wider sample of Nigerian English teachers who could not have been reached for individual or focus group interview (Creswell 2009). As secondary data, it provided background data for the study by identifying the provisions for reflection within the research context. I received 98 responses. Twenty-six of these were online responses. Although the first nine questions were structured, Question Nine was open-ended, allowing respondents to provide qualitative responses describing some of the challenges they faced in their attempts to participate in teacher development.

A discourse analysis approach was used to analyze Questionnaire B (Appendix 3). It was a semi-structured questionnaire with 16 questions. Questions were open ended and

required participants to type or write a response on their perceptions of reflection. I received 12 responses. Looking for key words by their re-occurrence, relationships, co-occurrence and meaning carried out analysis of questionnaire B data. I also looked for hidden meanings and compared texts. Words were then categorized and examined for relationship. The approach was used to provide more insight on how reflection was perceived by participants; how they constructed descriptions of reflection and the significance of this. The extract below shows part of the process (explained in 6.4.4.1) with three categories: words used for similar construct (underlined); words showing the context (highlighted); words used for time (italicized and bold).

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1. Reflection is a conscious critical examination of self in practice to gather data for the purpose of bringing about positive changes and improvements in professional outcomes.

2. Reflective practice is a process of looking at what you do in the classroom, analyzing and evaluating it.

3. Reflective practice is thinking about a process that *had taken place* and evaluating the process.

4. Reflective practice is a self-appraising practice, where the teacher/trainer relives each teaching/learning session with the view to improve on their practice

5. Reflection or reflective practice to [my] understanding is *looking back* at the experience got from the course training and applying it to my *present* teaching practice.

6. To my mind, reflection is deep thinking that involves looking inwards.

7. Thinking carefully of, pondering over past experiences or knowledge.

8. Reflection has to do with the ability to think and create new ideas and also look for better ways of improving on a particular activity.

9. Thinking over a process, the challenges encountered how they were solved as well as the lessons learnt and using it *to plan for the future.*

10. Sitting back to think about *what happened,* how it happened, *what you did*, and what you should have done to make things better.

11. Reflection is a process that enables me considers (sic) my work or experiences and records (sic) my thoughts in a diary *for future use.* Reflective practice helps me reflect on action for continuous learning.

Figure 9 Extract from Questionnaire B

When the key words listed above were categorized in stages and for their context of use, they provided an insight into what participants perceived as reflection, including dynamic and non-dynamic views about reflection (see Chapter 6.4.4.1).

4.6.3 Document analysis

Document analysis was carried out as part of the analysis process to identify the state of English teacher education within the context. Mainly, The NCCE curriculum for language teachers was analysed to see if reflective inquiry was integrated into the programme. FME 2006b was also analysed for teacher qualification statistics in Nigeria between 1998 and 2006. On account of contradictory statistics, I decided to analyse Nigerian newspapers for the more current positions of policy makers between 2011 and 2012 (2.1). Further analysis was also carried out on the statistics of teachers who are registered with the TRCN to find out the percentage of registered English teachers in Nigeria and their spread across primary and secondary school (Appendix 1). These all served as background data for the study by showing the challenges and development needs of Nigerian teachers: especially, of Nigerian English language teachers.

4.6.4 A grounded theory approach

I used a grounded theory technique, which included open, selective and axial coding of data (Glaser and Strauss 1967, Corbin and Strauss, 2004, 2008). I explored the data over several months, trying to make sense of them by returning to concepts and categories to

refine them and examine their constituents. Primary data (individual and focus group interviews) were transcribed and numbered (line by line). Then I started the coding process by 'fracturing' the data. I probed and explored the data by using highlighters, questions and analytic memos, which also aided and challenged my thinking (Appendix 5 shows the beginning of this process). Analytical memos have been integrated into the research report. According to Dey (1993: 63) 'to analyze data we need to use existing knowledge, not dispense with it', thus the literature on reflection was also used as an analytic tool during data analysis. I also recorded the insights I gained from my frequent review of the data (Lincoln and Guba 1985, Snyder 2002, Denzin 1998, Richards 2003). I created data summaries for each interview (see samples in Appendix 6) and then started the categorization and codification process (Appendix 7) until a clear pattern emerged from the data. Then I explored the data for interview extracts which illustrated these clearly. Table 10 shows a sample showing selected extracts from data with samples of corresponding elements identified and categories and themes that emerged from them.

Data	Elements from open coding	Categories from axial coding	Themes/central codes from selective coding
'I observed from facial expression you know (.) and the child kept throwing the hand wild if you asked a question (…) it didn't occur to me immediately to attend to that need but when I reflected it came back to mind'- Sylvia	Feedback from learners, observing learners	Understanding learners' needs, learner-centred focusing	Learner-centred-reflection
'what it [reflection] does for me is when I (…) teach I get to think of the way I have presented the (…) lesson and then I get to see possible ways in which I would have used in driving my point'-James	Self-assessment, self-correction	Self	Teacher-centred reflection

'if I am teaching a topic now and I have a challenge I ask them in the meeting or just tell them this is what I've been experiencing (…) what do you suggest or how do you think I can present this topic?'-Rihanna	Seeking other perspectives, connecting own practice with others	Professional	
'So you look into yourself and discover so I have this kind of ability in me all the while and I never realized it? So it's like we are growing ourselves' – Focus Group	activating redundant skills, questioning, probing,	Developing competence	Skill-centred reflection
'[reflection] gives you the opportunity to tear off bits and pieces of flesh from form (…) it's like a surgeon looking for something (…) the surgeon's discovery from opening up a patient could also help him to analyze the earlier diagnosis' -Gloria 'When I try it in class and I get the right responses then I know it's okay' – Nicky	Deconstructing knowledge, reconstructing knowledge, constructing personal knowledge, reflection as tool trying out, testing feedback	Deep thinking Knowledge validation	Knowledge-centred reflection

Table 10 Sample of grounded theory approach to data analysis

Table 10 shows a sample of the approach used to analyze primary data. In the analysis, concepts were sorted according to similarity or relationship though a process of open coding. All coding and categorization was carried out manually with large envelopes to aid the categorization process. Through this process, I identified and classified a range of categories which were further narrowed down through by axial coding which looked for connections between categories and sub-categories, including looking for variations and contradictions. I looked for relationships between categories and sub-categories identify core categories or themes. Diagrams played a significant role in my analysis. As patterns emerged I quickly translated them into diagrams that showed the mapping of every code that emerged. Four distinct codes emerged in my findings. A fifth central

code which looked as reflection as a tool for different purposes was discarded when I

found that it could be described as an essential part of every other code in the study.

Figure 10 shows the mapping of the use of reflection by Nigerian English language

teachers from findings in the study.
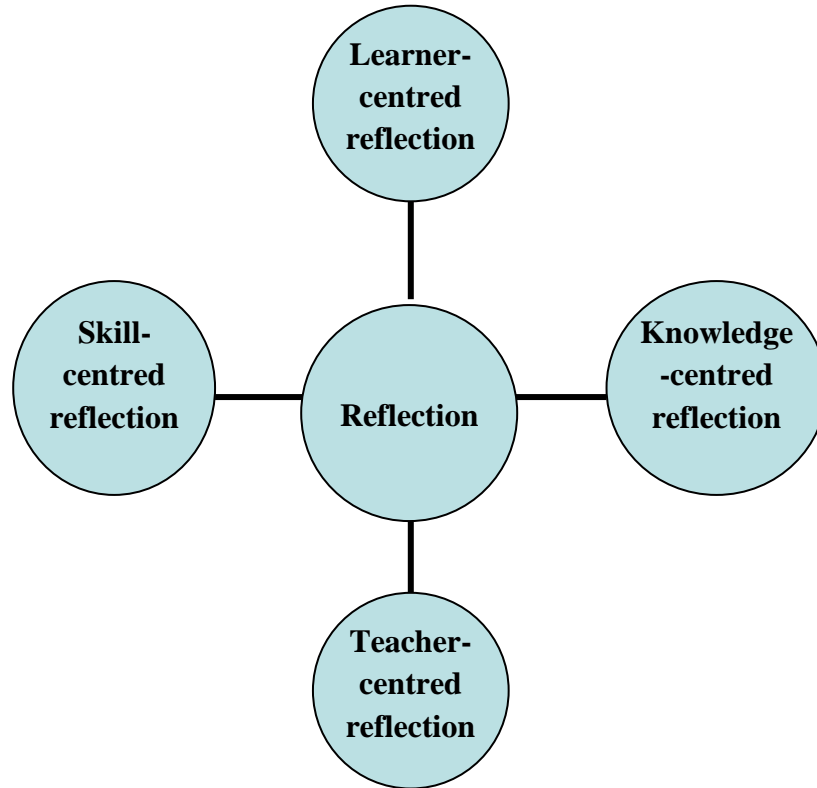
Figure 10 Four codes showing the use of reflection by Nigerian English teachers

Figure 10 shows the four central codes and major findings in the study: teacher-centred

reflection, skill-centred reflection, learner-centred reflection and knowledge-centred

reflection. These were tested using the following criteria from Dey (1993) for

identifying any central category/code:

- It must be central; that is, all other major categories can be related to it
- It must appear frequently in the data. This means that within all or almost all cases, there are indicators pointing to that concept
- The explanation that evolves by relating the categories is logical and consistent. There is no forcing of data.
- The name or phrase used to describe the central category should be sufficiently abstract that it can be used to do research in other substantive areas, leading to the development of a more general theory
- As the concept is refined analytically through integration with other concepts, the theory grows in depth and explanatory power.
- The concept is able to explain variations as well as the main point made by the data; that is, when conditions vary, the explanation still holds, although the way in which a phenomenon is expressed might look somewhat different. One also should be able to explain the contradictory or alternative cases in terms of that central idea (Dey 1993: 147).

After testing the central codes with the criteria above, I was more confident of the authenticity of the codes. Table 11 shows one of the central codes, which emerged from data analysis (teacher-centred reflection). There were two main categories connected to this code. Self: (category 1) and professional (category 2).

Code:	Teacher-centred reflection (self-oriented)	
Categories:	*Self (category 1)*	*Professional (category 2)*
Sub-categories:	Self-assessment	Scaffolding
	Self-discovery	Sharing discoveries
	Self-correction	Learning communities
	Grooming the mind	Reaching out
	Self-appraisal	Seeking other perspectives
	Emancipation (from beliefs/ habits/ doubt/ sch. procedures/ limitations of scheme of work.	Connecting own practice with others.

Table 11 Sample of codification and categorization of interview data

Several sub-categories relate to the two main categories. They describe how teachers in the context used reflection in self-centred and professional ways. Diagrams like Figure 10 formed an important part of the axial coding process as they were used to show the relationship between categories. They also became models for describing each main finding. Codes were not forced and are abstract enough to be used for further research. When each main code in the study is explored analytically with other concepts, it has the ability to expand in depth and in explanatory power as (Dey 1993) suggests.

Summary

Several months after preliminary and major data analysis, I again reviewed the data to scrutinize it for elusive details such as relationships between categories and new insights gained from my further study and reflection. Initial and subsequent findings were shared with research participants and their further views were incorporated into the study. Furthermore, by comparing different sets of data across the study, I was able to triangulate the data to validate mine and participants' impressions and perspectives. It is my hope that the data will speak for itself and that the voices of research participants will be amplified above mine. When I entered the research field I told them that together they held a body of knowledge that I sought to uncover. In Chapter 5, I describe the research process.

CHAPTER FIVE

Narrative of the Research Process

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I described my research methodology and its justification including research participants, ethical considerations, research methods and analysis. Here, I provide a narrative account of the study which took place in 3 phases. This will include the steps I followed and challenges I faced, including my mistakes and how I corrected them. They illustrate my development as a researcher and my attempt to answer my research question: 'how do Nigerian English teachers use reflection?'

Preparation began in November 2009, when I travelled to Nigeria to find a school where English teachers would be willing to participate in the study. After a 3-week search, I found a small school in Lagos with teachers who were willing to participate in the study. There I eventually set up a process of triggering reflection through an intervention: a TG which met weekly to carry out a book project. The aim was to stimulate and possibly scaffold the growth of reflection and reflective practice. My development as a researcher is significant in Phase 1 of the study and this is described at length. This chapter is in three parts. Part One describes Phase 1 of the study; Part 2 describes Phase 2, while Part 3 sets the stage for Chapter 6, the findings chapter

5.1 Phase 1 of the study

A friend personally introduced me to the primary school in Lagos, Nigeria where I started the study. Earlier, she had suggested that we visit 2 other primary schools in the same residential area. The first of these was a very expensive school. However, the expatriate head teacher would not see me at short notice. I could not spare the days needed to book an appointment. Moreover, in many Nigerian schools one can have easy access to the head teacher. I had planned to avoid any bureaucracy which could stall my study. We decided to move on to the next school. The next school was promising. I had a talk with the teachers after a second visit within the week. However, they suggested I give them 2 more weeks to make a decision. I could not spare 2 weeks, especially as I had no guarantee that they would participate. The tired looks on their faces told me otherwise and I considered that I had only three weeks in Nigeria to identify a research site. Finally, we went to the third school. It was smaller than the previous schools. It had about 300 children of Nigeria's middle class. They were polite and pleasant. Their classrooms were small. It was not a purpose built school but had been converted from residential quarters. There was a school administrator who was interested in the study. She introduced me to the school head who arranged a meeting with English teachers in the school. There were 8 female teachers. I later learned that one of them studied French and English, but taught French in this school. After discussing the study from the perspectives of the benefits it would bring to the teachers (new learning, professional development and the idea of joining a PhD study), the teachers agreed to join the study.

They became Group A, an intervention group (4.3.1.3) of 8 teachers with varying teaching qualifications (see 4.2.3.1: Table 6).

Four participants in the intervention group were not qualified English language teachers. However, they were co-opted into English language teaching because of local education policy which allows all primary school teachers to teach English. The need to provide a platform for professional development of teachers like this is the rationale for an intervention. It also illustrates an assumption in Nigeria: that all primary school teachers in Nigeria can effectively teach English despite their lack of appropriate qualifications. Records from TRCN show that at primary level 1.16% of 575,160 teachers are qualified English language teachers (see 2.2: Table 5). There were two graduates from numerical fields in Group A, who migrated into teaching and then further migrated into English language teaching. English was a major for only three participants who studied it at university, illustrating a problem of the basic teaching NCE qualification for most English language teachers: qualifications are usually in two different subject areas. One of these could be anything from social studies to any of Nigeria's major languages. English language teacher preparation is thus shared with another subject during a 3-year period. 50% of the teachers in group A had no English teaching qualification. However, the core purpose of the intervention group was to encourage the development of reflective inquiry or reflective practice in ELT through teacher collaboration.

To understand this intervention group better and their potential for self-initiated professional development, I examined their years of teaching experience in the light of Huberman's (1993) descriptions of teachers' life cycles, from a study of 160 secondary

school teachers. Following Huberman (1993:13) descriptions, I checked participants' personal data to see where participants could be located in their teacher life cycle:

Teaching Experience   *Probable Stages in Life Cycle*

1-3 years   career entry:' survival' and 'discovery' (Katherine)

4-6 years   stabilization   (**Rihanna** & Anne)

7-18 years   experimentation/activism or reassessment/self-doubt:

                               (Ona, Angela, Akon, Adelaide & Ariel)

19-30 years   serenity/relational distance or conservation (none)

The data shows that more than 60% of the sample was within the years of activism, reassessment and experimentation. This is significant, as this group constitutes the majority in the sample and may account for the scaffolding that emerged naturally from the group over a period of 18 months. Rihanna, who was within the years of stabilization, is a key focus in this thesis, as the only participant in this group who was identified early as having a form of reflection in her practice. Her experience in the intervention group is described in Chapter 6. It shows how she developed through the support that emerged from teachers who were more experienced than her. During a focus group interview, Rihanna describes her experience in the group and thus illustrates the group behaviour when she says:

Extract 1

```
187    Rihanna    well (.) when we come together it's like she said (.) it's to get
188               direction (.) in fact (.)  if I'm teaching a topic now and I have a
189               challenge I can ask them in the meeting or just tell them this is
190               what I've been experiencing with my children in the class (.)
191               what do you suggest or how best do you think I can present this
192               topic? I think we only have a challenge if we do stop (.)  I've
                  benefitted from the meetings. (Rihanna/187)
```

From Rihanna, we see what might be a successful intervention process, collaboration is in process and inquiry leads the collaboration. Thus Rihanna gets a sense of direction from the group (L 187); she turns to the group for support when she is challenged and desires that the meetings continue because she has benefitted from them (L 191- 192). The behaviour and actions of the intervention group may have been influenced by the stages of their growth and development as teachers. A questionnaire survey of 50 Nigerian English language teachers (Hyacinth 2007: 35) who regularly participated in ELTAN meetings in Port Harcourt within a 2-year period (2005-2007) showed that 60% of the group had between 7-18 years of teaching experience. Voluntary participation in TAs and TGs may be connected to the life cycle of teachers and their level of experience. Waites (1999: 35) describes this period of diversification and change (7-18 years' experience) as one of: 'experimentation, of reforming the classroom organisation and teaching methods (…) a quest for stimulation, new ideas and challenges'.

At the beginning of the study, I explored 8 participants' classrooms to gain a brief insight into their practice (4.3.1.1) I then followed up with eight post observation interviews (4.3.1.2) which were aimed at instigating individual reflections of classroom practice. Preliminary analysis of these data was done by thematic analysis (4.6.1) to identify themes that could guide my understanding of the teachers' practice and guide other research phases. In the following sub-sections. I describe the procedures followed and my research actions, providing some evidence of my exploration of the study context.

5.1.1 Beginning explorations in a Lagos school

Participants in Group A agreed to allow me into their classrooms to carry out classroom observations, which lasted an average of an hour each. All classrooms were small and mostly arranged with individual desks facing the white board at the front. Years 1 and 2 classes were different. Children sat round tables which were arranged in 'u' shape to face the white board. After each classroom observation session, I arranged a short interview (15 minutes) with each participant. It was exploratory in nature and was aimed at helping them identify an area of interest for classroom explorations. During the interview, I deliberately questioned some of the actions they took for granted, to raise their awareness about their practice. In the following samples, I highlight aspects that suggest how a reflective process might begin when another assists it. To appreciate the potential of reflection, we must remember Dewey's description of reflective thought as: 'active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it [emphasis mine] and the further conclusions to which it tends' (Dewey 1933: 118). When teachers act, there are grounds for their actions. From thematic analysis, I was able to identify some of the implicit 'grounds' that support participants' actions.

During post-observation interviews, participants were asked questions that aimed to trigger reflection. A consistent response for every teacher was an attempt to connect their answers to something more concrete (a ground that supported their actions, opinions or beliefs). Although the disciplined thinking that Dewey (1933) advocates

could not be achieved through these brief encounters, they illustrate the possibilities of a process that can be guided, aided or happen spontaneously through some peer or group activity. The following dialogue illustrates that teachers have reasons for their decisions, even if it is not explicit. For some it might even be a theory-in-use (Schön 1987, Pakman 2000).

5.1.1.1 Exploring participant's awareness of learners

In an episode of post-observation, I asked Ariel why during the lesson, although every other child was called by their first names, she continued to call 'Jane Doe' (a pseudonym used for this study) by her first and second names. Extract 2 shows this encounter.

Extract 2

45	R	I observed that you were calling children by their first names throughout the lesson
46		(.) but in one situation you called a child by <u>first and second </u>name…why did you
47		do that?
48	Ariel	Em (.) I guess (.) yes I love using their first names but Jane Doe's name is like a
49		name that comes together (.) I've known Jane Doe for quite some time even before
50		coming here (.) before (...). So there and then we call Jane Doe (.) It's like the
51		name sounds very nice when you blend them (.) bring them together rather than
52		Jane <u>and I've noticed also that she hardly responds when you call her by her name</u>
53	R	<u>only but when you put Jane Doe she tends to respond (.)</u>
54		Alright (.) so you are actually following what learner prefers? (Ariel/45)

Above, I prompt the Ariel by asking a simple question from my observation of her classroom (L 45-46). Ariel hesitates for a moment and then she says: 'I guess' (L 48) suggesting natural recourse to intuition and possibly to some assumptions. From intuition she appears to make a transition to more rational thinking, by signaling with

'yes' (L 48). Then she explains her reasons for calling Jane Doe by both names in class (L 48-53). In doing this, she reverts to the child's history (L 52-53), she identifies her own preference for the sound of the two names (L 51) and then eventually identifies that it is in fact, Jane Doe's preferred style of being called by Ariel (L 52-54). This extract shows how intuition and rational thinking may work together in transaction within a thinking process, until clear justifications are identified for what informs practice. The starting point appears to be intuition, and this may help our understanding of how teachers may begin some reflection in natural ways with some intuitive knowledge L 48-51). This knowledge appears to have been eventually supported by experiential knowledge: 'and I've noticed also that she hardly responds…' (L 52)

While Zeichner and Liston (1996) identify intuition as part of a reflective process, they express the need for teachers to examine their assumptions. Claxton (2001: 101) argues that 'the more effective teacher is one with a more highly tuned and highly differentiated intuition for understanding and interpreting classroom life'. Atkinson and Claxton (2000) argue that although intuition can provide some insight, it is not without basis. What starts by hinting of intuition is however, explained by Ariel as a response she makes to the child's preference (underlined extract). It appears to be some implicit knowledge. According to Pakman (2000: 6) teachers' theories-in-use are: 'tacit theories of action, guiding their moves when they are in the mode of practicing their professions, although they cannot have access to that knowledge when they are asked about it'. To access this tacit knowledge, Ariel had to make a quick reference to the child's history and her personal preference (exemplified by her love for the sound of the names).

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Ultimately, this teacher's decision to call the child in question by name in a way the learner prefers is learner–centred even if this knowledge is not easily accessible. However, Ariel's response cannot be classified as being 'active, persistent, and careful consideration' (Dewey 1933: 118). As I learned, process of triggering reflection is not so simple, it cannot be hurried. According to Dewey (1938) there are three other types of thought that people may have: stream of consciousness (spontaneous flow of thoughts); invention (imagination), and belief (prejudgments). In describing beliefs Dewey says:

> Prejudgments are not conclusions reached as a result of personal activity, such as observing, collecting and examining evidence. Even when they happen to be correct (…) their correction is a matter of accident (Dewey 1938: 7).

From Dewey, we learn that teachers can be right, albeit intuitively ('even when they happen to be correct'). It is described as an accidental rightness. This is however, not sufficient for practice. If teachers have the other three types of thought that Dewey describes, then reflective thinking must become an essential part of practice as a way of more disciplined thinking. van Manen (1995) suggests that teaching is itself reflective (supported by Akbari 2007, Lytle and Cochran-Smith 1991, Fendler 2003). According to Schön (1987:40) 'competent professional practitioners often have the capacity to generate new knowing-in-action through reflection-in-action undertaken in the indeterminate zones of practice'. Thus more competent teachers may have clear experiences of reflection in their practice. Although this dialogue is not within a classroom situation, it still suggests that Ariel's knowing-in-action has helped her to recognize that she can motivate *Jane Doe* by calling her in a preferred way. Ariel was

one of the most experienced teachers in Group A and her classroom was the most interactive.

5.1.1.2   Exploring Participant's awareness of motivation

Katherine is another teacher whose classroom I observed, in two classroom episodes, she asked her group of learners to clap for themselves after some of them produced satisfactory responses to the questions she posed while teaching. In the sample below, I ask why.

Extract 3

58	R	Alright so let's go further (.) why did you ask children to clap for
59		themselves twice (.)
60	Katherine	For (sic) to motivate them (.)
61	R	Is that very important for learning?
62		I think so (.) motivation is (.5) in fact is a (.5) is an aspect of
63		learning which cannot be underestimated (Katherine/58)

During my interview with Katherine, I ask her a question about a common practice, which she may have taken for granted (asking the children to clap). She answers very promptly (L 60). When I explore further, she hesitates (L 62). For a moment I think Katherine is going to define the word motivation, but she doesn't. There are two possibilities here, Katherine may have been affected by her perception of my researcher role as requiring a right answer, or she could have been going through the difficulty of articulating an implicit theory-in-use which as Pakman suggests, may happen to teachers.

Either way, it comes across that Katherine seemed to reach for some theoretical explanation to support her implicit understanding of motivation in learning. This suggests that received knowledge and some intuitive or implicit knowledge are at work hers ('to motivate them' L 60 and 'I think so (.) motivation is (.5) in fact is a (.5) …' L62).

Ariel's inability to articulate her beliefs as clearly as I had hoped may in fact be a temporary one which could change through the support of other peers in the intervention group. Pakman (2000) explains this possibility: that participation in reflective practice with other colleagues allows professionals to 'reconstruct their theories of action making their action strategies able to be explicitly formulated and open to criticism' (2000: 6). This was not possible in one encounter; however, I hoped that the intervention group would support Ariel through the process described by Pakman. To illustrate this possibility, I show a response from further explorations of this idea with another participant in Phase 3 of the study. She replies:

> yeah it works in a group because at times your own idea you feel may be the best may not actually be the best idea (.) another person too may propose a better idea and by the time another person proposes a better idea (.) and you are actually seeing that what the person is coming up with is better off than your own idea (.) which means you have to accept it (Lola/371).

Above Lola describes what could happen in a collaborative process when teachers open up their thinking to other colleagues. An idea can be shared and found to be inadequate and can be dropped in preference for another suggested by a colleague. When she says in the last line: 'which means you have to accept it'. She identifies what might be an

unwritten rule that guides collaborative explorations or sharing of ideas with other colleagues in Nigeria: openness is required: to criticism (Pakman 2000) and to new possibilities.

5.1.1.3 Exploring participants' awareness of classroom decisions

From my analysis of post-observation interviews I identified that some teachers in the study context appeared to revert to previous experience or to their beliefs about teaching and learning in the thinking process that followed my probing. In one encounter after looking through my classroom maps, I observed that Rihanna spent a lot of time moving around the classroom to mark individual children's work. While this process was on, she talked with them and corrected their work in progress. It was something I thought she might have an interesting explanation for. Extract 4 illustrates this encounter.

Extract 4

44	R	What happens when you mark individually is there a
45		special benefit to children?
46	Rihanna	I believe so (.) I think so because then you have a one-
47		on-one you know when you talk (.5) the (.) when you
48		talk to them generally sometimes you are not
49		addressing individual challenges … from my experience
50		sometimes you make corrections (.) (Rihanna/44)

When I ask Rihanna about her practice of visiting each desk to mark, she responds by saying 'I believe so' (Line 46). It is an explicit expression of some teacher cognition at work (Borg 2003). However, she reframes the idea by saying: 'I think so' (Line 46) and then she launches into her reason for doing so (L 47-50). She explains that the general

teacher talk is not enough for learners who have challenges. She connects this knowledge to her experience (L 49) and adds that visiting individual learners allows for individual corrections. By anchoring on experience, Rihanna is less intuitive in her explanation. She is able to justify her actions from this perspective. According to Maughan (1996: 76) 'the purpose of reflection is (…) to bring our reasoning processes and behaviour patterns to the surface and make them explicit. However, uncovering these can be difficult because so much of this knowledge is tacit and spontaneous'. Rihanna showed a strong desire to improve her practice and she features (more than any other participant) in this thesis as a teacher who despite feelings of inadequacy took the opportunity offered through the intervention to strengthen her practice. She is also the only teacher in the intervention group who started to show some evidence of reflection in her practice as early as a few months after the study (5.1.2.4). Through this encounter, I was able to establish the use of experiential knowledge for decision making in Rihanna's practice: 'from my experience' L 49.

The examples above illustrate some of my initial actions in this research field. The preliminary analysis which followed after transcription of these interview data showed participants' practices were guided by some implicit knowledge. These were identified as an espoused belief, an experience, knowledge of a child's history or a theoretical idea. Thus I established that experiential knowledge (Extract 2), intuitive knowledge (Extracts 1 and 4) and received knowledge (Extract 3) worked hand-in-hand in these teachers' practice. Wallace called for the integration of reflective practice into the training of L2 English teachers to bring them into more professional practice. The

emotions, beliefs, ideas and intentions expressed by participants are significant. According to Wallace (1991),

> it is possible to leave these feelings or intentions either unexplored or unconsciously stored, or it is possible to reflect on them, leading to the conscious development of insights into knowing-in-action (Wallace 1991: 13).

Wallace suggests that teachers have options: to leave feelings or intentions unexplored, to store them unconsciously in a mass of partially submerged knowledge, impressions and information (Claxton 2006: 357) or to reflect on them to gain new insights about teaching in more explicit ways. The latter is more desirable. This reflects Dewey (1916: MV 9: 167) who says we need to test '*humble guesses* or dignified theories' by acting on them. The inability to articulate or make tacit knowledge explicit is explained by Polanyi (1958)

> In effect, to the extent to which our intelligence falls short of the ideal of precise formalization, we act and see by the light of unspecifiable knowledge and must acknowledge that we accept the verdict of our personal appraisal, be it at first hand by relying on our own judgment, or at second hand by submitting to the authority of a personal example as the carrier of a tradition (Polanyi 1958: 53).

Above Polanyi explains how tacit knowledge could guide our actions as practitioners because of the inability to formalize knowledge in more precise ways. Three ideas stand out from this first attempt to trigger reflection

- Reflection cannot be momentarily triggered. It requires careful consideration and some time (Dewey 1933).

- Teachers in the context could not be immediately identified as being reflective

- Their attempts to describe the reasons for their actions and to connect their answers to some rationale that supported it, suggests there may be elements of reflection in their practice, even if intuitive.

In the process of the interviews, I asked each participant if they would like to explore an area of their study. Each participant selected an area of interest. I then suggested that they could explore their classrooms to understand them in more specific ways. Wright (2005: 92) posits that 'the very existence of a learning group implies social and social-psychological realities'. The possibilities of teachers exploring their classrooms to unravel these realities are endless. Chapter 6.2.2 and 6.2.5 discuss the possibility of this connection in the Nigerian ELT context. After requesting each participant to write a report of her classroom exploration, I left the research context for a few months

5.1.2 Classroom explorations

Classroom explorations took place while I was away from the research field. Six out of eight participants voluntarily carried them out after I stimulated their interest about this possibility through post-observation interviews (described in the previous sub-section). These classroom explorations were aimed at triggering a fuller process of reflection, which I hoped to view through participants' reports. Below I show the planned sequence of procedures which I followed to achieve this.

Planned Procedure	**Implementation**

1. Classroom observations   carried out by researcher

2. Post-observation interview   by researcher & participants

3. Individual classroom explorations   carried out by 6 participants

4. Report of classroom observations   carried out by 6 participants

Procedures mentioned above were shared with participants before the study commenced. All eight research participants had expressed keen interest in the study and promised to carry out individual classroom explorations and write a report on the process. A few months after, when I returned to this research site, I observed that most reports were written in expository style with an emphasis on received knowledge (Wallace 1991) rather than practical knowledge gained from their classrooms. I felt a sense of disappointment. I put these reports away for a few months and pondered on my next course of action wondering why, if classroom explorations had taken place, the reports did not evidence reflection. Several months after leaving the research field, I thought of creating an instrument to evaluate the reports for any evidence of reflection.

Different researchers have identified distinct ways of rating reflection or describing the depths of reflection as some call it. Ratings have been carried out according to levels of reflection, which have been described in different ways: productive and unproductive reflection, descriptive reflection; dialogic reflection; transformative reflection; and critical reflection (Smyth 1991, Day 1993, Hatton and Smith 1995, Zeichner and Liston 1996, Jay and Johnson 2002). In addition researchers have identified levels of reflection in written texts or dialogic texts in different ways with little (if any) standard agreements

about criteria for determining levels of reflection in a text (Hatton and Smith 1995, Davis 2006, Fleck 2012). My study did not look for different levels of reflection. I simply needed evidence of reflection or a way of determining from the reports that some kind of reflective process had taken place at all. After several months of reflecting on my research actions and reading the literature on reflection, I returned to this same data and reexamined them with an instrument I had created from my understanding of the literature on reflection. It was redesigned after it was tested and criticized by an MA class at the Centre for Applied Linguistics (University of Warwick). In the following paragraphs I discuss the instrument and processes followed to identify reflection in the reports.

5.1.2.1 An instrument to identify reflection in participants' reports

The instrument was created by using criteria I had isolated from the literature on reflection with specific reference to the theories of Dewey and Schön. Each criterion I isolated for this purpose became a specific code or analytic lens to see how reflection was used. An example of this would be to actively connect thought and action in an exploratory and purposeful way. The greater influence for this framework was from my study of Dewey who was quite specific in his description of reflective thinking, including identifying 5 phases of reflection. Six codes were fashioned from my analysis of the literature. Each of these codes is shown in Table 12 with some corresponding or connecting quote from Dewey or Schön. For example the last code in the table: 'show

relevance of new learning for the future', comes from my understanding of the literature

that reflection is future-oriented.

Codes from the Literature	Quotes on reflection (all emphasis in the quotes below are mine)
Reflecting on a puzzle	'An intellectualization of the <u>difficulty</u> or <u>perplexity</u> that has been felt (directly experienced) into a problem to be solved, a question for which the answer must be sought' (Dewey 1933: 107) The practitioner allows himself to experience surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique. He reflects on the phenomenon before him, and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behaviour. He carries out an experiment which serves to generate both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in the situation. (Schön 1983: 68)
Connect thought with action	'dialogue of <u>thinking and doing</u> through which (...) [professionals] become more skilled' (Schön 1987: 31)
Show some reframing of ideas	'There is no intellectual growth without some <u>reconstruction, some reworking</u>' (Dewey 1938: 64). 'We think critically about the thinking that got us into this fix or this opportunity; and <u>we may, in the process, restructure strategies of action, understandings of phenomena, or ways of framing problems</u>' (Schön 1987: 28-29)
Reveal new learning	'That he have opportunity and occasion to test his ideas by application, to make their meaning clear and to discover for himself their validity' (Dewey 1916: 192). 'Competent professional practitioners often <u>have the capacity to generate new knowing-in-action</u> through reflection-in-action undertaken in the indeterminate zones of practice' (Schön 1987: 40).
Show evidence of the method used in the exploration	'While we may speak, without error, of the <u>method of thought,</u> the important thing is that thinking is the <u>method</u> of an educational experience. The essentials of <u>method are therefore identical with essentials of reflection</u>' (Dewey 1916: 192) 'The use of one suggestion after another <u>as a leading idea, or hypothesis, to initiate and guide observation and other operations in collection of factual material</u>' (Dewey 1933: 107)
Show relevance of new learning for the future.	'Suggestions, in which <u>the mind leaps forward</u> to a possible solution' (Dewey 1933: 107)

Table 12 Codes used to create an instrument to identify reflection in a written report

The MA class criticised the instrument as being unreliable: they wondered what they could use as a basis for determining when to use a particular scale, since the scales could not be accurately and consistently used to get the same result when used on the same report by different persons. Following this feedback, I modified the instrument. Originally it integrated the following codes: reference, style, mode and tone. This was to analyse the way the reports were written (Table 13).

Feature	Scale			
Method	0	1	2	3
Reference	0	1	-	3
Style	0	1	2	3
Mode	0	1	2	3
Tone	0	1	2	3
Perplexity/doubt/problem	0	1	2	3
Evidence of engaging in reflective thought	0	1	2	3
New learning	0	1	2	3
Looking forward	0	1	2	3
Total	0	9	16	27

*0 = none   1 = weak/vague   2= explicit/medium   3= more explicit/strong

Table 13 Codes and quantification scales used in the original instrument

Table 13 shows the codes and rating scale used for each feature (code). This was devised to show different values: zero (0), weak/vague (1), explicit/medium (2), and

explicit/strong (3) following the descriptors (codes) which were derived from my analysis of the literature on reflection. *Method* was used to represent the use of and more rigorous thought and action processes for classroom explorations. *Reference* showed if participants used first person, second person or third person (0= 3rd person; 3= 1st and second person or 1st person only). The number 2 was deliberately taken out of the scale. Schön (1992) identifies the importance of not being a spectator in one's own reflective inquiry when he says: 'the inquirer does not stand outside the situation like a spectator. He is in it and in transaction with it'. (1992: 122) I therefore considered the use of the first person (I) in reporting the classroom exploration as important for describing the transaction. In a key word analysis of Professional Practice text data from MA TESOL students, Wharton (2012: 495) identifies 'I' as a frequently occurring word. According to Wharton:

> In the concordances for I, three salient groupings were found. The first was around the mental process of learning, with the items learn / find / discover / realise (that) … occurring 21 times in total. The second grouping was again around a mental process, that of belief. The items believe / think / feel / know (that) … appeared a total of 15 times. A third frequent pattern was the item BE plus an attribute: (I am creative, I was supportive). This pattern occurred with 17 instances of I (2012: 495).

In the context of her study, Wharton suggests that 'I' could be more frequently associated with learning than with beliefs or attributes. Thus in the context of reflection, a teacher's discourse identity (dynamic roles taken in discourse, e.g. responder or questioner) may be more central than situated (culturally recognised roles: e.g. teacher) or transportable (real or claimed attributes, e.g. ethnicity) identities which Zimmerman 1998 and Wharton 2012 describe. I looked for evidence of new learning in each report

as well as looking for evidence that the reflective thinking process would inform future practice. Where a report raised new questions but was not explicit about how new knowledge or awareness would be connected to future practice, a score of 2 was given to show possibility of further cycles of reflection which were not explicitly stated. After each report was rated a total score was given and compared with the highest possible score in the rating scale (27). I used high inference to create this instrument which I was later to understand was flawed (5.1.2.2).

5.1.2.2 Modification of the evaluative instrument

Below I show each report identified by its number and its total score from my first analysis and use of the instrument; after which I provide a description of the analysis in another table. There are 6 reports summarized in both tables. These are provided to contribute to the discussion on the use of instruments to measure classroom exploration reports and the advantages or disadvantages of doing so.

	Report 1	Report 2	Report 3	Report 4	Report 5	Report 6
Method	0	0	3	3	0	3
Reference	1	1	1	0	0	3
Style	0	0	0	0	0	3
Mode	0	0	1	1	0	2
Tone	0	0	0	0	0	2
Perplexity	0	0	0	1	0	3
Evidence of reflective thought	1	0	1	2	0	3
New learning	1	0	2	2	0	3

Looking forward	2	0	1	1	0	1
Total	5	1	9	10	0	23

Table 14 Rating scale for the 6 reports of classroom exploration

The instrument above shows my use of quantification in my attempt to evaluate the reports. At this time my thinking was still developing and I looked for ways to measure reflection. However, I found that this was in fact not appropriate as any quantification of reflection would be problematic based on the differences in the ways reflection is perceived or evaluated (Day 1993, Zeichner and Liston 1996, Jay and Johnson 2002, Luk 2008, Wharton 2012). Nevertheless, I show the analysis I made by using the instrument (in Table 15). I illustrate this with three samples from the original six reports (Table 15). The rows in the table therefore show Report 1; Report 2 and Report 3 from participants in the intervention group.

Report Sample	Description of Report Features with codes
Participant 1 Supporting new learners who have just joined the school	**Method:** not evident; **Reference**: mostly 3rd person; 2 sentences in the 1st person at end of report (one in past tense the other in future tense); Style: expository (derived from practice); **Mode**: display; **Tone:** prescriptive; **perplexity/problem/doubt**: none evident; **Evidence of engaging in reflective thought**: inferred: 'putting the above mentioned into consideration' (in reference to expository content). **New learning**: inferred: 'I have been able to help the new children in my room'; **Looking forward**: yes: 'this same experience is what I am planning to use for the new child that just joined'
Participant 3: Teacher/learner interaction	**Method**: (a) interviewed learners in small groups to find how they liked to learn (this information was given by this participant in the focus group interview we had; not in the report), (b) using activities: 'I have been involving them in one task or the other during classes and they like to participate and are very active'; **Reference:** 1st and 2nd person; **Style:** expository (derived from practice)/ explanatory; **Mode:** display; **Tone:** prescriptive/personal; **perplexity/problem/doubt:** none evident; **Evidence of engaging in reflective thought:** ' I have been able to explore my classroom (…) and discovered that…' **New learning:** yes: 'I was able to discover the pupils who are introverts'; **Looking forward:** inferred, 'I have been helping them to come out of their shells and interact better in class'. '
Participant 6: How can learners' classroom activities and exercises help learners to retain learning?	**Method:** chatted with individual pupils to identified their favoured teaching approach then used group discussion experimentally, (pupils' favoured approach); **Reference:** 1st person; **Style:** descriptive narrative/inquiry; **Mode**: reflective thinking 'I also noted that the exercise in class piqued their interest'; **Tone:** personal; **perplexity/problem/doubt:** 'how can one group learn or recall what the other discussed?'; I do not think it is every topic that can be done like this'; 'the challenge I have with this method-group discussion'; **Evidence of engaging in reflective thought:** use of self-directed questions in report: 'but will they commit it to memory?'; reconstruction: 'I do not think it is every topic that can be done like this'; **New learning:** evident. **Looking forward:** 'how can one group learn or recall what the other discussed' (not explicit; suggestive that further exploration is necessary).

Table 15 Analysis of 3 reports of classroom explorations with the instrument

Table 15 shows how I originally rated three of the six reports. As earlier mentioned, an MA class from the Centre for Applied Linguistics (CAL), challenged the use of quantification in the instrument which they tested in my absence (but in the presence of my PhD supervisor). The MA class discovered that as users of the instrument, they were forced to make judgments based on their subjective views since the quantitative scales that were used had not been standardized. Their conclusion was that reflection could not be easily quantified; they also observed that the use of a rating scale to evaluate reflection was unrealistic and too subjective to be accurate. I was in the research field when it was tested and could therefore not contribute to this process but responded to the feedback at my return. Therefore as a result of the feedback received from the MA group, I adapted the instrument. Although the instrument above may not have been effective, it was successfully used to raise discussions about the possible nature of reflection might look like in the MA class. It also helped to develop my thinking about reflection and my tacit beliefs about quantification.

5.1.2.3 New Learning from the evaluative instrument

When I reflect back on why I chose to use a rating scale, I realize that I was at the onset of my study and had not explored reflection directly, except through the Literature. My decisions may have been based on an assumption that reflection needs to be quantified to make the evaluative process less subjective (unfortunately I could not achieve this). It may also have been influenced by another assumption: that some people are more reflective than others. While this may be found to be the case and quantification of

reflection a future possibility; feedback from the MA class showed me that I needed an instrument which was easier to use and which could be used by several people to reach the same conclusions. The following table shows the final instrument, which was used to test the reflective reports. However, one needs to remember that the authenticity or validity of the instrument can only be determined by putting it to use in a factual report. It is not meant to identify reflection as a genre but as a teacher development or pedagogical tool. Further study could show the need to modify the framework or differentiate the codes used. After removing the rating scale and 'reference'; 'mode'; 'tone' and 'style' to focus not on the way the report was written but on its content and what was done by the teacher, a simpler instrument emerged. It simply looked for any evidence of reflection using the codes without attempting to measure this evidence (see Table 16).

CODE	DESCRIPTION	VISIBILITY	
Method	Refers to how the exploration process discussed in the report was carried out: e.g. by interview, questionnaire, etc.	YES	NO
Puzzle	Evidence of doubt, perplexity or problem	YES	NO
Connected action	Actions which can be connected to reflective thought as outcomes of reflection	YES	NO
Reframing	Evidence of cycles of reflection, e.g. new questions or issues emerge	YES	NO
New learning	Evidence of new learning, new understanding and new insight	YES	NO
Looking forward	Evidence of connecting new knowledge with future plans	YES	NO

Table 16 The final instrument used to analyze the reflective reports

Table 16 shows that the modified instrument is qualitative. It uses only descriptors to evaluate for presence of six criteria: a method of exploration; a puzzle that began the exploration; some connected action; reframing of knowledge; evidence of new learning and evidence that the outcomes of the exploration looked forward or was perceived as being relevant for future practice.

5.1.2.4 Using the modified instrument

Using the six criteria in the instrument, I looked for a report that showed all the criteria described in the instrument above. The report by Participant 6 (Rihanna) from her classroom exploration showed all six criteria. Her report suggests some use of structure in her classroom exploration process even though she had no knowledge of the theoretical frameworks of reflection. A question that might be asked is if the report was a result of an authentic exploratory process (Hobbs 2007 suggests that reports can be faked). However, the six criteria used to identify evidence of some reflective exploration were not disclosed to her nor was the instrument constructed until several months after the report was written. In the following page, I show the report and the criteria, which were identified in it.

Report from Classroom Exploration

TOPIC - Exploring Learning Processes And How These Can
HELP LEARNERS RETAIN MORE LEARNING

RESEARCH QUESTION - How Can Learners' Classroom
Activities and Exercises Help Young
Learners RETAIN LEARNING.

Experience
    We had a class in Creative Writing where
the pupils were grouped together to discuss different
aspects of the Topic, World Cup. A passage in their
Comprehension textbook was used as Starter
and they discussed in groups what each division
of player does on the field.

Observation: It was noted that the pupils were
able to recall what they learnt better, days and
even weeks after the lesson.
    I decided to adopt this method after having
individual chat with each pupil and realised
most of them prefers to be grouped for discussion
According to them, it makes them remember better.
    I also noted that the exercise in class
piqued their interest to write about the main topic
WORLD CUP.
    The Challenge I have with this Method - Group Discussion
I do not think it is every topic that can be
done like this.
→ How can one group learn or recall what the other
discussed, yes they will hear as the others share but
will they commit it to memory since it wasn't their

Puzzle

Method

Connected action

New learning

Looking forward

Reframing

Figure 11 Rihanna's report that showed evidence of reflection

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Rihanna's report shows the use of the six criteria mentioned in the instrument for identifying reflection. There is a method used during exploration (group work and chatting with young learners afterwards). The report shows that the teacher had a few puzzles apart from the initial research question (also evidence of reframing). These are evidenced when Rihanna poses these questions to herself: 'how can one group learn or recall what the other discussed (…) will they commit it to memory?' There is evidence of the use of connected action when she chats with the children to find their learning preference. This illustrates attitudes of openness, wholeheartedness and responsibility, which are advocated by Dewey as being necessary for reflection (Dewey 1933, Zeichner and Liston 1996). In addition, when she chats with pupils about the method and then decides to adopt it. When she says: 'I do not think it is every topic that can be done like this' she is reframing her thinking to adjust to other possibilities. Her new learning is evidenced by the expression: 'I noted that the exercise in class piqued their interests….' Looking forward' is evidenced by her decision to adopt group work as a teaching method which will help her learners to retain learning. Rihanna had 5 years of teaching experience when she carried out this classroom exploration and wrote this report. During this time she was within the period of 'stabilization [and] consolidation of a pedagogical repertoire', as suggested by Huberman (1993: 13). Waites (1999) observes that 'in this phase, an attempt is made to master core aspects of the job, to seek out an area of focus, to try for better working conditions, and, in many cases, to pursue responsibilities which are more prestigious, powerful and lucrative' (1999: 23). This is reflected in this participant's willingness to follow up on her promise to explore her classroom as part of a possible need for more professional competence. This participant

was also the most active member of the teacher group meeting and became a coordinator for the group during the periods of teacher group meetings.

5.1.3 Conclusions from Phase 1

Without the instrument, I may not have been able to clearly identify evidence of the use of reflection in Rihanna's classroom exploration. Nevertheless, two new questions stand out from the experience: is reflection connected to the type of language used by a teacher or by the way language is presented? Could a report be faked to meet these criteria? (It is a possibility, especially if the criteria are given in advance; although the criteria themselves could guide the exploration process). These were not tested in the study as they were not my immediate focus. According to Ward and McCotter (2004: 225) 'we have often asked our students to reflect on field experiences without ever discussing the qualities of good reflection, often with disappointing results. Students do not automatically know what we mean by reflection'. I also was disappointed at first, when I read the reports of research participants. It is possible that the experience of classroom explorations would have been more successful for them if I had taught them about reflection before their classroom explorations. However, this is debateable.

When I returned to the context to collect the reports, a review showed that these teachers might not have had an understanding of reflection. We had a meeting during which time I established from discussions and interactions with them that they did not know the

concept or practice. I therefore integrated a workshop into the study in April 2010 to introduce reflection to them in simpler ways, through descriptions of the practice, and its benefits for teachers, not by theoretical expositions. Participants in the intervention group therefore had no conceptual knowledge of reflection, nor have I evidence that any of them progressed into regular reflective practice during the study. However, I could now see that reflection existed in some minimal form within this research context, among teachers who had not yet encountered it in a formal programme. From my observations and analysis it was: intuitive, basic and unstructured. However, the potential of regular and systematic reflection was within the context, exemplified by Rihanna's report. I then initiated a TG in the school as an intervention to develop the collaborative growth of reflection and reflective practice in the group. After giving a free workshop on active learning to all teachers in the Lagos school, I returned to the UK.

In September 2010, a few months later, I returned to Lagos and found out that the group had hardly met because they could not make out time for meetings. Recordings of the few meetings they had had not been properly done. I requested a meeting with Group B and the school administrator. During this meeting they told me that they couldn't find time to meet regularly. I asked if they would like to opt out of the study but they said no. The school administrator then suggested they meet on Wednesdays during the time designated for departmental meetings for the study. After teaching two teachers how to correctly use the recorder, I left the school, with a promise from these teachers that they would continue to meet and record their meetings.

5.2 Phase 2 of the Study

After returning to the UK to reflect on my experience in the field, I reached out to colleagues in ELTAN by email and requested for a mailing list that I am a member of, through which I could contact members to me further perspectives about possible provisions for reflection in the context. I designed Questionnaire A for this purpose through a survey tool at www.surveymonkey.com (Appendix 2).

5.2.1 Use of questionnaires in the larger ELT context

Questionnaire A was a semi-structured instrument which sought for Nigerian English teachers' views or understanding of reflection and professional development. It had 9 structured questions and a 10th one (Question 9) which was open-ended and allowed respondents to give unrestricted responses. Twenty-six responses to Questionnaire A were received through the online survey. Anonymous responses were received from members of ELTAN across Nigeria. However, a few wrote back to me to inform me they had filled the online questionnaire. One of these was a university lecturer. This online survey which was directed at Nigerian English teachers was carried out while I was in the UK.

A few months later, I again travelled to Nigeria to interact with English teachers and create some awareness about reflection in Abuja through free workshops. One of these days, I called Kenny, a colleague from ELTAN (also a participant in this study). He

informed me that the government was giving a training for hundreds of secondary school English teachers. I requested on phone that he helped me to reach out to the organizers of the training in advance of my coming. I then quickly printed out my online questionnaires and photocopied about 200 copies and rushed to the training venue. There I was graciously introduced to the teachers and allowed to speak for 5 minutes about my research and request for questionnaire respondents. I was allowed to distribute the questionnaires and Kenny assured me he would collect responses before participants left the venue that afternoon. Seventy-two other responses came from hard copies of the same questionnaire, which I personally administered to government secondary school English Language teachers with the help of Kenny.

During this phase, I had various interactions with many teachers from this group who attended three free teacher development workshops on reflection, teacher collaboration and materials development: which I gave in Abuja (in Central Nigeria). A teacher who attended two of my workshops was inspired to start a teacher group meeting of English teachers from 8 junior secondary schools in a school district in Abuja. I was unaware of this group for several months until I returned to Nigeria and was invited to attend one of their meetings at a government junior secondary school in Abuja. I talked with them about reflective practice. Although many other government schoolteachers that I met in Abuja (while administering my questionnaires) indicated an interest in collaborating in another book project that I proposed (to instigate collaboration and reflective practice), they were unable to meet as a group after our initial meeting where I talked to them about reflection and how to evaluate and adapt materials. They claimed they were too

busy. They were from different schools across the state capital, some too distant to encourage attendance. The following sub-sections show my analysis of these questionnaires several months after this incident.

5.2.2 Exploring teachers' awareness of reflection

There were 98 responses to Questionnaire A that was designed to identify awareness about reflection in the context. This was confirmed by responses to the first and second questions, which showed that 87.8% of respondents had some awareness of reflection. Using Dewey's description of reflective thought I sought to find out if teachers agreed with the description of reflection, without mentioning the word reflection. See question below:

> Do you think that teachers or teacher trainees should actively persist in questioning or trying to understand any teaching or learning related issue/subject and/or be carefully considerate of any beliefs or knowledge they engage with or come across in their practice? (Dewey 1933, reframed for questionnaire)

Unfortunately, it was a leading question and its responses have now been discarded (I had looked for a way to frame the question and adapted a quote from Dewey). I do not now think a questionnaire is the best way to find out if teachers use reflective inquiry in their practice, unless the questionnaire is aimed at those who understand fully, what reflective practice is. The questionnaire also tested their opinions and beliefs of professional development indirectly by asking the following question and following it with another in the questionnaire: 'which of the following is more realistic and can add

to the professional development of practicing teachers? (You can choose several answers)'

Questionnaire Extract 1

Options	No. of Responses	Percentage
A short course at a University or College	57	58.1%
A short course outside a University or College	21	21.4%
School based workshops and seminars	72	73.5%
External workshops and seminars	77	78.6%
Informal teacher group meetings	35	35.7%
Formal school meetings	19	19.4%
Attending teacher association meetings	40	40.8%
Informal chats with colleagues	33	33.6%
Self-study	50	51%
Internet research/browsing for information	69	70.4%
Observing other teachers	49	50%
Engaging in problem solving or reflective practice	59	60.2%
Carrying out action research	54	55.1%

Above, Nigerian English language teachers express their beliefs about professional development. Although engaging in problem solving does not show the highest frequency of response, it is still significant at 60.2% as a potential entry point into reflective practice. I associated problem solving with reflection based on the Literature which states that reflection is commonly accepted as being problem-centred (Adler 1991, Cutler et al 1989, Calderhead 1989) and based on an understanding that problem solving amongst teachers requires some input on reflection (3.1.3). However, looking back, I realise that the response may be misleading because it is combined with reflective practice. The highest frequencies in the responses shown in the questionnaire are opinions that external and school-based workshops are more realistic than short formal courses which respondents still find attractive. Use of the Internet comes third,

followed by problem solving or reflective practice. 55.1% of the sample believes that AR is important for teachers. Beliefs about professional development did not match experience of professional development. For example, only 33.6% of the sample had engaged in AR although 55.1% favoured it. In the next section, I highlight the difference between respondents' opinion and actual experience.

5.2.3 Engagement with professional development

The opinions reflected above were tested with another question, which aimed to identify real experience and to compare this with opinions about professional development. There is a variation between beliefs about professional development and real experience as the following question from the questionnaire shows: 'Which of the following have you done in the last one year?'

Questionnaire Extract 2

Options	No. of Responses	Percentage
A short course at a University or College	20	20.4%
A short course outside a University or College	13	13.2%
School based workshops and seminars	64	65.3%
External workshops and seminars	54	55.1%
Informal teacher group meetings	22	22.4%
Formal school meetings	32	32.6%
Attending teacher association meetings	25	25.5%
Informal chats with colleagues	46	46.9%
Self-study	58	59.1%
Internet research/browsing for information	44	44.8%
Observing other teachers	45	45.9%
Engaging in problem solving or reflective practice	46	46.9%
Carrying out action research	33	33.6%

The responses show a drop in actual experience of teachers' opinions about professional development. The differences in responses to the two questions are highlighted in Questionnaire Extract 3 (which illustrates opinion versus experience).

Questionnaire Extract 3

Options	Opinion	Experience
A short course at a University or College	58.1%	20.4%
A short course outside a University or College	21.4%	13.2%
School based workshops and seminars	**73.5%**	**65.3%**
External workshops and seminars	**78.6%**	**55.1%**
Informal teacher group meetings	35.7%	22.4%
Formal school meetings	19.4%	32.6%
Attending teacher association meetings	40.8%	25.5%
Informal chats with colleagues	33.6%	46.9%
Self-study	**51%**	**59.1%**
Internet research/browsing for information	**70.4%**	**44.8%**
Observing other teachers	50%	45.9%
Engaging in problem solving or reflective practice	**60.2%**	**46.9%**
Carrying out action research	**55.1%**	**33.6%**

There is a visible discrepancy between these teachers' opinions and experience of professional development in all but two some categories (formal school meetings and informal chats with colleagues). However, the difference between opinions and experience of school-based workshops is small (73.5% and 65.3% respectively); highlighting the fact that many Nigerian English language teachers in the sample have had recent experience of school-based professional development. A significant number of teachers in the sample (55%) have also engaged in external professional development in the year before the questionnaire. Opinions about the role of the Internet in teacher development are high at 70%; however, in practice less than half of the sample engages in this experience probably because of lack of technological access.

5.2.4 Awareness of collaborative development

Questionnaire A probed for awareness of collaborative development by including formal and informal TG or TA meetings and informal chats with colleagues. Responses show that awareness of these as professional development opportunities was low. There was disparity between opinions and experience of these opportunities: described below.

Questionnaire Extract 4 (opinion on TG/TA/informal chats versus self-study)

	No.	Percentage
Informal teacher group meetings	35	35.7%
Formal school meetings	19	19.4%
Attending teacher association meetings	40	40.8%
Informal chats with colleagues	33	33.6%
Self-study	50	51%

Opinions expressed in Extract 4 shows that formal school meetings were least perceived as being beneficial to professional development. Less than 50% of the sample perceived TAs, TGs and chats with colleagues in similar ways. This is contrasted with self-study to present a picture of collaboration/peer support versus individual effort/support. Opinions about peer contributions to practice are lower than opinions about self-support. Questionnaire Extract 5 shows actual experience of the same opportunities.

Questionnaire Extract 5 (experience of TG/TA/informal chats versus self-study)

	No.	Percentage
Informal teacher group meetings	22	22.4%
Formal school meetings	32	32.6%
Attending teacher association meetings	25	25.5%
Informal chats with colleagues	46	46.9%

Questionnaire Extract 5 shows that opinions about TGs and TAs though low, are not supported by actual experience, which is lower. These responses suggest that teacher collaboration and peer support are low within the context. The experience of formal school meetings is higher at 32.6% than beliefs about its benefits. Informal chats with colleagues are higher in practice than beliefs about its benefits for professional development. Self-study, which represents personal effort, is actually higher in practice and significant as a preferred method of professional development (when compared to peer support) in the context. These responses suggest that Nigerian ELT would benefit from awareness raising about teacher collaboration through TGs, TAs and formal and informal school meetings. Nevertheless, self-study (at 59.1%) is identified as one of the main provisions for reflection in the context, as are participation in external and school-based workshops, which are 55.1% and 65.3% respectively. Poor perceptions of TGs, TAs, formal school meetings and chats with peers as professional development opportunities may reflect an individualistic culture (Lortie 1975, Huberman 1992) in Nigerian ELT. Analysis of responses suggests that awareness needs to be created among Nigerian teachers that professional development can be gained from informal interactions with colleagues and by self-engagement with practice (Brookfield 1995, Hatton and Smith 1995, Johns 2000, Bailey and Willet 2004).

Finally, the questionnaire sought reasons why Nigerian teachers do not engage more in professional development. The most significant reason was financial (usually lack of money or funding). This was mentioned 35 times. Lack of motivation was mentioned 10 times, followed by lack of interest or time with 8 responses each. Others were: distance

or transport challenges (6 mentions) ignorance (5 mentions); lack of awareness and laziness (4 times each) and conflicting interests (3 mentions). Responses show that teacher development is on the increase in Nigerian schools. I expected that time would be mentioned more frequently as a significant inhibiting factor, but it wasn't. Despite mentions of financial issues Nigeria teachers have found new ways of developing themselves, aided by government, their schools; personal study and by interactions with colleagues. From post-observation interviews and questionnaire data which were administered across Nigeria, I established that there are provisions for reflection in Nigeria and that it might exist in intuitive practice, even though it is not yet integrated into the NCE curriculum as strategy or content. Thus my research question emerged from the study: If reflection was in use within the context, 'how do Nigerian teachers use reflection'? To answer this question, I moved to Phase 3 of the study, using individual and focus group interviews to find answers from teachers who had some experience of reflection in their practice, even if limited.

5.3 Phase 3 of the study

Phase 3 began in July 2011. First I travelled to Lagos to carry out the second focus group interview with group A (used as primary data). Group A had managed to sustain their TGM and developed some understanding of reflective practice. They had expanded the study to include 5 other subject teachers (4.2.3.1). Although their book project had developed very slowly, it had served its purpose to create a platform for developing

some reflective practice in group A. I then travelled to Port Harcourt, Nigeria to individually meet with former course participants from my practice who had accepted to participate in interviews when I contacted them by email or phone.

5.3.1 Connecting with former course participants

My former course participants had experienced reflection by taking two Cambridge courses (CICTT and CIDTT) that I had begun to teach from 2008. I had not taught them reflection from theoretical perspectives but as practice. In the course, they were required to reflect over three different teaching and professional experiences and to write assignments from these encounters. Assessments were graded by external examiners who looked for evidence of the new insight, understandings and perspectives that these participants had gained through the course. Although the evaluation of reflection has been criticized in the literature (Roberts 1998, Scott 2005, Hobbs 2007, Luk 2008, Wharton 2012) they appear to have retained some systematic reflection beyond the course. I had retained a mentoring relationship with these teachers and had involved some of them in an English teacher training project that I had carried out in 2009 and 2010.

Although I had not explored their classrooms, I had been in touch with them before the study and had heard from them about the benefits of the reflective teacher development course long before they joined the study. According to them, it had made them more disciplined in their thinking, given them a better appreciation of learners' needs and

learners' rights to learn in more learner-friendly environments. It had created a desire for continuing professional development (some of them have taken other courses since then or seek to) and increased their confidence. As they told me during our informal interactions over the years, they could now justify their teaching decisions to their head teacher. Some of their colleagues who took the same course (not in this study), received some promotion in their schools or recognition and in two instances new jobs in the sophisticated private Nigerian school where about 15 teachers in this school had taken either of the two courses. A significant part of their experience on the course was that all participants were self-sponsored on the course which by Nigerian standards is quite expensive. It is not clear if they would have given the same attention to their development if the course was given free of charge.

Before interviewing these teachers who had taken the formal reflective course, I designed Questionnaire B which allowed participants to write about their experience of reflection through free responses to open-ended questions. I administered it by email or as hard copy. Six out of these twelve respondents later gave in-depth interviews (between July and August 2011) when I visited them individually in their schools or at neutral venues. I could not physically reach the participant in Bonny (an Island) and interviewed him by phone in November 2011 after I had left Nigeria. To do this, I put the phone on speaker mode and recorded the interview with a recording device.

5.3.2 The Pro Learning Group (PLG)

In September 2011, I went to Abuja to connect with some of the teachers I had met in Abuja during my study. When I learned from Kenny that he had been inspired by the workshops I had given in Abuja in early 2011 and had started a TG in July of that year. This was a group of English teachers from 8 different JSS in a school district. Through my contact with Kenny, I was able to connect with three of his colleagues at school who agreed to give me individual interviews. They were also members of PLG which met at least twice a term. I also contacted James a private school secondary teacher who had attended one of my workshops. All of these interviews took place in participants' schools. I met with teachers in the TG started by Kenny during one of their meetings. There, I was asked to speak about reflection after a problem solving session (about one hour, thirty minutes) when they discussed how to effectively teach writing to classes of over 100 JSS students. I was unable to travel back to Lagos for an individual interview with Rihanna (from Group A) and contacted her by phone asking if she would accept to be interviewed by phone. She agreed and the interview was done with a phone and a recording device in October 2011.

Summary

The three phases of this study provided me the opportunity to interact with English teachers across Nigeria. In the process, I discovered that Nigerian English teachers are genuinely concerned about their practice and about their development as English teachers and that teachers who had no conceptual knowledge of reflection showed some

evidence of it in practice. I learned that research helps to shape researchers' thinking by challenging their assumptions. I also learned how to sustain a study in the midst of uncertainty, especially through the experience of Group A, which could not always meet with me when I requested a meeting. Nevertheless, I understood from experience with Group A that it can take time to develop reflection in practice and that teachers' lifestyles need to be taken into consideration in any teacher development effort or study. Thus I developed new understandings about reflection (through interviews with participants), about teacher development, how to carry out research and about the challenges of teaching English in Nigeria. During the extended months of study, I also explored documents to gain more insight about teacher education in Nigeria. I turned to news papers for more current information when I discovered that government statistics were not always accurate (2.1). I also visited TRCN to get the statistics of English teachers in Nigeria and found that English language teachers are less than 2% of the total population of Nigerian teachers. All interviews (for primary data) took place between July and November 2011, in Phase 3 of the study. Questionnaire B was also administered in this period. These interviews were transcribed and analyzed (see 4.6.4) over several months as were other data (4.6). Findings are discussed in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER SIX

The Use of Reflection by Nigerian English Teachers

Introduction

In Chapter 5, I described my development as a researcher through a narrative account of the different phases of the study. In this chapter, I share my findings by describing the ways that Nigerian English teachers in the study used reflection to support their practice and how it increased their awareness and understanding of teaching, learning, learners and of themselves as teachers. It was not always a conscious process and participants' were not often aware of the ways they used reflection. However, through the data analysis, I was able to identify the implicit actions of these teachers more explicitly thus developing my own learning as a teacher educator. The descriptions shown are significant for their illustration of the use of reflection for specific purposes and for the ability of participants to articulate the experience. According to Rodgers (2002: 864) 'once reflection can be talked about with precision by both teachers and researchers (as well as students!), it cannot be so easily dismissed as "soft", nor lost in the flurry of vaguely defined movements'. Through the study, I have become more open to the awareness and understanding that teachers can lead the process of their development through collaborative explorations of their engaging encounters and experiences. It is a process that I participated in as co-constructor (Field et al 1997, Richards 2003, Richards 2009, Mann 2011) of the 'new knowledge' that I hope is created for

participants, the Nigerian English language context and myself. This findings chapter is in four parts: Part 1 describes skill-centred reflection, Part 2 describes learner-centred reflection, Part 3, teacher-centred reflection and Part 4 describes knowledge-centred reflection and illustrates the characterization of reflection by participants in the study. In this chapter, I conflate analysis, findings and discussion within my descriptions.

6.1 Skill-centred reflection

Skill-centred reflection describes a way in which participants were found to use reflection in their practice. In the study it was found to be associated with teachers' actions which aimed at improving practice. Three categories are identified in the central code, which will be described from data: developing competence; innovating and problem solving. Participants used reflection as a tool for developing competence, by honing their skills, replicating successful action, renewing teaching experience, and to restructure their practice. In the following sections I describe them using extracts from the data.

6.1.1 Developing competence

Developing competence describes the attempts by participants to develop their ability to carry out teaching-related activity well. This is significant in the context because poor

teaching and classroom management skills are some of the weaknesses of Nigerian teacher education graduates Okebukola (2007). In the NPE (FRCN 1990: 1) some of the goals of teacher education in Nigeria, is to produce: 'highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers [with] appropriate attitudes and skills for effective performance (…), to equip teachers with relevant and adequate skills, knowledge, techniques and general content in subject areas' [emphasis mine]. The need for Nigerian teachers to develop competence with adequate skills for effective performance is therefore a priority, as Okebukola suggests (2007). In the following pages I describe how they did this through a reflective process.

Replicating (teaching) action is a sub-category of the concept of developing competence in the study. Data analysis showed it to be related with 'honing (teaching) skills' another sub-category from the data, which is identified as a process of becoming more skilled, more competent or more effective in the process. Replicating action describes a finding that showed that in the context, some teachers identified successful strategies by reflecting on their practice. After identifying these strategies, they were then replicated in other classroom scenarios or for other groups of children: thus increasing the teacher's competence. I start my descriptions with Manny through whom this idea is evident. Manny, a private school teacher completed both CICTT and CIDTT before the study. Manny had taken both CICTT and CIDTT. The experience of exploring his practice (recounted in Extract 5) took place about 8 years before the study and about five years before he took any of the two courses. In Extract 5, I show our discussion.

Extract 5

245	R	Okay (.) alright I'd like you to flashback on any incident in your practice to try to describe for
246		me how you go about reflecting over your practice (.) if you could just flashback and think for a
247		moment and see how if you could describe a process of reflection (.) what you did (.) you know
248		(.) how it started (.) what happened in between (.) the outcomes (.) et cetera
249	Manny	Okay I remember very well this set of children I prepared for English language school
250		certificate examination some years back (.) I got there and within one year I was given the
251		assignment of preparing these students (.) since it was a new thing to me I took it as a stride (.)
252		we worked together and at the end of it all when the results of the exams came out (.) we had a
253		hundred percent success (.) all the students passed (.) now that came as a pleasant surprise
254		because there were some of them that honestly (.) I had doubts whether they would make it and
255		they gave me a pleasant surprise because all of them passed (.) so I sat down to ask myself what
256		did I do and how did I do it? What methods (.) what approaches did I adopt and how did I adopt
257		those approaches and how come that even some of those children that I had my doubts about
258		were able to make it? I assessed my own (.) I appraised my own methods and I learnt a whole
259		lot from it (.) some of the things I learnt from that they have always (.) they are things that I've
260		always applied subsequently in my practice (.) so that is one incident that I always remember
261		and I reflected on it and I learnt a whole lot from it
262	R	What were the outcomes of the reflection? Having learnt a lot from it what were the other
263		outcomes?
264	Manny	And then the outcome was that some of the practices (.) some of the approaches I used since that
265		day I've carried them over (.) I replicated them in subsequent classes (.) in subsequent schools
266		and they worked for me (.)
267	R	They worked? Alright (.) this was how many years ago please (.) this experience?
268	Manny	Okay this was about eight years ago
269	R	That's before you encountered reflective practice as a formal thing?
270	Manny	Yes (Manny/245).

In extract 5, Manny recounts how several years before in a different school (with senior secondary school learners) he had successfully prepared his students for the West African school certificate exams (WASCE). It was a new experience for him (L 250-255). An important feature that can be highlighted from his account is: 'we worked together' suggesting that his strategies were learner-centred and involved collaboration between himself and his learners. It was however, surprising to him that all learners passed the exam. This was beyond his expectations and he could not tell why (L 255-257). This element of surprise is mentioned in the literature. According to Kinsella (2007) 'in practice, reflection often begins when a routine response produces a surprise,

an unexpected outcome, pleasant or unpleasant (…) when intuitive, spontaneous performance yields expected results, then we tend not to think about it; however, when it leads to surprise, we may begin a process of reflection' (Kinsella 2007: 108). It is not surprising then that Manny starts a reflective process where he tried to identify his successful strategies. However, Lynch and Metcalfe (2006) suggest that when complexity is to be explored intuitive reflection is no longer adequate and so there is a need to switch to what they call explicit concept reflection or reflection-on action (see 4.1). It is a process that Manny starts with questions to himself: 'what did I do?' and 'how did I do it?' In my analytic memos I probe this self-questioning that I found so often in the study:

> why does the self ask itself questions if it doesn't have the answers? The data shows probing and questioning as a technique for understanding practice; events in practice, or learners' needs. It means that knowledge of theory is not sufficient; knowledge of practice is also not sufficient. The self must explore both and connect them to develop new understandings, new perspectives and the knowledge, skills and attitudes, which are used in more professional ways' (Analytic Memo/May20/12a).

From Manny, I began to see that the answers practitioners ask themselves cannot be answered by oneself alone. Although the questions are posed to the self, the answers are beyond the self. What Manny started as an intuitive process of exploration becomes more structured and deliberate. It is as Schön (1987) describes:

> Reflection is at least in some measure conscious, although it need not occur in the medium of words. We consider both the unexpected event and the knowing-in-action that led up to it, asking ourselves, as it were, 'What is this?' and, at the same time, 'How have I been thinking about it?' Our thought turns back on the surprising phenomenon and, at the same time, back on itself (1987: 28).

Above Schön describes a process that is visible in Manny's experience, which I continue to describe below. To find explicit answers, Manny explores his practice by appraising his methods (L 260). When I probed further to know what he did he says:

Extract 6

307	Manny	Well I collected the results (.) I looked at their
308		grades and I was able to work out the percentage
309		for instance (.) those that made A1 A2 A3 C4 C5
310		C6 and all that (.) and I looked at candidates (.) the
311		children themselves (.) who you know fell within
312		these categories (.) I looked at all these things (.) I
313		put all these things together and then I thought
314		back about their own classroom practices (.) I tried
315		to match the results with their classroom practices
316		(.) and within a couple of weeks I'm able to put
317		these things together (Manny/307).

By working collaboratively with his learners (Extract 5: 253) and by reviewing the results and matching them with 'their classroom practices' (Extract 6: L 314), he was able to identify successful approaches from his practice (that he was unaware of). The process was structured and included data collection and analysis (using candidates grades), categorization of data by specific candidates and then a comparison of these with past classroom practices ('I thought back about their own class practices'). As he told me, he took down notes and constructed diagrams to illustrate his findings. It was a reflective process that took weeks (he did not know about reflection at the time of his analysis). Manny was thus able to reconstruct his methods and to gain new understandings of implicit knowledge which became more explicit. According to Kemmis & McTaggart (2005: 279) 'focusing on practices in a concrete and specific way makes them accessible for reflection, discussion, and reconstruction as products of past

circumstances that are capable of being modified in and for present and future circumstances'. This was the case for Manny whose new learning was applied to his practice and replicated in other classrooms and schools (L 260-262; L 267-268). It is a process of reflection-on-action: 'we reflect *on* action, thinking back on what we have done in order to discover how our knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome' (Schön, 1983: 26). According to Maughan (1996)

> when we develop a pattern of behaviour that works in certain situations, we will tend to repeat it until it becomes automatic. We can't describe the processes involved because we are not aware of what is going on. It is only when something goes wrong or something unexpected happens that we may stop and think about what we did and what we could or should have done in the situation (1996: 76)

By stopping to look again and think about patterns of practice, which we take for granted, professionals have an opportunity of becoming more effective. Using the literature as an analytical tool, we can deduce that Manny established a pattern of successful strategies, which could have become automatic; these were highlighted when he faced the challenge of preparing senior secondary students for the English SSCE exam (a new experience for him). However, Manny was unable to describe the process he followed until something unexpected happened and then it instigated a lengthy process of reflective thought and action (Dewey 1933).

Replicating teaching action was also associated with some peer collaboration. Again, it involves a process of honing one's teaching skills. I will illustrate this by using data from Group C. During the focus group interview, which was carried out in Phase 3 of

the study, participants' described their TG meeting in terms of a laboratory, suggesting

that it facilitated different processes.

Participant: The classroom is the lab.

Researcher: And your meetings?

Participant: This is part of the lab.

Researcher: Oh (.) this is also part of the lab?

Participant: Yes (Focus group2/517).

The idea of the TG as a lab- an extension of their classrooms (the main 'laboratories')

suggests that participants had come to view their classrooms as places of inquiry and

experimentation. This is a construct that may illustrate their understandings of how 'new

knowledge' is developed through a collaborative process that connects classrooms with

the TG. As we discussed this idea, Rihanna recounts an experience.

Extract 7

458	R	How frequent are your departmental meetings?
459	Anne	Every week
460	R	And how long?
461	Ona	An hour.
462	Ariel	I remember a particular training we attended together and after that training we
463		came (.) of course I mean it was...
464	Anne	Wow!
465	Rihanna	It was but you know (.) I remember the excitement you know (.) with which she
466		implemented it (.)okay (.) probably because she em (.) maybe I didn't have the
467		opportunity to use it that way because I was (.) I teach a higher class (.) but then
468		you know she was able to break it down in the class very well and each time we
469		spoke (.) I know I went back after listening to her (.) each time I will go and look
470		at the way I could also use it and adapt it to my class (.) even though my class is a
471		higher class (Focus Group2/451).

A trainer had visited and taught some new idea or approach which participants explored afterwards in the TG (L 462-463). It was obviously an exciting experience because another participant interjects with 'wow!' (L 464) before Ariel continues. Ariel describes the excitement of another participant who adopted the new idea into her practice (L 465-469). Rihanna observes however, that she could not use the same approach directly because she teaches a higher class (L 467). However, her colleague was able to practicalise the approach in more accessible ways by 'breaking it down very well' (L 468). This suggests some deconstruction and reconstruction of the original idea from the trainer; illustrating the 'reframing' and 'reworking' that happens in reflection (Dewey 1938: 64). Lines 468-471 show a scaffolding process that Rihanna's colleague facilitated by allowing Rihanna into her own classroom to observe the approach in use. According to Fernandez, et al (2001: 42), the 'conception of 'scaffolding' is closely related to Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) where a learner is supported by and adult or peer who has superior understanding of the concept being learned. Through several interactive encounters with her colleague, Rihanna was able to adapt the approach to make it more suitable to her own learners. It is a process that she believes makes her more effective and although we are not told what skills she applied, it is a successful process of becoming more skilled. The new learning for Rihanna is not only the approach, but on how to adapt an approach for practice. Thus we see an example of how teacher collaborations are extensions of classroom practice (the 'lab') and how learning emerges from the interactions that begin from classroom practice and are extended to colleagues for more strategic input.

Wallace (1991) a leading voice in L2 teacher development discussed the need for L2 English teachers to develop competence by becoming more reflective. Analysis of data from the study, suggests that this is in fact in process in Nigerian ELT. At the time of both experiences described in this section (Extracts 5 and 7) reflection was not a regular feature of these participants' practice. However, it appears to have supported the more explicit development of their skills as teachers that Schön advocated when he says that reflective practice is a 'dialogue of thinking and doing through which (...) [professionals] become more skilled' (1987: 31). This is exemplified by the Rihanna who enters into a dialogue of thinking and doing through a supportive process.

The process of becoming more competent was identified from data as including some deliberate restructuring of practice. Restructuring practice as a sub-category of developing competence illustrates the making of small amendments in practice to make learning more suitable for learners. Through the following data, I describe it.

Extract 8

613	R	Okay (.) so (.) so for you (.) the idea of a holiday (.) when the children are not there (.)
614		the schedules are not as tight (.) that's one way of creating space (.) does anybody
615		think they can create space some other way?
616	Ariel	Me (.) yes (.) like the subject I teach (.) I first of all look at my objective (.) so for a
617		child not to (.) to get the objective <u>I have to bend somehow to make sure that this child</u>
618		<u>will actually go home with the (.) with something</u> (.) maybe let's say for example (.)
619		em (.) we are asked to get a circle (.) now if at the end of the day the child is not able
620		to cut a circle that means I've not achieved anything (.) so what I do (.) <u>I'll maybe</u>
621		<u>devise a means to make sure that particular student gets the shape.</u>
622	R	In that same class?
623	Ariel	That same class.
624	R	In that same lesson?
625	Ariel	Yes. So he may not get it as perfect as others but somehow the child will be able to at
626		least
627	R	So in devising that means are you saying that you are reflecting within the classroom?
628	Ariel	Yes
629	R	To solve a problem?
630	Ariel	Yes (.) yes (.) immediately
631	R	Immediately?
632	Ariel	<u>Yes(.) yes (.) because if I don't do that immediately (.) because maybe next week I</u>
633		<u>may have a different topic (.) so if that child didn't get the topic for that week (.) that</u>
634		<u>means I've not achieved my objective</u> (Focus group2/613)

The above extract shows a conversation that I had with a member of the intervention group, during the second focus group interview. It illustrates some of the small changes that participants made in practice to facilitate learning. During the interview, we began to discuss the need to create space for reflection during the holidays. I asked if there were possible alternatives. Ariel responded by pointing us to another way of creating space for reflection not outside of the classroom but within dynamic classroom practice. This suggests some experience of reflection-in-action (Schön 1983, 1987). Using an example to illustrate her point about some possible use of reflection in her practice, she says when she finds that a learner faces the possibility of not being able to achieve the set goal, she has to 'bend somehow' (L 617-618) to introduce another way of meeting

the learner's need. Her further descriptions add more meaning to the process, when she says she has to 'devise a means' (L 621) to ensure that a particular child could achieve similar success as other learners. The 'bending' the teacher describes shows some presence of flexibility and suggests that she is going against her immediate or otherwise established plans for the lesson. This deviation from routine is associated with reflection (Dewey 1933). It also illustrates the possible presence of the attitudes that Dewey suggests for reflective persons: open-mindedness, trustworthiness, responsibility (Dewey 1933, Zeichner and Liston 1996). The significance of this description is the willingness or openness of the teacher to deviate from her pre-planned action. The deviation from routine and openness is visibly teacher-focused as two sentences suggest and focuses on completing objectives or teacher performance (L 620 & L 634). I explored the idea of openness with another participant, Lola. When I ask Lola if she needs to be open to new ideas to reflect more, she responds:

> Yes (.) yes because when actually you are not open to new ideas you may not actually be able to reflect well (.) you have to be open to new ideas (.) welcome new ideas (.) try it (.) see how it works (.) it helps you to reflect (.) and it is not just enough to rely on what you know and you feel is the best (.) you also have to try other people's ideas and see how it works (Lola/643)

Lola describes the openness that encourages reflections thus: 'welcome new ideas (.) try it (.) see how it works (.) it helps you reflect'. When she says: 'see how it works' it points to a performance oriented reflective process. When she says: 'it's not enough to rely on what you know and feel is the best (.) you have to try other people's ideas and see how it works' it points to a skill-centred use of reflection. Collaboration is highlighted as part of the skilling process as exemplified by Ariel and Rihanna in

Extract 7. Zeichner and Liston (1996) describes open-mindedness (an attribute shown by Lola) as: 'an active desire to listen to more sides than one, to give full attention to alternative possibilities, and to recognize the possibility of error even in beliefs that are dearest to us' (Zeichner and Liston 1996: 10). Lola's understanding of the possibility that she does not know it all is clear: 'it's not just enough to rely on what you know'. Wharton (2012) observes that reflection acknowledges the problematic nature of reality. It is not a sleek process. This, Lola seems to understand. Classrooms are not predictable places as Wright (1992, 2005) suggests. Wright (1992) describes findings in a study of Cameroonian teachers in practice and the 'critical moments,' when things did not go as planned: moments when a learner's immediate classroom needs potentially moves the learning group into another direction. According to him, the 'completion imperative' (pressure from administrators to complete the syllabus) drove many Cameroonian teachers to disregard moments of possible intervention to attend to learners' needs (Wright 1992, cited in Wright 2005: 77). This could be better achieved when teachers deviate from routine practice which may not be perceived as effective in order to attend to the real needs of learners, as illustrated by Ariel in Extract 8.

Activating redundant skills was another sub-category of developing competence identified in the study. This explains how teachers experienced some new awareness of redundant abilities and skills through reflection. Extract 9 describes one such instance.

Extract 9

434	R	How is this kind of professional development different [TG] from when somebody
435		comes from the outside to teach you on a topic? Is there any difference?
436	Ariel	There is a difference
437	R	Yes (.) please comment.
438	Ariel	There is a difference (.) the difference is that in this way (.) in a funny way it's as
439		if you are like let me just put it (.) as if you are fumbling in the dark and at the
440		same time you find your way and you grow (.) because it's kind of like she has (.)
441		Ona (.) something that I don't have (.) Anne has something she needs maybe
442		Angela has (.) like that. Rihanna has something I have (.) like that we learn (.) It's
443		different from when someone comes (.) in actual fact most of the time when
444		someone comes to train you (.) you just listen (.) at times (.) most of the time (.)
445		you listen for listening sake (.) you don't (.) it's not as you doing it practically (.)
446		now we are learning practically so the change is happening faster than when it's
447		em (.) just abstract
448	Rihanna	I was telling her (.) I saw what she did and I told her this is really beautiful (.) and
450		I'm sure by the time we go round looking at what others have done we'll find out
451		that... <u>so you look into yourself and discover so I have this kind of ability in me all</u>
452		<u>the while and I never even realised it?</u> So it's like we're growing ourselves (.)
452		we're growing faster because we are practicalising the changes ourselves (Focus
		group 2/434).

During the focus group interview I asked participants how they perceived the difference between their professional development through the TG meetings and the input from an external trainer. An explanation from Ariel describes the difference. Before showing evidence of the awakening or activating of redundant skills, I describe significant details of the experience. Ariel describes the TG and the collaborative explorations they have had through their TG as a process of fumbling in the dark, yet finding a way (L 438-439). This is in contrast to the abstract inputs they get from trainers in a formal course, which she claims they listen to 'for listening sake' (L 444). The use of 'fumbling in the dark' suggests exploration and a search for answers. From this description, we see a contrast between the TG and the formal course. The TG is associated with practical learning experience (L 438-446) while the trainer's input in the formal course is

described as being theoretical. The TG, which includes the collaborative experience of sharing ideas and experience, according to Ariel also brings faster change (L 446). Rihanna continues from where Ariel stopped by reminding me about her previous explanation of how, by observing and listening to another colleague; she was able to adapt an approach to suit her learners (Extract 7). She highlights the importance of the experience (gained through collaborative experience) when she says: 'so you look into yourself and discover so I have this kind of ability…and I never realized it?' (L 450-451) This describes some self-awareness that comes from the motivation of having done a 'new thing' successfully. However, although Ariel and Rihanna highlight the influence of the TG this new idea gained through a colleague was actually introduced into the context by a trainer. Another colleague picks up from where she has stopped as I probe further about this difference between development in the TG and development from external trainers.

> I will see it as em (.) the difference between theory and practice (.) when a trainer comes from outside it's for me (.) it's like a theoretical thing and then this our departmental meetings helps us to now break it down (.) this is where we now actually break it down in practice. So…I would value both (Focus group/646).

The last contribution creates a balance in the discussion and highlights how external trainers' contributions are useful for TGs; and how TGs deconstruct and reconstruct new knowledge, thus creating change not only in practice but in individual teachers by making them more conscious of their skills and abilities which had been put aside or forgotten (Extract 7). The reflective process that takes place through the TG is significant because it brings other perspectives that help growth and development. As Bolton (2005: 7) says: 'reflective practice is learning and developing through examining

what we think happened on any occasion, and how we think others perceived the event and us'. The different perspectives that were shared by these participants in their TG meetings appear to have activated individual action through a scaffolding process: 'so it's like we're growing ourselves (.) we're growing faster because we are practicalising the changes ourselves' (Extract 9: L 451-451). In the study, teachers became more reflective by picking ideas from the TG and trying them out in the individual classrooms, therefore starting a process of individual exploration that fed back into the TG in subsequent meetings. In the following section, I describe innovation, a category of skill-centred reflection.

6.1.2 Innovating

Innovating is a sub-category of developing competence, which describes how teachers made small but significant changes to their practice by experimenting, adapting, testing, trying out and amending actions in their practice. Kenny describes how he resolved a teaching challenge by innovating. Kenny works in a government run secondary school where he teaches English language. In every session he taught at least 120 learners in a large classroom with broken windows and broken benches. He mentioned that no less than four students had to sit on a bench made for two. Our interview took place at his school and I confirmed this to be true. Although Kenny was teaching in difficult circumstances, he was excited at the prospect of integrating reflection into his practice when he came to hear about it in one of the free workshops I gave in Abuja during the study. Kenny only had rudimentary understanding of reflection and could not articulate

the experience as clearly as some participants who had taken a formal course. In the following episode Kenny describes how he introduced some innovation into his very challenging practice.

Extract 10

24	R	Now um (.) from your ideas do you get solutions to problems (.) from this
25	Kenny	gathering of ideas?
26		Yes (.) let me give you an instance (.) this last JSS 3 that just finished junior
27		WAEC I <u>noticed </u>a problem there because some schools they have this system (.)
28		they say follow your class as you go (.) that means you took JSS 1 this session (.)
29		first term (.) second term (.) third term (.) so what we do after that series of term
30		they'll now say follow you class as you go (.) that means you taught JSS 1 last
31		session then next year you have to teach JSS 2 because you follow that very class
32		(.) but I've come to realize that it's not doing (.) it's not really bringing out what
33		we need (.) the students (.) you teacher yes (.) you might say it's not difficult
34		because the same students you met last year (.) you are still meeting them (.) you
35		know each (.) you know individual's problem but for the children it's not really
36		bringing out result (.) so what I did last session with the JSS 3(.) cos <u>I noticed</u>
37		some things (.) I was not the one that took them JSS 2 but JSS 3 the school said I
38		should go there (.) then <u>what I noticed is</u> that they have some problems especially
39		in constructing English (.) for them to speak fluently was a problem (.) so what I
40		did was I organized what we call class quiz (.) I call it shot gun (.) I just come into
41		the class (.) I call them out (.) they will have an open presentation (.) I might tell
42		you tell us if you are made the president of this country in the next 24 hours what
43		will you do? Then from there we'll now (.) after that I'll go to another class and
44		do the same (.) at the end of the day I will select the best presenter from this class
45		(.) select the best presenter from the other class (.) then there will be a class
46		competition (.) we even gave out (.) I bought some books with my own money
47		just to propel the students (.) then at the end of the day we gave out prizes (.) they
48		came (.) they spoke and in the exams it really helped them because when they
49		asked them to write essay topic (.) I remember when they asked them to write
50		essay topic (.) their best teacher (.) they were just flowing (.) and their last result
51		(.) this last result that just came out (.) is really speaking (Kenny/24).

Extract 10 illustrates Kenny's attempt to teach English in more impactful ways by trying out a new approach. With hundreds of learners across the year group, he could not carry out the types of activities that other teachers could. For example, teaching writing with classroom tasks is virtually impossible because the teacher would need to provide

regular feedback for over 700 students per week. Because of challenges like this, writing is now taught with little practice in many Nigerian government schools. Many government teachers have also abandoned it because it is simply impossible to carry out writing activities that require individual feedback. Kenny had a challenge; he had to prepare his learners for what is called the Junior WAEC (the junior equivalent of West African school certificate exam). Like Manny (Extract 6), Kenny had been assigned to a new group of learners and he had to find new ways of building their speaking skills and increasing fluency. Although Kenny never uses the word 'reflection' in his description he uses the word 'I noticed' three different times to show his identification of two problems: the method of assigning one teacher to teach the same children for several years as they progress into higher classes and the problems that his students had with constructing their sentences in English (L 27; 36; 38). Noticing is part of another concept in this study. It is used as a feature to describe a category of learner-centred reflection named 'learner-centred focusing' in this study (6.2.2). This suggests that Kenny's use of the word 'noticed,' signals the beginning of a reflective process.

To highlight how noticing is used in reflective process I quote from Sylvia another participant who describes how noticing triggers a reflective process of problem solving: 'if I didn't have a time when I could replay the scenes in class I probably wouldn't have done anything about what I noticed' (Sylvia/107). Sylvia used this statement in the context of reflection (described in 6.2.2: Extract 17) According to Day (1993: 86) 'the teacher-researcher focuses, observes, selects, synthesizes and interprets'. It is a process that is simplified by Kenny as 'noticing'. Having noticed his students' problems, Kenny

decided to do things differently, suggesting an application of some reflective thinking to action. He started a quiz, which he also named 'shot gun' (L 40). Using attractive topics and interclass competitions he was able to get the children to produce more language:

> I remember when they asked them to write essay topic (.) their best teacher (.) they were just flowing (.) and their last result (.) this last result that just came out (.) is really speaking (Kenny/24: Line 49-50).

Although Kenny started out focusing on their speaking skills, there is a transfer of the benefits of the approach to the children's writing. In their final JSS exams, conducted by the Nigerian National Examination Council (NECO) they showed fluency ('they were just flowing') and they got a good result ('this last result…is really speaking'). Innovations like these may be small but are in fact significant in L2 contexts like this.

According to Mann (2013) teacher innovation is not generalizable, but is determined by contextual factors including dynamics, affordances and constraints. The type of innovation identified in the research context was not extensive it was innovation that happened in small ways to improve learning experience. A participant in the study, Lola associates innovation with reflection when she says:

> actually reflection has to do with your ability as a teacher you know (.) to reason (.) to think (.) to be creative (.) to bring in new ideas (.) to initiate new ideas especially in teaching that will help you to teach your students well for them to understand (Lola/653).

Above, Lola provides a description of reflection that includes the ability to 'be creative' and to 'bring in new ideas/initiate new ideas' in teaching. This supports the account Rihanna, a participant in the focus group who describes how she adapts and somewhat

replicates a new idea to suit her learners even though the original idea was for younger

learners (6.1.1: Extract 7). Innovating was found to contain several small actions apart

from trying out new approaches (Extract 10). During an interview episode, I talked with

Lola a participant who had formal experience of reflection through a part-time course on

the outcomes of her reflections. I was interested in knowing if they always worked and

if they didn't, what did she do? She replies:

> Yeah by reflection [by reflecting] you can change the idea if it is not working
> because at times even in learning (.) teaching and learning (.) you apply a method
> and you discover it's not working you have to change (.) reflect again and get new
> ideas and try it (.) if it works (.) you know that it is effective (Lola/349)

From Lola's description, she acknowledges that not every teaching approach is effective

and that change is a possible constant in teaching. The process Lola describes illustrates

the small changes that participants like her make in their practice. This includes a

process of amendment, adaptation and trying out, until the original or new idea or

approach works. This falls under the scope of teacher innovation as described by Edge

and Mann (2013): it is the realization of an idea through active practice (Edge and Mann

2013). It is a process which Edge and Mann (2013: 11) describe as 'as a reflexive

process of actions'. Thus the teacher thinks in action or about the action. According to

Schön (1987)

> reflection gives rise to on-the-spot experiment. We think up and try out new
> actions intended to explore the newly observed phenomena, test our tentative
> understandings of them, or affirm the moves we have invented to change things
> for the better' (1987: 28-29).

In his description above, Schön illustrates the process of innovation with reflective

practice: 'we think up and try out new actions' and 'the moves we have invented' (Like

Kenny: Extract 10). This reflective process gives rise to on-the-spot experiments. It also

involves the 'trying out' and testing that participants like Lola describe from their practice. Gloria a private secondary school teacher in Port Harcourt describes these small changes that increase a practitioner's competence.

Extract 11

344	Gloria	if you teach a particular topic to different learners from different stages
345		but same topic (.) same age (.) same time (.) you know (.) you'll get em
346		(.) you'll have a richer experience and you can confidently say this
347		works (.) this doesn't work (.) and em (.) from that you can also
348		confidently say I could try this (.) this would work well or this won't
349		work well or even if this works (.) this should be added (.) so I think
350		time is very (.) very important in that time gives you the opportunity to
351		test a wider range of experiences (.) so time (.) I think time is very (.)
352		very important in reflective practice (Gloria/244).

Above Gloria's description suggests that teachers' classroom actions have a basis and is supported by some previous experience (L 344-346). It is the experience that is used in Gloria's description as a basis for making judgments and identifying alternative ways (L 347-349). From her description we can identify a process of acting and thinking (348-349). She highlights time as an important factor in this process, suggesting that there is a continuous process of exploration through some testing, trying out, adding, etc. By testing a range of experience (L 351) a teacher becomes more innovative (Schön 1987).

In an interview with another participant (Sylvia) she says reflective practice is itself an innovation:

I think a lot has to do with the personality of the teacher (.) I happen to be someone who makes room for change because I see that's what reflective practice brings in (.) It's an innovation (.) It makes room for (.) if you don't create room for

change you will be bound and controlled by what we call experience over time in practice but if you are open to change a whole lot will change (Sylvia/147).

Comments like these suggest that formal courses have had an effect on participants' practice. It also suggests that reflection is in process in Nigeria ELT; creating room for change through small innovations which support the development of skills and competence in teaching. Much later in our discussion she adds saying: 'everything revolves round the teacher who reflects and creates innovative scenes in his or her class' (Sylvia/603). In the following section, I describe problem solving, which was identified as another way participants used reflection in the context in skill-centred ways.

6.1.3 Problem-solving

Problem solving is a process that is evident in some of the data already shown in this chapter. It was found to be part of a skills-centred process of reflection and was characterised by a process of questioning as a starting point for reflection. With few resources, participants used reflection in intuitive ways to solve problems that emerged within their practice. Kenny in Extract 10 is an example. Having shown some of the kinds of problems Nigerian teachers face in Extracts 8 and 10 (trying to get a learner to achieve a set objective when he or she is left behind or finding ways to facilitate learning for a large group), I provide other descriptions that show how reflection aided a skilling process that was problem-centred.

Extract 12

98	Nicky	As a teacher my life is filled with experiences so it's either I'm bringing in an
99		experience from my own life or I'm bringing experience from a training or (.)
100		there's always reflection for me as a teacher (.) okay maybe I should give an
101		example (.) there was a time when I was teaching language development (.) I
102		was teaching the children about The Dinosaur and the Cave Boy (.) and my
103		background is in geology and I have learned that dinosaurs are extinct because
104		of certain theory propounded by some scientist (.) so while I was teaching the
105		children they asked a question (.) 'So where are the dinosaurs now?' so I
106		recalled from my previous learning experience as a geologist that a meteorite
107		fell and burnt the forest and all the dinosaurs died (.) so at that point what I
108		had learned before played back and I was able to use that to satisfy the
109		curiosity and the questions that the children were asking at that time (.) else I
110		wouldn't have had any answers (.) I would have gone back maybe (.) made a
111		research, that's because I want to get back to the children otherwise I would
112		have just said to the children (.) 'I don't know why dinosaurs are extinct' (.)
113		but because of the experience I've had before I was able to reflect back on it
114		and I gave them a better answer (Nicky/98).

The above extract comes from my interview with Nicky, a participant who had taken a part-time reflective teacher development course. She taught in a private primary school in Port Harcourt. In the extract she discussed the role of reflection in her practice. However, our focus is on problem-solving which is apparent in the extract. She describes an experience in class where she was teaching English which a topic which provoked a question from learners. It is not a particularly big problem but significant enough to the learners who responded to the teacher's input by asking questions: they were producing the required language and the teacher did not want to miss the opportunity to maintain their interest (L 101-109). Nicky says that there were possibly three ways to deal with the situation: tell the learners that she did not know; carry out further research or become reflective and draw from a previous experience (L 110-114). Each holds different possibilities in classrooms. However, Nicky recognised that she needed to identify an answer quickly if she was going to achieve the learning objective.

Her automatic recourse to reflection (L 107-109) supports this process. Thus reflection

is used as a tool for teaching (van Manen 1995: 33). The promptness of her intervention

is linked to her understanding of classroom life 'I was able to reflect back on it and I

gave them a better answer' (L 113-114). I illustrate this further, through the intervention

group.

Extract 13

607	Anne	Every year you come across different groups of children, you know (.) and em (.) the
608		kind of learning capability of a child will be different (.) it could be entirely different
609		from what you had experienced in the past and for you now to help that child to come
610		out of that or to effectively learn (.) if you are the type that had never taught somebody
611		like that before (.) you need to em (.) you know (.) seek em (.) opinion from other
612		teachers (.) so in that situation (.) when you have a gathering like this you can bring up
613		such issues and some suggestions will come …
614	R	Or when you are alone in you classroom you can actually carry out maybe some
615		research (.) some experiment?
616	Anne	Yes. And even at that (.) as an individual one might not be able to still (.) you know (.)
617		be able to er (.) help the child in question but if you throw it out in a gathering like this
618		(.) somebody somewhere might have had that kind of er (.) child before and maybe the
619		person had been able to go through that and er (.) been able to help that child while he or
620		she experienced a situation like that (.) the person can always bring up solutions for you
621		and you apply in the classroom to that child which could of course help the child too
622		(Focus group/607)

During the focus group interview, participants and I discussed about their experience,

their new learning and their practices in the TG meeting. It was a process of co-

constructing knowledge as the extract shows when I contribute ideas to the discussion

(L 614). Anne explains that some problems are best resolved through the input of other

colleagues. She creates a background for her contribution by observing that teachers

annually meet new learners who bring new challenges into their classrooms. The

selectiveness of her description shows some explicit awareness of practice (different

groups of children, their learning capability, and comparison with the teacher's past

experience: (L 607-610)). She explains that when the teacher cannot find ways to help a child with learning difficulties, a forum like the TG becomes very useful (L 607-613). At this point I suggest that one might try to carry out a classroom experiment or some research. The participant agrees with me but goes on to emphasize the role of the supportive teachers' group. In this instance it appears to be more important and significant for the fuller perspective it can give. In her last sentence (L 621-622) she suggests that two people benefit from the problem-solving ideas that come from the group: the teacher and the learner: 'the person can always bring up solutions for you' and 'which could of course help the child too'. This illustration shows that the TG helped teachers to develop the skills they lacked, through a process of collaborative problem-solving.

A member of the PLG highlights the importance of a collaborative group in supporting classroom problems:

> It's not just discussing and you know … we are very good in discussing and analyzing without implementation (.) so it's just to for us to come together as English teachers to bring out these problems (.) discuss about them and bring out solutions and (.) eh go back and practise what we have discussed not just leaving it (Jordan/138).

Jordan highlights the importance of integrating thought with action through a collaborative process. As she says, discussing and analysing problems brings no solutions, until they are actualized through practice. Sylvia another participant illustrates the idea that problem-solving is a reflective process (Extract14).

Extract 14

<pre>
191   Sylvia   I have this issue in class (.) I have done what I should do from
192   this point but what else can I do? And when you start thinking of
193   what else to do definitely you'll be looking at new approaches to
194   getting the solution to a situation (.) it helps you to think of
195   solving a problem (Sylvia/191)
</pre>

Sylvia's comments show that problem solving is a reflective process that requires some necessary action after a teacher meets a sort of dead end; ' I have done what I should do' (L 194-195). She observes that sometimes the action required is new and instigates more thinking and possibly some reflection (L 195). In the literature, problem-solving is associated with reflection (Adler 1991, Cutler et al 1989, Calderhead 1989). Dewey posits:

> a large part of the art of instruction lies in making the difficulty of new problems large enough to challenge thought, and small enough so that, in addition to the confusion naturally attending the novel elements, there shall be luminous familiar spots from which helpful suggestions may spring' (1916: MW 9:164).

This description of the art of teaching shows that problem-solving presents reflective opportunities. The process that Dewey suggests above ('making the difficulty of new problems large enough to challenge though, and small enough…') is a skill that needs to be learned. A collaborative group provides more opportunity for this learning as Rihanna suggests in the focus group interview: 'so when I try out something and it works for me (…) I am bold (…) to talk about my experience'. Thus Rihanna describes the cyclical process within the group where problems are shared, situations are questioned; suggestions are given and tried out and new learning is returned back to the group to possibly start other cycles or episodes of reflection for other teachers.

In interviews I queried the outcomes of problem-solving by asking teachers how they validated the outcomes of new learning that was put into practice. All responded in similar ways: when outcomes of reflection were put into practice and it worked; it was validated. Lola one participant explains: 'in a learning situation, how you get to know it's valid is if it brings a positive result' (Lola/333). Where new ideas did not work these teachers simply looked for other ways or started the cycle of reflection again, sometimes bringing other teachers into the process by asking their advice or opinion. Questionnaire data (Questionnaire A) suggests that problem-solving is part of the practice of 46 teachers from a sample of 92 (5.2.3). From interview data it was found to involve a process of questioning that was directed at self, on teaching events or practice and was related to teachers' classroom performance. Figure 12 summarises the material arising from skill-centred reflection.

SKILLS-CENTRED REFLECTION

adapting, testing, experimenting, restructuring practice, replicating action

Innovating

amending

trying out

Skills-centred Reflection

Developing competence

honing skills

activating redundant skills

Problem solving

questioning   deep probing
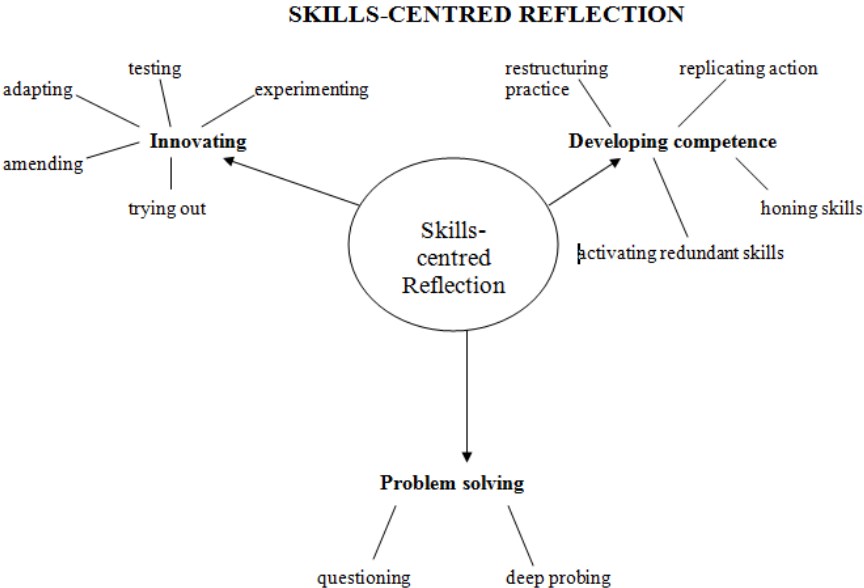
Figure 12 Skill-centred reflection

Figure 12 shows the three categories of skill-centred reflection and their sub-categories. These were identified within the context as an implicit process of building competence by using a measure of reflective inquiry. The 'new knowing-in-action' that Schön (1987: 40) describes was identified through the data in participants like Manny. Descriptions show that this new knowledge that participants generated made them more skilled. Skill-centred reflection in the context was connected to ways of doing that enhanced practice. In the following sub-section, I discuss learner-centred reflection, a way in which participants used reflection to support their learners' needs.

6.2 Learner-centred reflection

The notion of learner-centred reflection is used in this study to describe a reflective process that comes from the teacher's focus on learners' needs in classrooms. It was identified from data as a kind of reflection-in-use, which was triggered by a need to meet specific learning needs, although it was not limited to classrooms. The five I categories associated with this finding are: finding appropriate pedagogical styles, learner-centred focusing, reflecting to understand learners' needs, narrow experimenting and finding new ways of facilitating learning. Figure 16 illustrates the mapping of learner-centred reflection from the data.
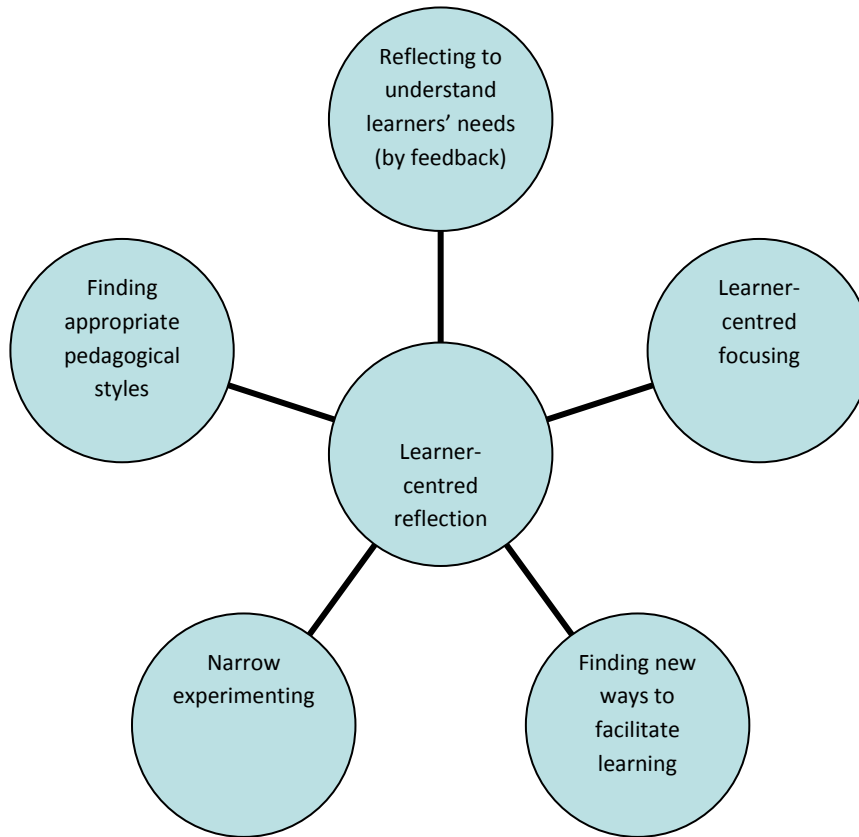
Figure 13 Learner-centred reflection

The mapping of learner-centred reflection is shown above, with the five categories that were identified from data. Discussions will show how in small ways, Nigerian teachers are challenging their understandings of learners and teaching and learning and at the same time; improving themselves.

6.2.1 Finding appropriate pedagogical styles

One of the categories of learner-centred reflection in the study is 'finding appropriate pedagogical styles'. The use of the expression: 'pedagogical styles' does not refer to learning styles but teaching approaches for meeting the peculiar needs of learners. Analysis of data showed some of the common problems in this context such as mother tongue interference in L2 use (there are nearly 500 different languages in Nigeria), the diversity of learners' backgrounds (Nigeria is a multicultural society), reluctance to go to school, poor basic skills including poor speaking, reading and writing skills. Technology was also identified as interfering with language teaching because many learners were getting more mastery in texting with shortened and irregular spellings than in writing through self-effort. The following extract shows how the need to provide appropriate pedagogy instigated some reflection in the context.

Extract 15

256	R	Okay let's talk about English language teaching (.) how has reflection
257		helped you as an English language teacher?
258	Lola	As an English language teacher reflection helps especially in the aspect of
259		er (.) comprehension because we have four skills of communication (.)
260		we have that of reading (.) listening (.) writing and speaking (.) when it
261		comes to the aspect of reading you know at times we have some abstract
262		issues like in a passage some of the issues are abstract issues (.) to
263		actually bring it closer to the learners I have to reflect to bring out
264		pictures that can you know play into the (.) or stimulate the interest of
265		readers(.) so at times through reflection I create pictures that can go along
266		with the passage to help students …so through reflection you can bring in
267		such things that will help to stimulate the interest of the readers because
268		at times you may have readers that are visual readers who do learn
269		through pictures (.) so reflecting to get the exact or apt pictures you know
270		(.) that is in line with the passage you are teaching a child comes as a
271		result of reflection (Lola/256).

Lola was a private secondary school teacher in Port Harcourt and a one of my former course participants. Her learning group was small, about 25 per classroom. In our encounter, I asked her what about the role of reflection in her practice as a language teacher. In L 260-270, Lola begins by describing a bit of her practice. She identifies the need for learners to have some sort of visual support to aid their understanding of abstract concepts and explains that some of the difficulties that her L2 learners face in English comprehension are 'abstract issues' (L 261-262). In recognition of this, she tries to find appropriate ways to support her learners' needs. Thus she engages in a reflective process (L 266-271) to identify the most appropriate pictures to meet this learning need. When she says 'to actually bring it closer to the learners', she is describing the need to identify appropriate pedagogy that is more suited to her learners. It is an attempt by the teacher to find appropriate pedagogy which is described as: 'any conscious activity by one person to enhance the learning of another' (Watkins and Mortimer 1999: 3). When she uses the expression 'I have to reflect' (L 61) she expresses a compulsion, which could be a display of some need for accountability and a sense of responsibility. Accountability and responsibility are part of the characteristics, which Dewey (1933) describes as being necessary for reflective inquirers. Farrell (2004: 14) describes it as 'careful consideration of the consequences of our action'. Rihanna illustrates this.

Extract 16

156	Rihanna	'I'll say that um (.) it was just borne out of em (.) the desire to get my
157		pupils (.) to get across to them … I knew that I will be a failure if I
158		didn't impact …then I began to ask questions (.) I would talk with my
159		colleagues… short of saying I'm fed up… <u>I'll just talk to them like</u>
160		<u>what else can I do?</u> That was before the study [the research
161		intervention group] because I must confess to you (.) I don't know if
162		I've mentioned it that I never had er (.) a foundation in education
163		(Rihanna/156).

In the situation described by Rihanna, she expresses a desire to be more effective with her pupils. She associates her feelings of inadequacies with her inability to find a solution (for her young learners) and fears possible failure (L 156-157). As a result, she reaches out to her colleagues in the intervention group through a process of inquiry in order to find an appropriate solution for her learners ('what else can I do?' L 159-160). According to Stanley (1998: 586), 'personal issues of self-esteem may trigger responses of guilt, pain, and self-doubt when teachers examine their teaching'. When she says: 'I must confess to you… I never had …a foundation in education', it reflects some guilt associated with not having had a teaching qualification and a fear of failing as a teacher (L 157-158). She was registered for a postgraduate diploma in education (PGDE) at the time of the study. Rihanna had entered into teaching reluctantly and had to find other ways to support her practice. She explains further: 'even before I got into the study [this research] I learnt to read up materials (.) I'll go on the net (.) search and you know (.) try to find out how I can do stuff in my classroom' (Rihanna/178).

I could identify with this feeling. I myself had entered reluctantly into teaching 11 years ago, but found the idea of teaching children fascinating and remained in the profession. My self-studies were driven by feelings of inadequacy because I had no teaching qualifications at the time. This led me to take the Cambridge CELTA and eventually an M Ed in Education. Rihanna and I illustrate a common feature in Nigerian school. We exemplify some of the teachers who reluctantly entered the profession without a teaching qualification (as discussed in Chapter 2.1, 2.2). However, we are not the ones who use teaching as a stepping-stone to a better job. We are now what Manny calls the

'perpetual teacher' (Extract 34), a name used for himself in our interview. We are teachers who are proud of what they are, in and out of school. Research on Nigerian teacher education will need to explore the true reasons why many teachers remain in teaching after reluctantly joining the profession like Rihanna and I. Findings may show the motivating factors that caused us to remain in teaching despite the poor salaries and lower social status that still characterize teaching in Nigeria. In a journal entry I reflect about my own experience:

> As an English teacher, I suffered feelings of inadequacies on two accounts: my experience of teaching without (at the time), a teaching qualification, and my feelings of inadequacies as an L2 teacher of English. The first I dealt with by further study and the second by testing my English language ability through IELTS, eventually becoming an IELTS examiner. Do I still have the second feeling of inadequacy? Not as a teacher, but sometimes as an African to whom English is, in a political sense, foreign. Even though it is my first language; taught me by my father (who himself studied English at university over 40 years ago) Journal Entry/July 2011).

Rihanna is not the only teacher who showed some feeling of inadequacy. There were two others; James and Mary, who perceived themselves as learners (of English) in order to become better teachers who are more capable of facilitating learning in more appropriate ways. I illustrate this from the data.

During our interview, Mary, a participant from a government secondary school explains her perception of herself as a learner of English. Her explanations illustrate a possible relationship between learner-centred reflection and teacher-centred reflection:

there's nobody that can tell yourself more about yourself than yourself (.) I know my weak point even in the subject because <u>whether you're a teacher or the student (.) we are all second language learners of English</u> (.) so I can't claim perfection but for the students they see me as a super champion (.) so how do I remain that super champion for them? So it means that <u>I will in my own way too (.) continue to learn</u> (Mary/205).

When Mary says that 'nobody one can tell you more about yourself than yourself' she is describing a reflexive process, which is associated with reflection. Although used in the context of research, reflexivity is described by Sandelowski & Barroso (2002: 222) thus:

reflexivity implies the ability to reflect inward toward oneself as an inquirer; outward to the cultural, historical, linguistic, political, and other forces that shape everything about inquiry (2002: 222).

The description above illustrates how reflection can be critical when it connects with factors outside the teacher. Thus Mary recognizes that as an L2 teacher she is also a learner of English ('we are all second language learners of English'). It is a perception that allows Mary to grow as an English teacher ('I will in my own way too (.) continue to learn). James another participant in Abuja who worked in a private secondary school supports the same idea during his interview: 'for me I really tell my kids that 'I'm only a bigger learner coming to learn with you'' (James/207). I probed further some minutes later: 'you talked about yourself as a big learner learning with children (.) now is that an attitude that was formed in you by reflective practice or is it an attitude you had previously? (James had taken a course for the Cambridge Teaching Knowledge Test). He responds:

no (.) I developed it as a result of my contact with reflective practice…because most at times (.) when I find myself standing in front here (.) the children just find themselves thinking I know everything (.) so they are not thinking at all (.) it's what I give them (.) they simply take and that's all (.) but in a situation where I

find myself mixing myself with them (.) <u>making them to understand that we are</u>
<u>learning from each other you know (.) they feel free (.) they are able to think'</u>
(James/409).

Although James is not as specific as Mary, from his statement we see the extension of

the idea that in Nigeria, both teachers and learners have a common need as L2 speakers

of English: a need to improve their language. This illustrates one of the values that L2

teachers bring to English language teaching; a notion of themselves as language learners

(Medgyes, 1994, Canagarajah, 1999, Lee, 2000; Cook 2005). Like Mary, James'

students also perceive him as an expert user of English: 'the children just find

themselves thinking I know everything'. However, James adds that when he presents

himself as a co-learner of English, his learners gain more autonomy, as they are then

more able to think for themselves. As Sinclair et al (2000) explain learner autonomy and

teacher autonomy are connected. According to Smyth (1997)

> teachers should be encouraged to become self-conscious social activists [who]
> work in ways that challenge the taken-for-granted in their teaching and operate
> from the position that there may be other more just, inclusive and democratic ways
> of working that help to overcome various forms of classroom disadvantage (1997:
> 109)

By allowing his learners the freedom to appreciate their own needs to learn, James could

be said to be in the process of creating a more democratic classroom, where change

comes to both teacher and learner, simultaneously. It is a process that L2 teachers need

to embrace. As Lamb puts it (2000: 127), 'as with learners, teachers need to understand

the constraints on their practice but, rather than feeling disempowered, they need to

empower themselves by finding the spaces and opportunities for manoeuvre'. The use of

reflection in his practice appears to have helped James to explore this possibility more

strongly. James is only one example of the different teachers identified in the context

who through a self- reflexive process opened the door for the prospects of finding more appropriate approaches to teaching English, including developing or presenting themselves to as fellow learners of English. In the following sub-section, I describe learner-centred focusing another category in learner-centred reflection.

6.2.2 Learner-centred focusing

Learner-centred focusing was identified in data as a process whereby a teacher could focus more particularly on a learner in order to meet their specific learning needs. In Extract 17, Sylvia describes a classroom encounter where this happened.

Extract 17

96	Sylvia	Yes (.) I observed and by facial expression you know (.) and the child
97		kept throwing the hand wild if you asked a question (.) I picked that out
98		and for that particular child I had to do a conferencing to find out
99		exactly what his problem was
100	R	Now can you just focus on that scenario? You were teaching a lesson
101		and you were observing a child and the facial expressions and gestures
102		were suggesting things to you (.) at that moment were you reflecting or
103		is it that you went out after the lesson and you reflected? What really
104		happened?
105	Sylvia	It didn't occur to me immediately to attend to that need but when I
106		reflected it came back to mind
107	R	So that image came back?
108	Sylvia	Yes (.) came back to mind so that's why I wrote down somewhere that
109		while reflecting I use visual images (.) scenes replay (.) I had to go back
110		(.) get the child and ask questions (.) why were you throwing your hand
111		about? And I saw your facial expression and had a feeling you didn't
112		really understand the lesson and he was quite shy and said (.) "No (.) I
113		didn't" (.) but he was among those who said they understood everything
114		(.) so I had the opportunity to talk with him (.) If I didn't have a time
115		when I could replay the scenes in class I probably wouldn't have done
116		anything about what I noticed (Sylvia/96)

The above extract is from a discussion where I probed Sylvia's use of visualization in reflection (before this interview she had indicated her use of visualization to reflect in Questionnaire B). In Line 111, Sylvia describes a process of looking at the learner and having 'a feeling' (underlined) that the learner did not understand; although he had said otherwise. She therefore acts on a hunch (L 110-114) and talks with him. The reflective process that identified the learner as needing some help was outside the classroom session and may have been started by an intuitive response (her 'feeling'). However, by deliberately recalling the classroom session, she was able to focus on the learner's behaviour and body language and identify that he had a need. As she said: 'if I didn't have a time when I could replay the scenes in class (.) I probably wouldn't have done anything about what I noticed' (L 114-116). This situation also illustrates how intuition and conscious action can play a role in a teaching and learning situation. Atkinson and Claxton (2000) explore the intuitive element in teaching exemplified in Extract 17. According to them, 'intuition in teaching draws on routine procedures which are second nature to the practitioner, and pattern recognition which allows them to read the context at a glance' (2000: 6). Sylvia's recognition of a pattern (Maughan 1996) was instigated by a feeling, which causes her to recall the situation and reflect on it. Cheng and Brown (2010) argue for conscious and intuitive knowledge to be accepted as part of learning experience. In the context of teacher learning this idea is relevant. The incident illustrated in Extract 17 was a learning experience for Sylvia as her last sentence shows (L 114-116). This line also illustrates how focusing (or noticing) can be reflective: 'if I didn't have a time when I could replay the scenes in class I probably wouldn't have

done anything about what I noticed'. Claxton (2001: 345) describes focusing as a natural learning ability. He explains however, that there are two types: 'the broad open-mindedness, which is the default mode of the mind' and the 'tighter, more selective scrutiny, which actively searches for details and tests hypotheses' (2001: 345). The second type described by Claxton is the one referred to by Sylvia in this data extract.

6.2.3 Reflecting to understand learner needs (feedback)

In the study, it was evident that teachers got a lot of feedback from observing learners' behaviour. I illustrate this with another extract from Lola.

Extract 18

43	R	Do you reflect when you're teaching a lesson?
44	Lola	Well actually (.) it's somehow to reflect when you are teaching unless you
45		are getting some response or negative feedback from your learners because
46		while teaching you can also watch the expressions your learners (.) the
47		signal or the expression your learners are giving (.) at times learners may
48		give some negative response or feedback in the class which helps you to
49		know that maybe the line you're towing or the method you're applying they
50		are not actually flowing along with you (.) at such moments you can reflect
51		to think of what will be the possible thing you could do at such a moment to
52		carry your learners along in the class (.) so it is possible at times that you
53		can reflect while the lesson is going on
54	R	Are you suggesting that reflection is driven by a need?
55	Lola	Yeah (.)
56	R	Or are there times when you just reflect (.) you have no need and you still
57		reflect?
58	Lola	Well actually you know when we talk about the issue of invention and
59		innovation and all other things it may not necessarily be that you have a
60		need at hand (.) at times you may also try to reflect to come up with new
61		things (.) not just what you have on ground because I want to believe that
62		like what we're having now (.) anyway I may say that it comes out of a need
63		(.) we have a need (.) but at times you can also sit down to think of what can
64		I do (.) something new to come up (.) and by the time a new thing comes up
65		it may be a need (Lola/43).

In Extract 18, Lola shares what happens in her classroom. When she says; 'it's somehow to reflect when you are teaching unless you are getting some response or negative feedback' (L 44-45), she suggests that reflection in the classroom would not be appropriate unless it is instigated by some response the teacher is getting from learners (supported by L 46-53). She seems to explain that while teaching the teacher is actually engaging by observing learners' expressions or signals which help to fine-tune the teaching method (L 44-48). She says; '*at such moment you can reflect*' (L 50: emphasis mine) to think for other ways. The focus on learners and methods described above appears to come from a need to tie learners' needs with real solutions. This was categorized as (learners) needs-led reflection. When I probe further to find out if her reflections are always needs-led, she says: 'well actually you know when we talk about the issue of invention and innovation and all other things it may not necessarily be that you have a need at hand (.) at times you may also try to reflect to come up with new things (.) not just what you have on ground' (Lola 57). Her statement shows that reflection is carried out for other purposes, including a need to innovate (6.1.2), not because there is a problem, but to create alternatives to 'what you have on ground' (the situation at hand). Extract 17: L 96-99 (6.2.2) shows a similar episode that shows that reflection can arise from a need to understand a learner's need. It is a response from a learner which triggers an exploration of the learners' need by Sylvia. The difference is that while Lola responds to this trigger immediately, Sylvia waits until after the lesson. These episodes illustrate Schön's (1983) reflection-in-action and reflection-on action. Lola reinforces the idea that feedback from learners is important: 'but when you are in the class you are watching out (.) it could be a particular learner (.) it may not be all the

learners because in the class at times it may not be all the learners that may not actually understand what is going on (Lola/140). This process of watching out for a learner or several learners (for feedback) is not unique to Lola and Sylvia.

James describes his experience a little differently:

It's based on interaction (.) I get the kids involved (.) yes (.) as we interact <u>the feedback I get from them actually helps me to explore them better</u> (.) so <u>by exploring them I know where and what I should actually bring to them</u> (James/498).

Above, James explains that he uses feedback from learners to begin an exploratory process in classroom interaction. This is aimed at identifying learners' specific needs ('by exploring them I know where') and at how to meet them ('what I should actually bring to them'). Kenny the government schoolteacher (Extract 10) described some feedback that made him seek for more effective ways to help his learners. It comes from a process of 'noticing': '<u>then what I noticed is that they have some problems </u>(discussed in 6.1.2). This noticing of learner feedback is recalled and reflected upon to identify possible solutions as previous data extracts have shown. According to Mann (2005:109) 'The recall of events, incidents or moments in classroom teaching is a powerful development tool'. Thus both learners and teachers benefit from the development that comes from using reflection in learner-centred ways. In the following sub-section, I discuss narrow experimenting, another category of learner-centred reflection.

6.2.4 Narrow experimenting

Narrow experimenting is a concept in learner-centred reflection, which describes how teachers in the study carried out experiments (sometimes on-the-spot) to support their learners. An interview with Nicky illustrates this finding.

Extract 19

214	R	What would happen if you stopped reflecting?
215	Nicky	Well if you stop reflecting then you'll (.) your professionalism (.) if I should use the word
216		in quote (.) stops
217	R	Now let's talk about English language teaching (.) your work in classrooms with young
218		children and um (.) can you describe how reflection has helped that experience? How have
219		learners benefitted from the fact that you are a reflective practitioner?
220		What experience am I going to use now? I hope this suffices (.) while I was teaching the
221	Nicky	children singular and plural to grade1 children I discovered that they had difficulties
222		changing certain singular words to plural (.) so I thought back to things I could do (.) I
223		remembered the part of sound (.) using sounds could do so much for me so I immediately
224		brought in (.) I just formulated a song right there on the spot and that did the magic for me
225		(.) so without that it would have been really difficult because we had so many words that
226		end with 'sh' (.) 'ch' … this is what you do (.) words that end with 'f' and 'fe'(.) there were
227		so many of them and some children found it difficult so I decide to (.) I recalled my
228	R	experience with using songs and immediately
229	Nicky	Was this experience right inside the classroom?
230	R	Yes.
231	Nicky	So you did your reflection spontaneously?
232	R	Yes spontaneously.
233	Nicky	You got a song spontaneously; you made a decision and it worked.
234		Yes and it worked (Nicky/214).

In Extract 19, I asked to know how important reflection was to Nicky (L 214). She associates her reflective experience with professional practice, prompting me to explore its use in her classroom. She describes a classroom encounter where she noticed that her learners were facing some difficulties (L 220-228). By reflecting she carries out an on-the spot experiment to support her learners' needs. In L 222-224 she explains how she

reflected on past experience using the expressions: 'I thought back' and 'I remembered…' She acts on her quick reflections by identifying a solution: a song, which 'did the magic'. The above describes an episode that fits with Schön (1983, 1987) reflection-in-action. It is carried out spontaneously in the dynamic context of practice, led by some tacit knowledge, which Nicky taps into (L 230-231). Schön (1987) informs us that:

> reflection gives rise to on-the-spot experiment. We think up and try out new actions (…) what distinguishes reflection-in-action from other kinds of reflection is its immediate significance for action (1987: 28-29).

From Schön we understand that classroom on-the-spot experiments spring from some reflective thought in classroom process, which is described as reflection-in-action, and from Nicky we understand that it may be initiated by some response the teacher is getting from learners. This use of reflection by Nicky could be said to have been an experiment, which is tried out to see if it works. Its outcome is evident when she says: 'that did the magic for me' (L 224). This statement shows that it was 'on the spot' spontaneous and unplanned. If it hadn't worked a modification would immediately take place in the approach, as Lola explains:

> yeah by reflection you can change the idea if it is not working… you apply a method and you discover it's not working you have to change (.) reflect again and get new ideas and try it (.) if it works (.) you know that it is effective (Lola/349)

For Lola, if it's not working, you have to change the idea or method. She explains that when this happens, she reflects again to get new ideas and try it out (see underlined). When it is tested again, it goes through the same potential as the previous idea; if it works it is accepted, if it doesn't it is discarded and the teacher may start a new process

of inquiry. It is a process that not every teacher can afford to follow through as we learn from Kenny.

Kenny explains how he presents his ideas and approaches to other teachers in training sessions and complains about the attitudes of teachers who do not want to try out new ideas to find new approaches for themselves:

> Nigerian teachers we don't like to work (.) most times when I begin to introduce this thing all they do is to be passive (.) they just sit down and then you see some of them they are taking notes (.) then at the end of the day when I've finished I say okay can I get a feedback from you they shout oh there (sic) are fantastic (.) let's go and try it (.) when they try it they will come back and say it worked out. (Kenny/248)

Above, Kenny suggests that Nigerian teachers are lazy. This perception is not too different from the literature on Nigerian teacher education, which identifies laziness as one of the problems of Nigerian teachers (see 2.2). However, Kenny connects this apathy to trying out new ideas (experimenting) as passivity. This passivity can be understood in the context of an earlier statement made by Kenny: 'in Nigeria (.) it's like (.) especially English teachers (.) you become slaves to the text book' (Kenny/223). The dependence on the textbook illustrates how routine could hinder reflective thinking. Kenny is an example of someone who has been somewhat emancipated from routinized thinking. As Dewey says: 'reflection emancipates us from merely impulsive and routinely activity' (Dewey 1933: 17). The passivity that Kenny speaks of among his colleagues may however, come from lack of motivation in a context where poor working conditions and few resources can impede teachers' willingness to innovate and

make a departure from predictable routine activity (see 2.3). In our interview Lola suggests that all Nigerian teachers may in fact reflect. However, some may be reflecting on their work conditions not on learning and teaching:

> now it comes to the aspect of the larger society and all the problems and the threats and the pressure on teachers you know especially (.) you know the central factor of what you are saying still boils down to the issue of money … and one of the things that do give teachers motivation is money… because in the society you know like teaching now they have maybe a particular amount of money that they are paying teachers and it is nothing to write home about (.) so what the teachers (.) the areas that the teachers are reflecting on are the areas that they can initiate ideas to get (.) to fetch money to take care of their families (.) so their reflection may not be directed at how to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their classroom (Lola/469)

Lola's observations above about teachers' needs and the challenges that hinder reflective inquiry are significant. Sangani & Stelma, (2012) agree that teachers may not necessarily reflect on their work as teachers but on their work conditions. This may explain why Kenny's colleagues who patiently wait to receive ideas gained from reflective experience, are willing to try them out, but not willing to make the effort of finding them out through active experimentation which involves reflective thinking (Dewey 1933). It also explains what Kenny perceives as their interest in money rather than more rigorous thinking about their practice. In the following sub-section I describe learner-centred reflection which is finding new ways of facilitating learning.

6.2.5 Finding new ways of facilitating learning

During the study, teachers were identified as trying to find new ways (which they often described as 'better ways') of facilitating learning. It was a process that was led by

classroom explorations of practice by examining self in practice and also by trying out,

adapting or amending approaches through a reflective process. The following extract

from Nicky describes this category of learner-centred reflection.

Extract 20

50	R	Um (.) within your classroom how does reflection take place? Does it take place
51		when you're teaching or does it take place after the teaching session?
52	Nicky	Both when I'm teaching and after I finish teaching
53	R	Can you describe both experiences?
54	Nicky	Okay when I'm teaching for example when I'm teaching children how to make
55		proper pronunciation and I have studied something and I come into the
56		classroom (.) I bring in the things I have learnt into the classroom to practise
57		with the children (.) okay (.) that's like bringing what I have learnt (.) reflecting
58		on it (.) the things I see the trainers do I try to implement it in my practice (.) and
59		then after the class I go back and I think again about how well I did it (.) was it
60		profitable (.) did the children really flow with it? And with that I'm able to
61		fashion out a better way of doing it next time ?…
62		would you describe it [reflection] as involuntary or would you describe as
63	R	deliberate at that point when you're teaching (.) are you deliberately looking
64		back you know (.) and then looking at what you are doing and then reflecting as
65		you are teaching pronunciation? Is it deliberate?
66		Deliberate and not deliberate (.) when I'm teaching it just comes up, (.) it's like
67	Nicky	oh this thing is there (.) it just comes up and then I now begin to focus
68		deliberately on it (Nicky/50).

In my interview with Nicky I asked about her use of reflection in her practice after her

experience on the reflective course. Nicky describes two ways of reflecting, outside the

classroom and within the classroom while teaching is in progress. It is described as a

cyclical process of reflection that brings new knowledge or learning into the classroom,

tests it and reflects on the outcomes which are then returned into practice through

another cycle of thinking and doing (L 56-60). She illustrates this by describing how she

brings new learning gained from self-study and from trainers 'to practise with the

children' through a reflective process (L 57-59). From L 59-61, we are informed that

after the class, she reflects on her teaching to evaluate her own actions as well as to see if the approach is suitable for her learners. It is a process that enables her to identify new ways ('fashion out a better way': L 61) of facilitating learning. She describes it thus: 'did the children really flow with it?' 'I am able to fashion out a better way of doing it next time?' (L 60-61) This experience of Nicky is a reflective process. Which Zeichner and Liston (1996) describe as a way in which teachers: 'regularly examine their own assumptions and beliefs and the results of their actions and approach all situations with the attitude that they can learn something new'. According to Hoyrup and Elkjaer (2006: 36), reflection is 'concerned with forms of learning that seek to inquire about the fundamental assumptions and premises behind our practices'. It is also a process, which is described by Dewey as: 'knowing what we are about when we act' (Dewey 1964: 211). Her use of reflection is both critical and teacher-centred as she brings in what she has picked up from trainers and implements it in her classroom with two objectives in mind: to reflect on it for her own benefit ('I go back and I think again of how well I did it': Line 59) and to find new ways to facilitate learning for young learners. Thus Nicky's approach to reflection is both teacher-centred and learner-centred.

Data shows that participants had different ways of finding ways to facilitate learning. One of these ways was by trying to identify solutions to problems in order to find new ways. James, the teacher participant who presented himself to his learners as a co-learner describes it thus:

    at times I identify some common errors children make and so to (.) what I simply
    do is when I identify such errors (.) I examine the errors to see if they are

applicable to all of the students (.) and if they are applicable to all of them I try to find ways of how to tackle them' (James/97).

Above James describes his approach to error correction. He first identifies the common errors, evaluates them in the light of his learners and finds new ways to deal with them. He also acknowledges that evaluating errors is not enough. He has to integrate his knowledge of individual learners as he says:

> but there are kids of different temperaments (.) some of them when you approach them oh you got it wrong you know (.) they'll simply log off themselves (.) so the issue of error correction varies depending on the type of classroom and the kids you have but the best way I think is for you to be able to correct them unconsciously [without them being aware that you are doing so]' (James/246)

The process of error correction includes the forethought about his students including their behaviour and response to correction. By integrating these considerations of learners' individual behaviour with his evaluation of common errors in his language classroom he is able to identify a 'best way' for correcting their language. This attitude to learners and practice is described by Weiss and Weiss (2001) thus:

> forethought is integral to making decisions (...) every action that a teacher takes, or does not take, needs to be a result of decision-making and subject to open-minded evaluation (Weiss and Weiss 2001: 129).

Above, Weiss and Weiss (2001) describe how considerations should be added to the decision making process through open minded evaluation.

> I have a way of assessing myself within the term…I'm able to evaluate my lessons and see (.) and you know I'm able to give assessments (.) and the way the kids perform because of the assessment also gives me (.) em (.) judgment as to what is actually going on (James/105).

From James we see that finding new ways to support learners involves a reflexive process. He evaluates his lessons, learners' behaviour and errors (mentioned earlier),

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learners' performance and himself in practice (as the last quotation shows). By doing so,

he hopes to make informed decisions that support learning and development.

Kenny describes his practice of using his son to test a teaching approach before taking it

to school. It shows how reflection was used to find new ways of facilitating learning.

Extract 21

58	R	Now this process is what I'm interested in (.) when did you start
59		developing this process where you reflect (.) you take down notes and
60		you try to find solutions?
61	Kenny	I think most of the inspiration (.) most of the (.) what really gave (.) what
62		really propelled me to go into that (.)I'll say meeting people has really
63		helped me and also the first time I met a you we had a chat on that (.) we
64		really talked then I came back home (.) I tried to incorporate this thing
65		into my own programme (.) at times the school might have their own
66		programme (.) I'm not trying to disobey them but I want what will (.) I'll
67		be able to achieve a goal (.) at times I go like the school will tell me that
68		look this thing you must make sure that you write test (.) CA [continuous
69		assessment tests] (.) so one of the things I do (.) yes we write CA but I
70		don't believe all the time writing (.) writing (.) writing CA (.) at times the
71		presentation the children will make matters a lot (.) so I use all these (.)
72		so the inspiration came from people I meet (.) exposure (.) so that's it (.)
73		another thing that has really helped again is this, my son and my wife.
74		Why I said my son is this (.) I use my son for any experiment I want to
75		do before I carry out a general (.) before I carry it out generally (.) I will
76		use him as a test ground and I will get a positive result (.) then my wife
77		also she read English (.) so most times we sit down (.) we interact (.) she
78		will tell me the experience she gathered from her own school (.) different
79		junior secondary schools (.) myself I will tell her (.) so we try to marry
80		these things together (.) so it has really helped me (Kenny/58).

In this encounter, I wanted to find out how Kenny started integrating reflective thinking

to his practice. As earlier mentioned, Kenny was new to the concept of reflection and

was excited about it. He found new ways to change his practice through what he

perceived as a reflective process. Although Kenny, could not articulate reflection well, I

could tell that there was some form of reflection in his practice. It may not have been structured but it was changing his perception of teaching learners and his obligations to following school procedures. In explaining how he tried to incorporate reflection into his practice, he narrows down to his disagreement with the manner of application of the school assessment policy (the continuous assessment tests) (L 64-71). He believed that a learner-centred focus was more important than prescriptive test requirements (L 69-71). The shift in his thinking causes him to carry out 'experiments' with his son, to identify ways of teaching that are better than the routine practices of school (L73-76). He describes his son as a testing ground and by trying out new approaches on him, he is able to find out if they are suitable. When he gets a positive result, then he transfers this new idea to his learners (L 75-76). Although his language is quite positivist and sounds impersonal (L 76), it is a process that is reflective as I will show. During the conversation he says more about these experiments;

> Because the results it will give me at the end of the day (.) but I've come to observe that at the end of the day when I go back to those my observations and I carry it out (.) I get better results because of their [students'] response (.) you remember like I told you (.) sometimes I try it because after here I still go back (.) if my child (.) if my son comes back from school I teach him (.) so I do the same thing (.) so the feedback (.) what he will give me will tell me that yes (.) something has happened (Kenny/173)

Above Kenny, indicates that his experiments are related to teaching and the feedback he gets lets him know if something positive has happened. In the second line when he says: 'I've come to observe that at the end of the day when I go back to those my observations…' we are informed that his experiments are episodes of inquiry. Reflection appears to be the tool that helps him to observe the effects of his actions. Thus Kenny also focuses on 'practices in a concrete and specific way' to make them more 'accessible

for reflection, discussion, and reconstruction' [with his wife] 'as products of past circumstances that are capable of being modified in and for present and future circumstances' (Kemmis & McTaggart 2005: 279). Kenny's experiments are not the only part of this reflective process. They are supported by discussions with his wife who also studied and teaches English (Extract 21: L 75-79): 'so most times we sit down (.) we interact (.) she will tell me the experience she gathered from her own school (.) different junior secondary schools (.) myself I will tell her (.) so we try to marry [merge/connect] these things together. So it has really helped me' (Kenny/72). By discussing and interacting with his wife as a professional colleague, Kenny was able to support his search for new ways to facilitate learning.

Mary, another participant who worked in the same government school as Kenny talks about the need for finding new ways to facilitate learning when she says:

> variety is the spice of life (.) I can't continue teaching the same way (.) so you must look for varieties (.) things that will make the children activated (.) interested in whatever because they would have to be interested for you to be able to impact (Mary/136)

Mary acknowledges her need for flexibility and the learner-centred focus that reflection appears to bring to these teachers (or that instigates reflection). In her opinion, learners need to be activated and interested before learning can take place. It is ideas like these that show that reflection is in process within the context. In small ways it is already guiding the practice of these government teachers who have very little knowledge of the concept. Learners are identified from the data extracts shown, as making significant contributions to the professional development of their teachers through their responses

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and feedback in teaching episodes. In the following section, I describe teacher-centred reflection.

6.3 Teacher-centred reflection

Teacher-centred reflection describes how teachers using reflection developed their awareness of self and practice through two different perspectives: the perspective of self and of the professional community. Studies suggest that teachers typically have an individualistic culture (Lortie 1975, Hargreaves 1992, Huberman 1992) as Questionnaire A data suggests (the sample's awareness and experience of the professional development through teachers' Associations (TAs), teachers' groups (TGs) and formal school meetings is very low, see 5.2.4). However, teachers in the study who were identified as using reflection more regularly were found to have a less individualistic culture. Teacher-centred describes a use of reflection that had the teacher as a central focus by using reflection in a reflexive way for their personal and professional development. Findings show that teacher-centred reflection is related to learner-centred. In the following pages I describe teacher-centred reflection from data.

6.3.1 Self in teacher-centred reflection

Delores was a teacher at a private primary school in Port Harcourt. She had completed the CICTT course about year before the study. It was a course that had challenged her. However, she emerged with a distinction. In my interview with Delores, I observed from her response that reflection had become significant in her practice and way of life. In our discussions she not only described how she used reflection to support her practice; she also discussed how it had helped her in personal ways:

> I used to be someone that reacts immediately to things but I got to understand now that it's not the best (.) because then when I react at times I start regretting my reaction (…) so I've learnt to reflect on something first before reacting (Delores/294).

Delores, statement above shows that reflection is part of her personal development (underlined). Extract 22 illustrates this more.

Extract 22

13	R	So what do you achieve by being reflective?
14	Delores	Um (.) so many things (.). It helps me (.) it makes me to be a better
15		person (.) a better teacher (.) um (.) in my decision making (.) em (.)
16		everything (.) thinking about the approach to use and before I teach in a
17		class now (.) I look at the lesson and objectives (.) I think of what do I do
18		to achieve a better result (.) or after teaching a subject I go back to look
19		at the objectives (.) were they really achieved? The areas I feel that were
20		not properly achieved (.) I start thinking maybe I should have used a
21		better approach (.) I shouldn't have taught it the way I did er (.) to get a
22		better result (.) and when I do (.) when I try another approach I see I get
23		a better result (.) I look at the children I teach (.) I look at their
24		background (.) I look at their level of understanding (.) I now say okay
25		em (.) this level maybe will not be (.) the approach I used before will not
26		be (.) maybe that was the cause of them not understanding better then I
27		will think of another approach which when I use it I see that I get a better
28		result (Delores/13).

We had only started the discussion and Delores had described her understanding of reflection in transcript as: 'thinking carefully of a past experience or knowledge (.) pondering over what has happened before (.) considering it (.) looking at it critically to know what you did well or what you did wrong and thinking of how to do it better to get er (.) a wiser result' (Delores/02). It is a person-centred description that describes reflection as a reflexive process of thinking and doing within an evaluative or analytical framework which brings new learning for future practice. When I asked what she was able to achieve by being reflective Delores responds: 'um (.) so many things (.) it helps me (.) it makes me to be a better person (.) a better teacher' (L 14-15). Without making value judgments about what constitutes a better person or better teacher, her expression: 'it makes me..' suggests that the quality which she describes as 'better' is a continuous progression of who she believes she is and what she does in her classroom. It is a position that appears to move her towards her aspirations of what she perceives to as an ideal teacher or person. Therefore 'better' could be referring to a reflective process of 'ongoing development'. This idea of being made a better person (self) and a better teacher (professional) is found among teachers in the study who grew to appreciate the benefits of reflection and who applied it not only in their professional contexts but also their personal lives.

In Extract 22, Delores describes a process of examining her objectives and lessons in the light of some thought about getting better results (L 17-18). She then uses this feedback from learners to examine her teaching actions: 'I start thinking maybe I should have used a better approach (.) I shouldn't have taught it the way I did' (L 20-21). This is a

self-reflexive process where the teacher self-examines herself in a critical way in the light of practice. The result is a new approach to teaching which is again tested against learners' backgrounds and understanding (L 20-23). This then starts another process of inquiry: 'the approach I used before will not be (.) maybe that was the cause of them not understanding' (L 25-26). The self is at the heart of this exploration which is connected to a learner-centred process of reflection. This sifting, exploration of practice which involves looking back at what we she does and connecting it with new experience, is a learning process. According to Dewey, to:

> 'learn from experience' is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence. Under such conditions, doing becomes a trying; an experiment with the world to find out what it is like; the undergoing becomes instruction--discovery of the connection of things (1916: MW 9:147)

From Dewey, we are informed that the 'backward and forward connection' of experience is an experiment, which brings about some discovery and new understandings. Extract 22 shows Delores' use of reflection in self-assessment, some self-appraisal, self-discovery and self-correction (L 16-23) which are sub-categories of the category 'self'. Since it is a process that takes place within and outside of teaching, I probe further and ask for the difference between the reflections that take place in the classroom and those that take place afterwards.

Extract 23

36	R	Is there any difference between reflection that takes place during your
37		teaching and the type that takes place (.) and the one that takes place
38		after your teaching?
39	Delores	Yes (.) yes (.) the one that takes place after (.) em (.) when I'm relaxed
40		(.) I start thinking (.) oh here I got it wrong (.) I should have done this (.).
41		but when I'm teaching or I just take note when I observe the children
42		and at times I'll just go and jot something down (.) when I observe the
43		children and look at them I em (.) maybe if I'm teaching vocabulary (.)
44		spelling (.) I'll look at it oh I shouldn't have used this method (.) this
45		other method would have been better or at times when a child says
46		something em (.) it just drops in my mind that ah (.) this child has made
47		an important point (.) I just record it somewhere then later on I look at it
48		and start reflecting (.) even when I come home at times when I'm done
49		with my house chores I lie down on the bed before I sleep off (.) I start
50		thinking of the day's job (Delores/36)

In response to my question above, Delores describes two possible times: when she is relaxed (outside of the classroom) and when she is teaching (L 39-41). Delores however, does not carry out new actions from ideas that come to her during teaching. She notes them down for later, when she can explore them (L 41-49). From her descriptions she informs me of the influence of reflection on her daily life: it has become part of it. In and outside the classroom she has believes that she has become more reflective. Delores' transfer of reflection into her professional and personal self is not usual with other teachers in the data.

Grace, a government secondary school teacher in Abuja did not believe in reflecting after school. Extract 24 describes her views.

Extract 24

178	R	Alright but generally as a person are you one of the types that like to look over all
179		you have done at the end of the day or maybe during the holidays? Are you that
180		kind of teacher?
181	Grace	Hmm (.) No
182	R	Why don't you do that?
183	Grace	I don't know (.) my kind of person is when I'm out of the system some other thing
184		takes my attention
185	R	You shut out the school?
186	Grace	Yeah.
187	R	Alright (.) so you find yourself doing more reflecting when you're in school?
188	Grace	When I'm in school (.) yeah

In Extract 24, Grace responds to a similar question, which I asked Delores (I interviewed Grace before Delores). She informs me that she does not reflect outside of school. I ask why and she tells me that other things take her attention after school. However, it is the way she responds that calls my attention. She uses 'system' to describe the school in a very impersonal way (L 183). I want to clarify my understanding of this and I ask if she shuts out the school, she says; yes (L184-185). This is in sharp contrast to Delores experience. Delores says: 'when I come home at times when I'm done with my house chores I lie down on the bed before I sleep off (.) I start thinking of the day's job' (Delores/ Extract 23: L 49-50). The other government teachers who I interviewed did not have the same opinions as Grace. Kenny, as we have seen, carried out teaching experiments at home with his son (6.2.5: Extract 21). A possible difference between these teachers could be explained by the literature on teachers' lives.

Goodson (1992) argues that a more 'valuable and less vulnerable point of entry [for teacher development] would be to examine teachers' work in the context of the teacher's life' (Goodson 1992: 114). Hargreaves takes a similar position when he says: 'developing the teacher (…) also involves developing the person, developing the life' (Hargreaves 1992: 233). Other researchers support the view that teacher life-cycles (Peterson 1964, Miller et al 1982, Ball and Goodson 1985, Huberman 1989, 1992) affect their professional lives and should be considered in professional development efforts (Huberman 1992, Jackson 1992). Although Delores and Kenny were within the same stage of the teacher life cycle (7-18 years), Grace was within the stage that Huberman (1992) describes as years of serenity, reassessment and distance. Goodson suggests that schools which do not consider teacher life cycles in their development plans stand the risk of 'creating' indifferent teachers whose opinions and attitudes will affect and limit school reform. A quote from an experienced teacher illustrates' Goodson's point:

> You don't understand my relationship to the school and to teaching. My centre of gravity is not here at all. It's in the community, in the home- that's where I exist, that's where I put my effort now. For me the school is nine to five, I go through the motions (Goodson 1992: 111).

Grace, like the teacher above appears to have distanced herself from the school. Although we do not discuss it at the interview.. What is significant however is that Delores and Kenny appear to have some intrinsic motivation which reflection supports as the following extract shows:

Extract 25

277	R	Do you think reflection could help in any way (.) to help a teacher to
278		reconcile those conflicts between what is outside and the profession they
279		practice or do you think reflection should just be something that stops
280		within the teacher's immediate teaching environment?
281	Sylvia	Reflection in a way helps me (.) I'm looking at myself as a person (.) it
282		motivates me without the outside (.) er (.) motivational incentives (.) I get
283		motivated reflecting over a session because sometimes during reflection
284		you realize you did something right and you got exactly what you desired
285		in class (.) it has a way of strengthening you and helping build your self-
286		confidence that look (.) you're doing what you should do (Sylvia/277)

Sylvia was a teacher and supervisor at a private secondary school in Port Harcourt at the time of the study. She had completed both CICTT and CIDTT. She stands out among the informants as probably the most avid user of reflection in the group. Her use of reflection was more structured, more regular and she also used it as a supervisory tool to scaffold junior teachers. When we discussed the challenges of teaching in Nigeria including poor incentives and poor salaries, I ask if reflection could help to reconcile the conflicts that Nigerian teachers feel. Sylvia reveals that with few incentives to motivate her she turns to reflection on practice as a source of motivation; 'sometimes you realize that you did something right and you got exactly what you desired in class' (L 283-286). By identifying successful practice she is strengthened and increases in confidence (L 285-286). When she says in L 286: 'you're doing what you should do', we see a sense of responsibility (Dewey 1933, Zeichner and Liston 1996) and the fulfilment that comes with a self-appraisal process.

This motivational experience is also found in the intervention group (mentioned in 6.2.1) as a participant says (Extract 16):

> so when I try out something and it works for me if there's a situation like that that comes up (.) maybe someone asks a question (.) I am bold there to talk about my experience and also use it to encourage somebody (.) that is also another (.) that constant meeting really helps us to rub minds and um for me it helps me to keep up (.) (Rihanna/Focus Group 2/243)

The motivation experienced by this participant is also a result of some success in her practice: 'when I try something and it works for me'. This increases her self-confidence (expressed as boldness) and she is able to share her experience with other colleagues. She uses the expression 'rub minds' to describe one of the benefits of the TG: the act of discussing and sharing ideas with other colleagues and its effects on her practice. This appears to come from the intrinsic motivation that helps her to step out of herself to 'rub minds' with the group. When she says 'it helps me to keep up', it suggests some motivation also rising from her interaction with the group that keeps her going. According to Ushioda (2008:1), 'motivation is what moves a person to make certain choices, to engage in action, and to persist in action'. The description of Ushioda supports what was found in the context. According to Noels (2009: 297) intrinsic motivation 'comes from the enjoyment felt while performing an inherently interesting activity'. The experience of recounting successful practice appears to create the enjoyment that strengthens Rihanna and Sylvia (Extract 25: 281-286). There appears to be a direct relationship between reflection and motivation, and I wonder if one can experience some intrinsic motivation without some reflection on the element of motivation.

Data shows that reflection is emancipatory. The emancipatory actions of participants, which will be described here, are private moments of participants who were going against the norms of school culture, rules and guidelines because they believed that there were better ways. It came from a reflective process, which liberated their thinking about how things should be done in classrooms and schools. I describe and discuss some of these encounters in the following pages. The teachers described have been discussed earlier. They each had an experience of reflection through a formal course or through a personal choice or tendency to reflect in practice even if minimally.

Extract 26

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464    Delores    But I on my own (.) even when I'm given a curriculum (.) in a week if I
465               teach a topic (.) like Maths (.) if it's on (.) em will I say division now or
466               fraction? And I see that the children didn't really grasp it and the next
467               week I'm to go to another topic (.) at times on my own I go back to that
468               fraction (.) I use two days or three days of the other week and go through
469               it to make sure that the children understand (.) then when I get to a topic
470               that I feel that oh it's easy (.) I just hasten up and nobody notices it (.)
471               They can't come to (.) they won't even come to query you to say what
472               happened this week you were supposed to (.) you know (.) to do this (.)
473               so it's what reflection has helped me to do (Delores/473).
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Delores, who speaks above, is the teacher who has integrated a reflective process into her life. In the episode described above, she explains how sometimes she chooses not to follow school requirements or the curriculum, which she has been given; 'on my own' (L 464). The decisions she makes are learner-centred (L 465-469). Her knowledge of her learners' needs and abilities as well as the topic guides her decisions which aim to support learners by deviating from the normal structure of the scheme of work. Extract 26 shows that Delores repeats a topic that has been assigned for a previous week when she thinks her learners have not fully understood it (L 464-470). L 470-471 shows that it

is a private decision which she does not share with her head teacher. By being reflective of her learners' needs she is liberated to do what she thinks is best for learners. Delores, like other teachers in the sample followed this deviation from the scheme of work to give room to other topics that she perceived needed more time than was allocated (in the scheme). Sylvia another teacher suggests that by reflecting, teachers can be liberated from routine.

> Without reflective practice one is bound (.) attached to the scheme of work you know controlled by it what you have to teach the very next session (.) but with reflective practice after a session you don't just assume that objectives have been realized…. when you have had occasions to converse with the learners and then you reflect on that (.) you could pick out areas where you realize that the kids are not truly through with the learning session (.) and then on that note I prepare what I would call a repetition (.) I could repeat but I use another strategy to see that I take care of the problem (Sylvia/82)

Above, Sylvia illustrates the liberating process that reflective inquiry has brought into her practice. In her view without reflective practice a teacher is bound to the scheme of work and controlled by it (L 82-83). She describes the process through which she is able to measure feedback against learners' actual needs and then she takes some steps to address the situation, not caring if it means temporarily putting the scheme of work aside. Sylvia has been emancipated from the 'boundaries' of the scheme of work and the expectations of the school by integrating reflection into her practice. These private episodes do not however, spill into the professional community, which may itself lead to another type of emancipation. In Extract 27, I illustrate how James another teacher who has formal experience of reflection, describes how he is emancipated from teacher stereotypes.

Extract 27

64	James	Well most at times what it [reflection] does for me is when I go to
65		the classroom and teach I get to think of the way I have presented the
66		whole lesson and then I get to see possible ways in which I would
67		have used in driving my point (.) and then I go about thinking about
68		the mentality of the children as well and it helps me to present myself
69		in ways that you know (.) at times the way teachers present
70		themselves could contradict what the children will be getting (.) so
71		by the time I actually reflect over what I have done it gives me the
		ability to imagine it in a better way (James/64)

In Extract 27, James describes how reflection helps him not to make the common mistakes that teachers in the context make when teaching learners and assuming that they have passed on clear ideas to learners (L 68-69). He describes how through a process of reflection he can tell whether he has failed to get his points across to learners and can imagine better ways to of doing so (67-71). Thus, James uses reflection as a safeguard against falling into a mould (stereotype) that he is familiar with. Sylvia describes another experience in her practice, which is emancipatory:

> Okay I also noticed that we pursue the teaching of English through the grammar but during this reflective practice I could deviate from that to actually teaching the use of English because while the session is on in the class it's communication (.) teacher to the learners (.) learners to the teacher (.) whatever pairs and focus had to shift from giving the rules to using the language (Sylvia/64)

Above Sylvia shows that she was emancipated from following routine ways of teaching English with a grammar focus to one that was more interactive and learner-centred. She describes it a 'deviate' meaning she is going against a previous direction. When she says 'focus had to shift from giving the rules to using the language' it suggests a shift in her mindset. By saying: 'I <u>also noticed</u> that we pursue the teaching of English through grammar…' we get a sense of the idea that her ideas have come from a process of some

previous reflection. Reflection is said to be emancipatory with a capacity to liberate us from routine actions (Dewey 1933). By reflecting, teachers in the study were found to liberate themselves from routine, habits, the restrictive scheme of work, and expectations from administrators. This liberation was has been shown to come from a learner-centred focus which reflection brings or which triggers reflection. I end this sub-section by describing Gloria's thoughts about reflection.

> It has um (.) groomed my mind and opened my eyes to so many challenges in teaching English language (.) teaching English language in Nigeria is very (.) very challenging because of the multi-ethnicity and multi-linguistic base we have here…I have also learned that if you're going to teach English you'll need to domesticate it (.) you'll need to bring it down to their own level of understanding. (.) sometimes if you're teaching English (.) I've had experiences where I had to use the native language to speak to them and interpret what I mean in English language (.) that way it drives the meaning home (.) so reflection (.) reflective practice in teaching English language has (.)… It's beginning to open doors of new ideas for me and um (.) I hope to discover more of these ideas (Gloria/98)

Above Gloria describes how reflection has made her more aware of the challenges in her practice. She uses the expression 'groomed my mind' and 'opened my eyes' (in the first line) in the same sentence to describe a new consciousness about the challenges of teaching English in Nigeria. For her reflection has brought new learning, including the new ideas and approaches that she has discovered: the need to domesticate English to make it more accessible to learners; and the new approaches she applies to her practice including using the local language. It is a process of 'self-development' and 'self-direction' (Mann 2005: 104), illustrating the opportunity that reflection creates for teachers. However, as we have heard from other participants in other extracts, self-

knowledge and self-awareness is not always enough for practice. In the next sub-section, I will describe the concept of 'professional' in teacher-centred reflection from the data.

6.3.2 Professional community in teacher-centred reflection

The professional community is significant in teacher-centred reflection. Identified in the study as 'professional' it describes the experience of teachers in the study who were identified as moving through a variety of reflective experience in what could be described as a 'continuum or 'reflective spectrum' (Day 1993: 84) to become more aware of the professional community and the support it gives to practice. According to Copeland et al the continuum of reflection is one in which 'people vary in opportunity, ability, or propensity to reflect" (Copeland et al 1993: 348). This suggests that people reflect in specific ways and for specific purposes. This was identified in the study as a consequence of an increasing awareness of reflection and its benefits in a professional and developmental sense. In the study, it was discovered that as teachers progressed across the continuum (moving from individual reflective episodes to more open and shared episodes) they became more deliberate in their use of reflection to support their development or work as teachers. From the study, the sub-categories of teacher-centred reflection are: scaffolding, brainstorming, sharing discoveries, connecting own practice with other(s), seeking other perspectives, reaching out and learning communities.

Manny (6.1.1: Extracts 5 & 6) is an example of a teacher in the study whose use of reflection caused him to look beyond himself in practice to collaborate with his learners and other colleagues. Earlier, in extract 6 he described how he was surprised that all his students passed the West African English exam and he started a process to find out what approaches or conditions influenced his success. It was a learning experience that helped develop his teaching skills and made them more explicit so that he could replicate them in other instances of practice and for other learning groups. When we discussed this further in the interview, he says:

Extract 28

456 Manny   For me (.) this incident [see 6.1.1: Extract 5] I reported now it was
457   purely to evaluate my own practices and see how I could help myself to
458   actually improve myself (.) so I desire to learn (.) I want to move to the
459   next level I want to see myself where I actually belong (.) make myself
460   see where I am and where I ought to be in the next level (.) what are
461   others doing? I could compare their practices with mine (.) these are
462   specific (.) the reasons why one could (.) why one might need to reflect
              (Manny/456)

Manny's comments show his reason for the exploration for successful strategies, which were eventually made explicit. It was to evaluate his practice thus illustrating a teacher-centred focus which aimed at helping him improve himself and to increase his own learning (L 456-458). However, in L 458, Manny describes a need to 'move to the next level (…) I want to see myself where I actually belong, make myself see where I am and where I ought to be in the next level'. Although this contains a self-centred focus ('make myself see') there is an expression of a sense of belonging. This sense of belonging and movement to the 'next level' (L 458) is associated with reaching out to other colleagues

'where I am and where I ought to be in the next level (.) *what are others doing?* And to a need to compare his practice with others' (L 459-461). This movement beyond self-evaluation of practice was not a random thing. It was motivated by the success he had identified in his practice and by a need to share his findings and gain some recognition in the learning community (458-459). It included an opening up to the possibility that if he could learn alone he could learn from others too. According to Wright (2005: 283) 'professional learning occurs not just within the confines of classrooms, but also in the wider contexts of school cultures and communities in which schools are situated'. So we see Manny looking for opportunities to reach out to the learning community to connect his own practice with others and to seek other perspectives: 'what are others doing?' (L 460) This could possibly be described as a movement towards collegiality or a search for it. According to Cavanagh (2010: 1), 'collegiality sits in opposition to individualism', the opening of the private self by Manny, to the 'Other' may therefore signal the progression from individualism to shared professional practice. Cavanagh (2010) explains the dangers of individualism thus: 'a context in which a sphere of practice becomes self- regulating and self-policing might shut itself off from critique and new ideas' (2010: 70-71). Cavanagh (2010) explains that self-regulation or self-policing is not enough for improving practice; it must be done with the contributions of peers who become critical friends and therefore co-constructors of 'knowledge' in the learning community. He adds however, that peer influence must not 'block off critical scrutiny' (2010: 70-71). Drawing from Brookfield (1995), teachers need to challenge their assumptions by looking at their practice through the eyes of their colleagues in critical ways.

I explored the idea of a more collaborative experience of reflection with Lola.

Extract 29

> 371   Lola   Yeah it works in a group because at times your own idea (.) you feel
> 372   may be the best may not actually be the best idea (.) another person too
> 373   may propose a better idea (.) and by the time another person proposes a
> 374   better idea and you are actually seeing that what the person is coming up
> 375   with is better off than your own idea (.) which means you have to accept
> 376   it (.) at times it works because two good heads are better than one and of
> 377   course the person may also partially improve on your own ideas (.) so it
> 378   works at times to reflect as a group … well actually if it's accepted (.)
> 380   acceptable by the group (.) the group would actually devise a means of
> 381   carrying out or implementing the idea (Lola/371)

Lola describes a process of collaborative exploration that begins because of an understanding that reflecting on ideas by oneself may not be adequate in some instances. She suggests that other perspectives are necessary (L 371-375). Thus she says in L 375 that; 'two *good heads* are better than one' suggesting that collaborative reflection on an idea is superior. She also suggests that the group has an ability to realize or implement an idea if they adopt it (L 378-380). Language teachers are encouraged to come together through TGs so that they can complement each other's strengths and make up for their limitations (Farrell 2008). This could happen when colleagues scaffold the development of other colleagues.

In the intervention group (Group A), Rihanna received some help from other colleagues which appears to be a scaffolding process (5.1: Extract 1 & 6.2.1: Extract 16).

> so when I try out something and it works for me if there's a situation like that that
> comes up (.) maybe someone asks a question (.) I am bold there to talk about my
> experience and also use it to encourage somebody (.) that is also another (.) that

constant meeting really helps us to rub minds (Rihanna/Focus Group2/243: Extract 16)

Above Rihanna describes the TG, which is part of the intervention in the context as a 'constant meeting' (Group A said they would continue to meet even after the study period). She explains the processes: it helps her colleagues and herself to 'rub minds'. This rubbing of minds can be described as a process of brainstorming and sharing ideas. It is significant as research shows that thinking can be scaffolded by peers (Fernandez et al 2001: see 5.1.3.3). Wells (1999) describes scaffolding as: 'a way of operationalising Vygotsky's (1978) concept of working in the zone of proximal development' (ZPD) (1999: 127). It is a supportive process that shows itself in the perception of the Group A of the TG as a lab in which ideas are 'broken down' and made accessible to teachers (6.1). Rihanna exemplifies this scaffolding process in the TG in the study when she says:

if I'm teaching a topic now and I have a challenge I can ask them in the meeting or just tell them this is what I've been experiencing with my children in the class (.) what do you suggest or how best do you think I can present this topic? (Rihanna/187: Extract 1: 6.1)

Rihanna, whose feelings of inadequacy are described in (6.2.1: Extract 16) for her lack of a teaching qualification, finds a safe place in the focus group to learn. By reaching out to a colleagues Rihanna in the TG, Rihanna is helped through a support system that emerges in the TG. She becomes not only a learner, but also a co-constructor of knowledge, by sharing her own discoveries within the learning community. Rihanna eventually took on the role of coordinator of the TG after the first coordinator resigned and left the school. Thus we see that reflection is not necessarily 'quiet and personal' but

social and ultimately political (Kemmis 1985: 141). It is a process of 'becoming' in a

professional community as exemplified by Manny who yearns to belong to a

professional community (Extract 28). Sylvia, another participant who is identified in the

study as the most avid user of reflection used it to scaffold other teachers whom she

supervised. Below I share her descriptions:

Extract 30

198	R	Has reflection or reflective practice (.) has it any place within the fact that you
199		um (.) live in this community and you teach with other teachers? Does it
200		express itself in other ways?
201	Sylvia	Oh yes it does (.) I have also had an opportunity to observe teachers and I
202		don't stop at observation (.) after observing a teacher in a particular learning
203		session (.) I leave the teacher and I reflect (.) I sit back to go through the
204		session and put down points that I noticed and I don't stop there (.) I do what I
205		call post-observation session with that teacher (.) I call the teacher in (.) sit
206		down and pose out questions and these questions are geared towards getting
207		the teacher to also reflect on the session and assess what he or she did during
208		the session (.) that way I try to reach out to my peers in you know (.) where
209		I'm working right now (.) reach out to other teachers with the practice and it's
210		really been helpful (.) and teachers we felt were exceptional in class you know
211		(.) but during these reflective sessions with them they have found out that
212		there are other ways of doing what they have been doing and the fact too that
213		they haven't really gotten what they desire to get in their different classes
214		(Sylvia/198)

Above Sylvia describes how she has integrated reflection into her practice as a teacher

and supervisor. This illustrates two things; how reflection can be used by teacher

educators to support their understanding of an observation (L 201-204) and how it can

be used as a supervisory tool to support the learning of another teacher (L 204-213) .

She uses a questionning technique to aimed at instigating reflection (L 205-206). The

power relations between her and the teacher she describes in L 205 appear unequal.

However, she call the teachers she supports her peers. Mann (2005: 111) states that

'despite differences in role, the supervisor or mentor may deliberately construct a discourse to create an interactional space where self-development is more likely'. In some way Sylvia appears to do this by asking questions. The need for balance in this type of interaction is observed by Fayne (2007: 66) who says that: 'the key to success was to know when to be prescriptive, interpretive and supportive – three types of supervisory behaviour… striking the right balance increased credibility'. By integrating a reflective process in post observation interactions with peers and junior teachers, Sylvia presented to them ideas that there could be alternative ways of teaching (L 210-213).

Wallace (1991) discusses the importance of reflective practice when he says: 'it is (or should be) normal for professionals to reflect on their professional performance, particularly when it goes especially well or especially badly' (1991: 13). While this sub-section does not discuss the individual aspects of reflection, it looks at how individuals extend their reflections through the professional community, often from the excitement that comes from having performed well or from a perplexity in reflection that drives them out of their individualistic culture to seek answers. The progression toward the professional aspects of teacher-centred reflection was characterized by increasing openness to new ideas and to colleagues and by the willingness to present one's own ideas to other teachers (Extract 29). This is also illustrated in the following sub-section where I discuss the relationship between self and professional in teacher-centred reflection from data.

6.3.3 Interaction between self and professional

In the study, teacher-centred reflection was discussed earlier as having two dimensions: self-focused and professional. Data showed that these two were reciprocal although they could be clearly identified as distinct phenomena. Nicky expresses this idea quite clearly when she says: 'as a teacher my life is filled with experiences so it's either I'm bringing in an experience from my own life or I'm bringing experience from a training (…) there's always reflection for me as a teacher' (Nicky/98: Extract 12). Again, Nicky appears to make a connection between the individual and the professional when she says: 'one has to (…) decide actually to be reflective (.) if you know what you're pursuing and you understand the core of what you're doing (.) you know there is nothing you can do without reflection (.) even in normal living you have to actually reflect to be better positioned to do your work' (Nicky/264). Manny, says it differently: 'reflecting has always been there because even in our everyday life one cannot help but reflect' (Manny/06).

The learning potential of self in teacher-centred reflection can be understood in the light of Zwozdiak-Myers (2012). In reference to Stenhouse (1975), she states that 'the outstanding feature of extended professionals [teachers who reach beyond themselves in professional development and practice] is their capacity and commitment to engage in autonomous self-development through systematic self-study, reflection, and research' (Zwozdiak-Myers 2012:3). Potentially, when self and professional context interact

professional development, self-development and improvement of practice will increase as was identified in data and is illustrated in Figure 14. Thus teacher-centred reflection could be an entry point to professional development (at least in terms of awareness) for these teachers. Lola describes this process like a journey: 'it comes step by step (.) gradually you know (.) it is piling up (.) building up from step to step till you get to where you are going to … you start from somewhere and reflection must start from somewhere … till you reach your target (Lola/420). This description suggests that reflection is in fact a progression that teachers make (Dey 1993, Copeland et al 1993) in their daily practice. From exploring the data, one could suggest that each reflective process is the beginning or the continuation of a journey towards a specific goal. However, the data suggests that reflective teachers never arrive at a point where they are satisfied that they have become what they set out to be or have known completely what they set out to know.

TEACHER-CENTRED REFLECTION
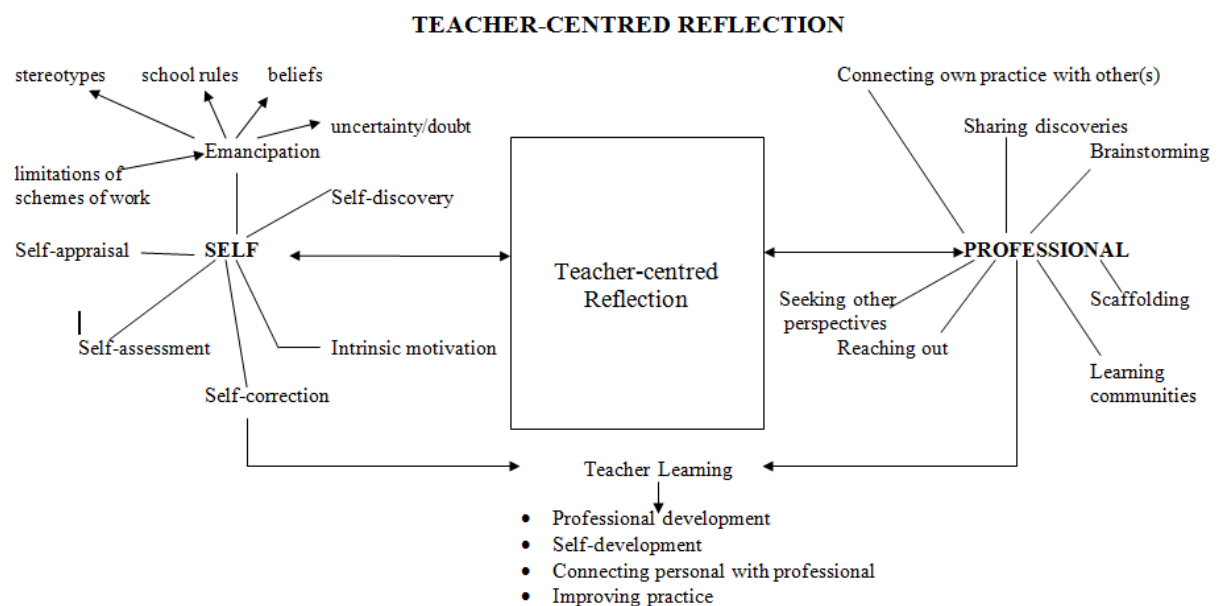
Figure 14 Teacher-centred reflection

Figure 14 shows the two dimensions of teacher-centred reflection. While self, shows a looking inwards for self-assessment, self-discovery, and intrinsic motivation. The professional looked outwards for collaboration and interactions with colleagues within the professional community. Two groups of teachers were identified in the study as using reflection in two different ways: in more individualistic ways and in collaborative ways. Those who were more individualistic used reflection more intuitively and randomly, while those who were identified as being collaborative were more deliberate and regular in their use of reflection. This may also have been influenced by the two courses that participants took (CICTT & CIDTT). However, from Rihanna (in data) we see the progression from individualistic practice to support and development from the learning community as an outcome (Group A). This idea is discussed in 6.4.4.5 where I describe the spectrum of reflection identified in the study. In critical reflection (Brookfield 1995: 30) teachers are required to look at their practice from 4 lenses: through autobiographical lens, as learners and teachers, through the eyes of their students, from their colleagues' experiences and from theoretical literature. The first three are in use in the context (as data shows) as ways in which participants challenged their thinking and practice. Participants were however, lacking in the integration of theoretical perspectives into their practice, through self-study or by peer review of published articles. According to Coghlan and Brannick (2005: 6): 'systematic reflexivity is the constant analysis of one's own theoretical and methodological presuppositions'.

From the experience of Rihanna we find that the intervention group was helpful in moving Rihanna (and possibly others in Group A) from an individualistic culture to a more collaborative one (6.3.2). The awareness of the professional community is stronger in participants who completed CICTT and/or CIDTT. Some of these are: Manny, Sylvia and Delores.

The need to be taught reflection (Schön 1987, Day 1993, Hatton & Smith 1995, Bean and Stevens 2002, Griffin 2003, Russell 2005, Bates et al 2009) or have it integrated in professional development experience is exemplified by Kenny who started a TG after attending two of the workshops I gave during the study. He was an enthusiastic teacher who often reflected to innovate and experiment. He was reaching out to other teachers but was limited by his lack of full understanding of reflection. Jordan, his colleague, had some regular use of reflection in her practice but was also limited in the same way. PLG holds a potential for introducing a more explicit and systematic form of reflection in the context. However, developing reflection takes time (Farrell 2004, Liou 2001) and the teaching of reflection will need to be more teacher-centred and specifically tailored to meet the needs of teachers in a particular context; with the starting point, being where teachers are at (Wright and Bolitho 2007, Akbari 2007). It should integrate an understanding that reflection happens in stages Zeichner and Liston 1996, Stanley 1998, Baxter Magolda 1999, Rodgers 2002, Jay and Johnson 2002, Farrell 2004, Ward and McCotter 2004, Lee 2005, El Dib 2007), so it should not be rushed (Hobbs 2007). For the intervention group it took at least a year of meetings for scaffolding and reflective inquiry to emerge. From Lola I learned that reflection is a journey: 'it comes step by

step, gradually you know (…) till you reach your target' (Lola/420). Lave (1991) looks at learning differently:

> I propose to consider learning not as a process of socially shared cognition that results in the end in the internalization of knowledge by individuals, but as a process of becoming a member of a sustained community of practice. Developing an identity as a member of a community and becoming knowledgeably skilful are part of the same process, with the former motivating, shaping, and giving meaning to the latter, which it subsumes (Lave 1991: 65)

From Lave, we see an important idea that teacher learning is best within professional context. It also presents a view of learning as a process of socialization. Manny illustrates the above description when he describes a need to belong and to be recognized (Extract 28). This process of 'becoming a member of a sustained community of practice' that Lave describes is what appears to connect the self with the professional (community) when teachers step out of their private zones of classroom practice through a teacher-centred approach to reflection which reaches out to the learning community. It is exemplified in the intervention group and in Manny's desire to belong: '*I want to move to the next level I want to see myself where I actually belong*' (Manny: Extract 28). New awareness about TGs and TAs will need to be created to increase this possibility in the context. In the next section I describe knowledge-centred reflection, a finding that emerged from data.

6.4 Knowledge-centred reflection

In Chapter 3 (3.4.1.3), I discussed the need for reflection to be taught in ways that are more relevant and accessible to teachers and suggested that it could start from the point of use in practice. In the following sections I describe from data, how teachers in the study used reflection to construct a personal knowledge of teaching and learning. Deep thinking, constructing personal knowledge and validation are categories of the code knowledge-centred reflection.

6.4.1 Deep thinking

Deep thinking in this study is used to describe the use of reflection by participants to generate personal knowledge for themselves as teachers. It is a process, which is better understood in the context of the data from which it emerged.

Extract 31

758	James	Well (.) reflection goes all round (.) you could go back to a particular thing
759		you had already concluded on and rethink it as if you have never thought of
760		it to be able to get results (.) so I can't say it's a straight path (.) that
761		description will be wrong (.) so it's all round (.) you go over issues that you
762		have earlier gone to conclude about and even make new suggestions again (.)
763	R	So would you describe reflection as a cycle of activities or how would you
764		say it?
765	James	Yeah (.) something like that (.) you go over it continuously and learn (...).
766	R	Do you think reflection ends at any time?
767	James	It can't end
768	R	So it's like it's a constant
769	James	It's a life process (James/758)

In our interview, James and I discussed reflection. I wanted to understand his construct of reflection from his own experience. I asked him to describe the path of reflection. I wanted to know if it was a straightforward process. James replies that it was not. He describes a thinking process, which is ongoing, connecting past and present in different reflective episodes (L 761-762). In L 740 James suggests that reflection is a meaning making process: 'it carries more meaning when you put in reflection'. Re-learning is an essential part of learning (Kolb 1984).

The description provided by James is echoed in the descriptions of others including the idea that one returns to the experience. The idea of reviewing experience; the continuous nature of the exploration of thought and action is described by James as 'reflection goes all round'… 'you go over issues that you have earlier gone' (L 758-762). This suggests that reflection involves the exploration of knowledge in more depth or rigour. Twice, James mentions the return to what had been earlier concluded (Ls 758/761-762) showing some back and forward movement between thought and experience, when he says 'it's not a straight path' (L760), it suggests some level of complexity.

Teacher development has been explained as an ongoing complex phenomenon which Hoban (2002) describes as systemic. It is an unpredictable process, which is determined by factors which are both contextual and unique to individual teachers (Huberman 1989, Roberts 1998). The possible complexity of teacher development through a reflective process can be compared to Eve et al (1997)'s description of complexity as 'the

interrelatedness and interdependence of components as well as their freedom to interact, align, and organize into related configurations' (1997: 20). As classrooms are unpredictable places where teacher development happens, (Wright 2005, 2010) there is an interaction of a multiplicity of factors in individual teachers' development. These have been described as: 'chaos', 'complexity' 'holistic' and ecological' (Eve et al 1997, Hoban 2002: 23). They produce a 'butterfly' or 'ripple effect' (Gleick 1987, Waldrop 1992 and Sullivan 1993).

The construct 'deep thinking' which is discussed in this section is gotten from Nicky who says: 'I go back to think deeply'. Nicky's use of this description (think deeply) may be an attempt to differentiate it from other types of thinking and an illustration of a more rigorous thinking approach (Dewey 1933, Schön 1983).

Extract 32

145	R	why is it important?[reflection]
146	Nicky	It's important (.) to me it's important because if I do something this way
147		and I go back to think deeply about it of course I am going to find that
148		there are certain things I did not do well which I should do better if I'm
149		doing that same course again or teaching the children again (.) so it's
150		important so that as a teacher you become more and more professional in
151		what you're doing and you'd be able to communicate better with the children (Nicky/145)

During an interview with Nicky, I asked her if reflection is important. In her answer she uses a description for the kind of thinking that was identified in the data: 'I go back to think deeply' (L 147). According to her, it is a thinking that comes from doing (146); it is thinking that returns the inquirer to past experience (L 147). It is a re-learning process (Kolb 1984) which shows itself in data through descriptions of how participants

revisited experience, or concluded ideas to rethink and re-learn them (L146-148). It is also an evaluative process that helps Nicky to identify what she does not do well. When she says: 'I am going to find out that there are certain things I did not do well which I should do better' she is describing some form of self-appraisal and shows a sense of responsibility. Although her description of this way of thinking is a little different from James, they agree on the return to past experience, the use of self-assessment, the rigorous process involved and the learning that comes from it (James: L 765; Nicky: L 150-151). During the interview, I asked James if he thought this reflective process was remembering.

Extract 33

735	James	Um (.) not really (.) I think turning that word to remembering would drop
736		some values from the real concept (.) why I say so is because remembering
737		(.) you just remember something but if you reflect you could just (.) if you
738		remember something it has reoccurred to you again but <u>if you reflect over</u>
739		<u>a thing you are checking the pros and cons of the particular thing you are</u>
740		<u>talking of (.)</u> so it carries more meaning when you put it in reflection
741		(James/735).

In Extract 33 we see James drawing a distinction between remembering (recalling information) and reflecting. The difference is marked by the way of thinking (Dewey 1933). It is more analytic and involves the use of selective perspective (Line738-739: underlined). It is also more dynamic than static, as are memories. From data, reflective thinking was found to always connect to the grounds that support the thinking (Dewey 1933; see 5.1 of thesis). This was found to be anything from experience from oneself, a colleague, classroom episodes, received knowledge from reading or training, etc. Thus 'new knowledge' was created from this process of analytic thinking, which connected

thought with action in several episodes of exploration that sometimes included classroom experiments or trying out (6.2.4).

In his theory about how people learn (Kolb 1984) posits that knowledge is created by the transformation of experience (see 3.4.2). The four parts to Kolb's framework are: active experimentation, concrete experience (action); abstract conceptualization and reflective observation (thought). Kolb's framework is used to describe how thought and action (reflection) bring new learning. It is a dynamic process which reveals itself in data from this study through participants' ongoing active experimentations (6.2.4), reflective observations (6.2.2) and exploring of experience through several episodes or phases of reflection that happened over days or weeks (as we are shown from Manny in 6.1.1.1: Extracts 5 & 6). By carrying out a reflective process through 'deep thinking,' participants conceptualized new learning in more personal ways.

6.4.1.1 Starting intuitively

The processes of reflection documented in this study were not always deliberate and structured. It was sometimes intuitive. Lola another participant explains a process of outpouring thoughts when she says*:* 'the ideas may just come spontaneously (.) and once in a while and if those ideas are not documented you may not really be able to carry out effective analysis and implementation of some of the ideas' (Lola/285). Our focus is on two things: the spontaneous thoughts and the analytical thinking and

implementation of ideas that follow the flow. It is clear that when ideas start spontaneously, the focus on them is deliberate as is the subsequent analysis that she suggests. By speaking of a need to document the spontaneous ideas for effective analysis, she shows the intention to reflect over these later in a more structured way. From James, Nicky and Lola (Extracts 31-33) we are made aware that the thinking described in the study as deep thinking is dynamic, either evaluative or analytic, and involves some self-reflexive activity that is connected with some experience: 'if you reflect over a thing, you are checking the pros and cons of the particular thing' (Extract 33: L 739-740).

6.4.1.2 Use of WH questions to extend reflection

The use of 'WH' questions was closely associated with the reflective processes identified from data. This was supported by questions such as 'what?' 'why?' and 'how?'. Manny describes previous experience of what he came to know was reflection.

Extract 34

60 62 63 64 65 66 67	Manny	even for me as a perpetual teacher I have had cause on my own to sit back and write reports about one or two things you know (.) experiences (.) either encountered with my colleagues (.) with my superiors (.) my supervisors or with my pupils (.) what actually happened ? How did it happen and why? You know (.) I've thought and I said okay that's actually reflection (Manny/60)

In Extract 34 Manny explains the probing process in his practice which he discovers to be a reflective process (L 67). This probing process that precedes his report writing shows the integration of some more structured thinking. It appears to be an attempt to gain new learning by making implicit knowledge more explicit. This process identified in data is explained in the literature when Schön (1987: 28-29) says: 'reflection-in-action has a critical function, questioning the assumptional structure of knowing-in-action'. Thus Manny questions: 'I sat down to ask myself what did I do and how did I do it? What methods (.) what approaches did I adopt (...) how come that even some of those children that I had my doubts about were able to make it?' (6.1.1: Extract 5: L257-259). Brookfield (1987: 1) describes it as a process of calling 'into question the assumptions underlying our customary, habitual ways of thinking and acting and then be ready to think and act differently on the basis of this critical questioning'. It is a process that was not linear as James suggests in Extract 31: L 760.

6.4.1.3 Constructing knowledge

From findings, knowledge-centred reflection happened when participants' developed 'new knowledge' through a reflective process. Within this process, as the data shows, there were other smaller processes, which are described, in the following pages. These were identified from data as: *deconstructing knowledge, reconstructing knowledge* and *constructing personal knowledge.*

The knowledge deconstruction process is discussed below when Gloria uses metaphors to express herself with 'far more conviction and feeling than literal language ever could' (Wright and Bolitho 2007: 72). See Extract 35.

Extract 35

363	Gloria	It [reflection] gives you the opportunity to tear off bits and
364		pieces of flesh from form (.) If you want to (.) em (.) it's like
365		if you want to it's like a surgeon looking for something to
366		remove from a patient during a surgical operation and (.) um it
367		gives by the time the patient is opened up even though there
368		hasn't been a (.) there has been a clear diagnosis of whatever
369		the problem (.) is the surgeon's discovery from opening up a
370		patient could also help him further analyze the earlier
371		diagnosis (Gloria/363)

In the encounter shown above, Gloria and I discuss reflection in more depth as I try to establish her understanding of the concept. She responds metaphorically that reflection helps her to deconstruct knowledge (L 363-364). Using the tearing up of flesh as a metaphor, she compares the process again with another metaphor: a surgeon looking into his patient in surgery, to find the answers to a problem (L 365-370). According to her this process allows the surgeon to compare his finding with an earlier diagnosis. In discussing research, Burns (1999: 147) explains that metaphors are used as an 'introspective and reflective tool … tapping the kinds of meanings practitioners create about their own professional actions, practices and personal theories' (Burns 1999:147). Therefore the process described by Gloria could be described as a meaning-making attempt. We can infer therefore that deconstruction is part of her reflective process (L 363-364). It can also be explained as an attempt to reframe and reconstruct meaning, which the literature associates with reflection (Dewey 1938, Schön 1983, Rodgers

2002). According to Dewey (1938) 'there is no intellectual growth without some reconstruction, some reworking' (1938: 64) and it appears that for Gloria to reconstruct new meanings she has to go through a probing process of deconstruction. This idea fits with her metaphor of a surgeon probing for new understandings (365-370) and suggests that for Gloria, deconstruction involves comparing previous knowledge with new discoveries. This process which creates personal knowledge for Gloria, supports the idea that there is no universal body of knowledge waiting to be used wholesale (Shulman 1987). It may be an attempt to make tacit knowledge more explicit (Schön 1987).

6.4.1.4 Breaking the mould

From Gloria we also learn that the new perspectives that reflection offers is not always easy to accept. Extract 36 illustrates this difficulty of becoming a reflective teacher.

Extract 36

69	Gloria	it was difficult in the sense that I have already passed through my formative
70		years of teaching and I have (.) em (.) certain principles and values in
71		teaching have already been moulded (.) now it's for me reflection is like
72		trying to break me up again and remould me (.) so it's a bit difficult but
73		whatever comes out of the mould comes out beautiful (.) so I'd say that
74		reflection is actually important at the early stage of teaching practice (.) that
75		is when reflection is important because when you begin to practice teaching
76		without reflection it becomes difficult (.) It's like breaking a very strong
77		habit (.) it's like you've been working like a robot and then they put a mind
78		in you and they want that mind to work out the methods that have been
79		programmed according to a specific (.) em (.) let me say programmed to
80		work in a specific style but now they want you to (.) they put a mind in that
81		robot and say (.) okay you can do whatever you like (.) it's a bit difficult
82		(Gloria/69).

In Extract 36, Gloria describes the difficulty of breaking the 'mould' that she is used to from her formative years as a teacher. By being introduced to reflection much later, she experiences what she describes as an attempt to break her: 'for me reflection is like trying to break me up again and re-mould me' (L 72). She compares this process to breaking a strong habit (L 76-77). Gloria suggests that this difficulty comes from her teacher preparation which compels her to imbibe pre-determined principles and values (L 69-75), which are difficult to break, possibly because they are espoused theories. This may illustrate the problems of espousing theories to teacher trainees (Ur 1992, Loughran 2002, Richards and Farrell 2005, Hobbs 2007, Russell 2005). Extract 36 shows a possible reason why even reflective practice could be resisted if teachers find no ownership of it (Otienoh 2009): 'they put a mind in that robot and say (.) okay you can do whatever you like (.) it's a bit difficult' (L 80-81). This also illustrates the importance of helping trainees to learn to use reflection before their careers as teachers begin.

6.4.1.5 Concentrating on what is important

Nicky describes a probing process which is started to identify an important idea.

Extract 37

549	Nicky	It [reflection] could be deconstructing it could be building it could be
550		finding the crux of the matter (.) so it all depends on what you're
551		reflecting on (.) for some it could be that you want to build for others
552		you're asking a question 'what is this?' 'I want to know' so you want to
553		find out the main thing. For others you've done something and you find
554		out that certain things don't come in so you take these things away and
555		concentrate on what is important (Nicky/549).

In Extract 37 Nicky describes a process of reflection, which 'builds' or 'takes away' (takes apart): building knowledge. It could be 'finding the crux of the matter' (L 549); it could be building (constructing knowledge: L 551); it could be probing through questions (L 551: deconstructing knowledge) or taking away, to concentrate on what is important (L 553-554). Nicky reveals the purpose: 'I want to know' (552). According to Nicky the reflective processes that she follows are dependent on what she is reflecting on (L 550). The process described by Nicky and others was found to be continuous and ongoing. Dewey reminds us that education 'must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience' (Dewey 1897: 79). It is identified in the data as a process of knowledge development: 'I want to know' (…) so you take these things away and concentrate on what is important' (L 522-555). The new learning that comes from filtering out unimportant ideas brings Nicky to an awareness that some things are more important.

6.4.1.6 New Knowledge?

In the mapping of knowledge-centred reflection used in the study, the process of deconstruction and constructing knowledge was found to happen through an on-going and dynamic process aided by hindsight, insight and foresight. It is a process that happened in or out of practice. By testing and experimenting with ideas, techniques and approaches in their classrooms, participants developed a form of 'new knowledge' in the context of its relevance to their learners, themselves and to their ELT context. Thus they found new ways of intervening in classrooms. Some outcomes of reflection were not

made public by these teachers because they went against established school routines, expectations of school administrators, and perhaps because a collaborative culture was yet to be established in their schools. Nevertheless, in authentic ways new practices and perspectives emerged from within the teaching community over time. Manny, illustrates this in individual exploration of his practice (6.1.1.1; Extracts 5 & 6) Rihanna illustrates this when she says: 'so when I try out something and it works for me (…) I am bold there to talk about my experience and also use it to encourage somebody' (Rihanna/Focus group 2/243). The construction of knowledge described in this chapter is relative to the needs of individual teachers and the learning community. Teachers' knowledge is personal (Wright 2005, Mann 2005). Shulman reminds us that a 'knowledge base for teaching is not fixed or final' (1987: 12). The study shows this as a continuing experience where ideas about teaching and learning are framed and reframed continuously to meet the specific demands of teaching and learning within the context.

When I asked Nicky if she ever loses sight of her original reason for reflecting, she says: 'No I don't lose sight because it's like a depth (…) sometimes the information gets so large and the problem or the difficulty I find is how to now bring them all together to be able to answer my first question' (Nicky/472). Clark (1992: 75) observes that 'research on teacher thinking asks teachers to 'think aloud' and describe their thoughts and decision processes, and to make the invisible aspects of teaching visible'. Teacher educators need to consider the power influences in teacher cognition (teachers' beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, influences from socio-cultural contexts, espoused theories, etc.), which Borg (2003: 81) describes as: the 'unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching

what teachers know, believe, and think'. As he says, these are not only influenced by TEd, but by their experience as learners (as Lortie 1975 affirms). Gloria illustrates (Extract 36) how powerful these are. We also learn from her about the conflict that teachers may experience when they try to become more reflective.

In the data, reflection was identified as a tool that facilitated deep thinking by connecting current or past experience with previous knowledge or experience which became relevant for building further understanding from classroom experience. Figure 15, I show the mapping of knowledge-centred reflection from data to guide further discussions on how participants developed their personal knowledge of teaching and learning by reflecting on their practice. In trying to build new or further understanding through a deconstruction and reconstruction process participants connected new and old learning (experience).

KNOWLEDGE-CENTRED REFLECTION

Knowledge-centred reflection

Research Experimenting Trying out

Validation

Speaking out Testing Feedback finding new ways

Connecting life experience with received knowledge Self-study

Deep thinking

Deconstructing Knowledge

Constructing personal knowledge

Connecting theory and practice Connecting past & present experience

Reconstructing knowledge

hindsight foresight

new perspectives insight connecting conscious with subconscious

Reflection as tool

classroom experience

Netscape readings

Experiential knowledge Received knowledge

life experience Intuition theory workshops

professional experience - hunches meetings
- personal beliefs
- perceptions
- attitudes

Figure 15 The Mapping of Knowledge-centred reflection from data

Figure 15 illustrates deep thinking and reflection as a tool from data. By reflecting participants were found to connect to a reserve of knowledge identified from data as: experiential knowledge, intuition, and received knowledge (see 5.1.1). I describe this by starting from a critical incident.

6.4.2 Thought in the 'Netscape'

In a critical incident during an interview, a participant used intuitive knowledge to describe reflection by using a metaphor. This incident led me back to the data to find an explanation, which I have conceptualized in the 'Netscape'. It happened during an interview with a government schoolteacher, Mary, when I asked her to give me a metaphor to describe reflection (the use of metaphors is discussed in 6.4.4.4). Extract 38 shows our encounter.

Extract 38

355	Mary	Reflection is um (.) it's a being.
356	R	Being B-E-I-N-G? What do you mean by that?
357	Mary	A being has life (.) it's from that angle (.)
358	R	So reflection is a being it has life (.) could you tell me a little bit more so I am able to probe
359		your understanding your perception of this thing that you've described as a being? Can it talk
360		(.) walk can it make decisions? Why did you use that?
361	Mary	Anything that has life has basic things that are salient among which will be what we are
362		talking about (.)
363	R	So if reflection has life is it that it has the ability to give life or it has life itself? Does it give
364		life to your thoughts your work or is it that…
365	Mary	It gives life because if we look at the opposite any dead organism can't even talk about
366		reflecting
367	R	So you're looking at reflection as something dynamic?
368	Mary	Yes…
369	R	So are you interacting with your subconscious mind or what is it?
370	Mary	That's the purpose of reflecting (.) yes (.)
371	R	It's interesting because I'm just wondering (.) I'm trying to think about what you mean (.)
372		does it mean that when we are reflecting there are like two sides of us interacting you know
373		and thinking on a matter or is it that we're looking at things from different angles? What is it
374		in that process that sustains reflection? What is it that brings problems that we're still trying to
375		solve back into our minds?
376	Mary	Because we are beings (.)
377	R	And so we confront this thing and we have to resolve it or it will come back (.)
378	Mary	Or it will come back?
379	R	Yes (.) it flashes into your mind to remind you that you have not resolved this thing (.). so if
380		you can't find answers today it will come back (.)
381	Mary	Yes it will still be there (.)
382	R	Until an answer is found (.)
383	Mary	Is given (Mary/355)

In this encounter (extract 38), Mary describes reflection as 'a being' (L 355). This was surprising and I had to be sure, I had understood her by spelling out the word (L 356). I probe further from my own understanding of what a being can do. She responds that reflection has a life of its own (L 361). This leads my further questions in L 358-367 until we arrive at a point of common understanding: 'reflection as something dynamic'. When I asked if she was interacting with her subconscious mind by reflecting she responds very promptly: 'that's the purpose of reflection (L370). Rather than taking the simplicity of her response, I get into an intellectual mode to try to theorize what she has just said, thus leading me further off the point (L371-375). She brings me back to the original idea by saying: 'because we are beings'. In L 377-383, I make another attempt to make sense of what Mary is saying. But I do not succeed. What strikes me most about the encounter is the characterization of reflection as a being gives answers (L 383). In my journal records, I try to make sense of this idea further and I make two different entries from my own reflections of this incident:

Extract 39

Entry 1	001	The study highlights intuition as a teacher tool that is ever present yet
	002	unexplored? It appears the lack of exploring this area of the mind makes
	003	teachers more stereotyped. Is reflection the link that connects the
	004	subconscious mind and the conscious mind? (The intuitive and rational
	005	mind?). Is it through reflection that we explore hid potential or who we
	006	are, what we can be and do as teachers? There appears to be a latent
	007	ability waiting to be discovered, an openness waiting to be connected
	008	to...it appears that teacher development needs to focus on connecting with
	009	the subconscious invisible mind which generates growth and development.
Entry 2	010	I think therefore I am....I am therefore, I think. ..I am a teacher therefore I
	011	reflect....I reflect therefore I teach Journal entry: 9/09/2012

My reflections extend to my first year at university when I took a course in philosophy and learned about Rene Descartes who says: 'I think, therefore I am'. By exploring this idea logically, I arrive at a new idea: 'I am a teacher, therefore I reflect...I reflect, therefore I teach' (L 010-011). Although this does not directly inform my analysis, it made me more aware that the reflection used by some teachers in the study could be largely, intuitive. I return to the data. An analysis of the encounter shows that reflection was perceived as being dynamic, active alive ('a being has life (.) it's from that angle': L 357). It has the capacity to bring change to the reflecting individual ('it gives life because if we look at the opposite any dead organism can't even talk about reflecting': L 364), it has staying capacity ('it will still be there': L 378). It gives a response ('until an answer is given': L 380). By exploring earlier points in the interview, I was able to interpret her descriptions. First I looked through my interview with her again and I noticed that when I asked if it was difficult to reflect over her practice she responds thus:

Extract 40

234	Mary	To an extent it may be difficult to (.) to an extent it may not (.)
235		because like I told you it's not something (.) because I was not
236		taught when I just discovered that (.) the thinking comes to my
237		mind- 'okay how I do this?'
238	R	Is it a long process or a short process?
239	Mary	For me sometimes it's very short (.) sometimes I may be in bed
240		(.) an idea comes up (.) I might forget (.) I will write it down (.)
241	R	Do you go over the same experience over and over again at
242		different times (.) different days (.) just to get answers (.) or is it
243		that you just reflect on an experience and you get the answer
244		immediately?
245	Mary	No you don't get the answer immediately (.) you have to (.) um
246		(.) it will still flash in again and then you take you (.) know (.)
247		take thought on that and then see the possible or the available
248		options to that particular thing (Mary 234).

In comparing her descriptions in Extracts 38 and 40, I identified that reflection was an intuitive experience for Mary (L 235-236); this may be why she describes it as having a life of its own, and because it comes into her mind involuntarily (L 238-240). When she says: 'okay how I do this?' (L 237) she appears to respond to these ideas or thoughts with an approach to inquiry. Although she describes a spontaneous process of involuntary thought, the response is deliberate (voluntary) and recorded down. She describes these thoughts as flashing back into her mind until she deliberately thinks about them to find alternatives by using a selective thought process: 'it will still flash in again and then you (.) know (.) take thought on that and then see the possible or available options to that particular thing' (L 245-248).

Voluntary and involuntary thought

The description above suggests that there appears to be some interaction between involuntary and voluntary thought. Mary's descriptions are similar to descriptions from other participants who suggest an ongoing forward and backward movement of thought on experience and action that brings new thinking. One of these participants, Delores describes an ongoing forward and backward process in her practice of thinking and doing which brings new learning (Extract 22). By deliberately thinking on the thought or idea that comes involuntarily to mind, Mary reconstructs new knowledge: 'it will still flash in again and then you take you (.) take thought on that and then see the possible or

the available options to that particular thing' (Mary/234). I explored the data further to find out where involuntary thought could be coming from.

Two other participants in their interviews used expressions that showed a similar experience of some involuntary thought that comes to mind as the following descriptions show.

Extract 41

116	Delores	At times I'll just be thinking of something else
117		and my mind will drift and I'll see myself
118		reflecting on other areas (.) but what I've
119		learned to do is when <u>something drops in my</u>
120		<u>mind</u> or when I'm reflecting I just try to note it
121		down because at times when I'm lazy about it
122		(.) if I'm on the bed (.) I'll say oh I'll
123		remember (.) I'll remember (Delores/116).
123		

In Extract 41 Delores expresses this idea of involuntary thought that is worth recording (see also Extract 23). The involuntary thought that comes to mind is sometimes recorded so that she will not forget. This suggests a type of thought that is difference from other regular thought. She differentiates between her thinking and this idea when she says: 'when something drops in my mind or when I am reflecting' (L 120). The drifting of her mind is not deliberate but it happens and she becomes aware of other thoughts. There seems to be an apparent movement or fluidity of her thoughts. In the focus group interview one participant uses the same expression as Delores. There is no relationship between the two of them: that they are teachers who work in two different parts of

Nigeria. This episode is shown below when I ask for what they bring to their TG meetings from their classrooms:

Extract 42

518	Rihanna	<u>Something just drops in your mind</u> and you come to the group and
519		you share. I was teaching prepositions and I thought oh (.) I could do
520		it like this (.) so when you share it here whoever is going to take
521		prepositions gains something from there (Focus Group 2/515)

The Focus Group participant explains how an involuntary idea that emerged from the classroom is shared at the TG (L 518-521). Thus an involuntary idea is given deliberate focus through the more structured interaction of the group. By using an inductive approach to data and the literature as an analytic tool, I was able to establish that these participants were engaging with knowledge that existed in some further recesses of their minds. Therefore I use the term 'Netscape' (Claxton 2006: 357), the 'partly sub-merged half-forgotten mass of information and impression' to describe a phenomenon that participants could not clearly articulate but which appeared to be common experience.

The 'Netscape' is used to describe an important sub-category of knowledge-centred reflection. The word ('Netscape') is used heuristically to explain a dynamic interaction between active processes of deep thinking which were identified in the data, and the vast and more passive reservoir of participants' knowledge that was also identified in data. In Chapter 5 (5.1.1-5.1.3), I discussed how I attempted to trigger reflection in the intervention group. My explorations showed that participants had three types of

knowledge, which was put to use in their practice. From this encounter and further analysis of data discussed in Chapter 6, I identified the following types of knowledge:

- Received knowledge was knowledge that participants received from TEd, trainers, self-study, etc. (5.3.3, 6.3.2, Extract 28)

- Experiential knowledge was identified as knowledge that teachers had experienced themselves or from observing other colleagues (5.1.3, 6.2, 6.3).

- Intuitive Knowledge (identified from the expressions and descriptions used by participants, showed they had spontaneous flows of thought in reflective episodes, had hunches, feelings or guesses about what to do, particularly, when they observed their learners (see 5.1.1 and 6.2).

Wallace (1991) argues that teachers need received knowledge and experiential knowledge. However, Freeman (2002, 2004) suggests that teachers possess received knowledge, personal knowledge, experiential knowledge and local knowledge. Claxton (2006) and Wright (2005) add that teachers also use intuitive knowledge in classrooms. In their descriptions about the role of experience in training, Wright and Bolitho (2007: 23) describe something similar to the 'Netscape':

It might be useful to picture our life's experience as a lake, an organic body of thoughts, images, memories, feelings, knowledge, in circulation, the water constantly in motion, although the depths remain fairly static. Attitudes, values and beliefs are partly in the depths, and also in the general circulation of water. New experiences feed into the lake in a variety of ways – through rainfall, the wind on the surface of the water, the lives of creatures like fish in the water, of birds which might float on the surface, of craft moving over the surface, from the streams and rivers which feed into the lake, and which originate in the lake and go elsewhere. In training sessions, through the activities, we might decide to dive below the surface, or to go fishing, in search of past experience. Or we might

choose to create a breeze on the surface or launch a boat and go for a ride on the water, the point at which new experiences are first perceived (2007: 23).

The description of Wright and Bolitho acknowledge the presence of a pool of unconscious knowledge in the mind that could be tapped into. Using a lake as a metaphor they describe the possible interactions we can make with this 'lake'. I suggest that by reflecting or in the process of reflection; information, ideas or thoughts appear to sometimes re-emerge from the 'Netscape' or 'lake' and pass through a process where reflection worked as a tool to reframe the idea by connecting this idea with other ideas or experience that was more within the domain of consciousness (not half submerged). Thus, the idea passed through a process where it was merged with other ideas, thought processes or outcomes of previous reflective episodes (teachers' encounters from classrooms that generate reflection). This process was mapped from data as a process whereby knowledge was deconstructed, reconstructed and finally constructed (discussed in 6.4.1) into a newer form which could now be identified as personal knowledge (not some idea that dropped in). By going through these three processes (de-construction; reconstruction and construction) a sense of originality was created which found ownership through a process of surprise and wonder (exemplified by Manny in Extracts 5 & 6). This process which has been shown to sometimes start involuntary (Extract 38, 40, 41, 42) could also be deliberate when the reflecting teacher fished for ideas by 'casting' their minds back on past experience or received knowledge or by deep thinking (Extracts 31, 32, 33).

The significance of this finding (which no doubt requires further exploration) is that espoused knowledge, beliefs and other ideas or information can be transformed into personal knowledge through a reflective process that is continuing and relevant to a context. This suggests that in TEd, teachers acquire a pool of 'knowledge', which can prove useful as powerful resources for knowledge development through reflection. When teachers gain ownership of the ideas, concepts or experiences that they encounter, it is emancipatory (Dewey 1933, Schön 1983 and Freire 1998) in the sense that their knowledge is no longer espoused. Although Burns and Richards (2009: 4) say that traditional perspectives of teacher education view teachers work as 'the application of theory to practice'. However, the theorizing of practice through reflective inquiry may in fact be the best way. This possibility is more evident when Bartels (2009: 127) states that research indicates 'that teachers need knowledge that integrates a wider number of relevant factors than academic knowledge'. The study shows that some of this knowledge emerged from classroom experience to make teaching and learning more suitable for a context through a process of reflective thinking or reflective practice.

6.4.3 Knowledge Validation

The relevance of personal knowledge (obtained through a reflective process) manifested itself in classrooms where teachers tested or tried new knowledge gained through reflective inquiry. This process was identified from data as knowledge validation. It is relevant because it probes the currency and authenticity of teachers' knowledge.

Ultimately, whether through testing new learning in the classroom or by sharing it with colleagues, validation was when learners in teachers' classrooms validated an idea, approach or understanding: these were characterized by active processes of thinking and doing, which brought small but significant changes into their classrooms.

Extract 43

335	R	You talked about assumptions (.) very (.) very important and in reflection teachers
336		do a lot of problem solving (.) how do you know that the outcome of your
337		reflection? That's the result (.) the complete product that comes out of your
338		reflection (.) how do you know it's valid?
339	Lola	If it is in a learning situation (.) how you get to know its valid is if it brings a
340		positive result
341	R	That's when you try it out?
342	Lola	and it works out (.) it brings about er (.) innovation (.) creativity and it improves
343		quality of learning (.) teaching and learning (.) it is effective
344	R	So are there sometimes you have a reflection and it's not valid?
345	Lola	At times
346	R	And what do you do when you find out that it's not valid?
347	Lola	You also look for a possible (.) possible ways to improve or to change it if it is not
348		valid (.) change it.
349	R	Okay so it means if you have the outcomes of reflection (.) you try out (.) it's not
350		valid (.) do you reflect again?
351	Lola	Yeah (.) you reflect again.
352	R	Okay (.) on the same phenomenon? On the same idea?
353	Lola	You change (.) you might change the idea
354	R	By reflection?
355	Lola	Yeah by reflection you can change the idea (.) if it is not working because at times
356		even in learning (.) teaching and learning (.) you apply a method and you discover
357		it's not working you have to change (.) reflect again and get new ideas and try it (.)
358		if it works (.) you know that it is effective (Lola/335)

Extract 43 shows Lola and I talking about reflection. In this encounter I asked to know how she knew that the outcomes of her reflections were valid and if all outcomes of her reflection are accepted for practice. She replies that validation comes when the outcome of her reflection is positive (L339-343). She says a positive outcome should bring about:

- Innovation

- Creativity

- Improve quality of learning

- Be effective (L 342-343)

I explore further and ask for what happens when new ideas don't work out in practice. She responds that in such an instance the idea or approach must be changed and reflected on, and then tested again (L 349-358). Some of the actions of teachers that preceded the knowledge validation process are identified from data as:

Researching   (6.1.1: Extracts 5 & 6)

Experimenting   (6.1.2 Extracts 11, 6.2.4 Extract 19; 6.2.5 Extract 21)

Noticing learners   (6.1.2 Extracts 10; 6.2.2 Extract 17; 6.2.3 Extract 18)

Colleague feedback (6.1.3 Extract 13; 6.2.1 Extract 16)

In each case validation was associated with success from using an approach, techniques or idea. I describe this validation processes in the following sub-sections.

6.4.3.1 Validating through learner feedback

The data shows that the process of validating new knowledge was connected to the responses of learners for whom the ideas or outcomes of reflection were used. After going through a process of classroom exploration or experimentation, most teachers in the study validated 'new knowledge' by trying it out in classrooms to see if it 'worked'.

Although some of these have already been illustrated by earlier discussions, I explore them through a different data extracts which I have merged as Extract 34.

Extract 44

001	Lola	It's also when I test it when I try it and it works (Lola/295).
002	Kenny	So <u>the feedback</u> (.) what he will give me will tell me that yes something has
003		happened (Kenny/173).
004	Mary	Okay let's try it out and see how it works (Mary/117).
005	Nicky	When I apply it in class and <u>I get the right responses </u>then I know it's okay
006		(Nicky/481).
007	Rihanna	Well it will show (.) It will show in the um (.) <u>in the child's performance</u> (.)
008		I think so (Rihanna/202).

Extract 44 shows 5 different informants (from 5 interviews) who worked in government and privately owned primary and secondary schools. My analysis of data shows a similar trend in each teacher's experience: the most powerful indicators that a new idea, approach or method was relevant and successful was from direct feedback from learners. Although Lola and Mary use similar expressions: 'when I try it out and it works' (L 001) and 'let's try it out and see how it works' (L004), they are both referring to how the approach, idea or method works within the context of classroom practice, through its use with learners. Kenny, Nicky and Rihanna are more direct and suggest that the validation is given through feedback from learners: 'what he will give me tells me that yes something has happened' (L 002-003); 'when…I get the right responses' (L 005) and 'it will show …in the child's performance' (L 007). Responses from learners included comments sought by teachers (Extracts 5 & 6), teachers' review of the lesson, teaching approach and objectives (Extracts 20, 22) learners' response in class activities (Extract 19), learner talk within classroom sessions (Extract 12), observation of learners'

gestures, expressions and body language (Extracts 17, 18, & 23). Where responses, feedback or performance of learners were not satisfactory, these teachers simply discarded the approach, method or idea and tried again, going through another cycle (or cycles of reflection). It is a process that Dewey (1916) advocated through his descriptions of the five processes of reflective thinking:

> That he [learner/inquirer] have opportunity and occasion to test his ideas by application, to make their meaning clear and to discover for himself their validity (Phase Five: Dewey 1916: 192).

From Dewey, we learn that thinking is not enough. Ideas must be tested so that new meaning may be gained. It is a process that participants followed in their practice as they tried to make sense of teaching and learning.

6.4.3.2 Knowledge validation as context-bound

James described another further process of validation which was related to use of shared experience by another colleague. It highlights the idea that knowledge validation is context-bound. In Extract 45 I illustrate this.

Extract 45

111	R	Are there times when your colleagues validate some of these things
112		that you have shared from your experience?
113	James	Yeah (.) Some of them come back and tell me it really worked and so
114		on
115	R	They tried it out?
116	James	They tried it out and it really worked
117	R	Have you also tried out what um (.) the suggestions or um (.) some of
118		the experiences that were shared um (.) with your (.) from your
119		colleagues (.) have you tried them out in your classrooms?
120	James	I've tried some of them (.) some of them have really worked (.) some
121		of them did not really work with every situation (.) you know some of
122		the discussions they had with me when I place them into graphics I
123		discover that some of them they happen coincidentally (.) some of
124		them really happen based on em (.) time (James/111).

James and I discussed how the knowledge that is derived from his reflective experience is validated. In the process, I asked if his colleagues have ever validated some of this 'new knowledge'. He answers in the affirmative (L 113), confirming that they tried these ideas or approaches and they worked. However, when I ask about his own experience of testing his colleagues' ideas he answers that sometimes the ideas worked and sometimes they didn't. He observes that an idea that worked in one situation may not work in another because of different variables. One of these is specified as time (L 120-124). Therefore, the context of application is shown as being relevant in knowledge validation. According to Moon (2005:12), teachers need to think critically and this capacity 'relies upon an understanding of knowledge as constructed and related to its context (relativist), which is not possible if knowledge is viewed only in an absolute manner'. James' experience illustrates Moon's argument that knowledge gained from reflection is relative and context-bound.

Extract 45 shows a corresponding relationship that this participant was part of. The ideas that he shared from reflective inquiry were tested or tried out by other teachers and found to work. On the other hand he had also tried out ideas from colleagues and found that they worked. However, the data shows that the validity of new learning is sometimes contextual: 'some of them did not really work with every situation' (L 121-124). This follows a constructivist view of knowledge as being relative and context bound (Crotty 1998, Richards 2003). A potential method of validating 'new knowledge' in the context is by what Lincoln and Guba (2000: 167) call a 'community consensus regarding what is 'real', what is useful, and what has meaning' (Lincoln and Guba 2000: 167). The importance of this consensus in a TA, TG or learning community, is articulated by Manny in Extract 46.

Extract 46

497	Manny	I believe that knowledge hoarded knowledge not shared is
498		knowledge lost (.) In the process just as I've always said no
499		man is an island (.) in the process of sharing one is learning
500		that is why I believe in sharing my experiences (.) and if I'm
501		sharing my experiences with colleagues there is every
502		tendency that that person may give me a different method of
503		doing the same thing and in that process that person will also
504		learn from me another way of doing the same thing he has
505		been doing for many years (.) I'll say that (Manny/497).

In Extract 46 Manny explains the role of the colleagues in knowledge-centred reflection. According to him, the process of reflection, which connects one to his/her colleagues, serves three purposes: to gain new insights, methods or experience (L 497-502); to share new learning with other colleagues (L 500-501) and record or safeguard new knowledge (L 497). The collaboration with other colleagues which Manny yearns for ('what are

others doing? I could compare their practices with mine' Extract 28: 460-461) could be said to be both an outcome of regular reflection on practice and a need to preserve and disseminate what has been learned. In the following sub-section I describe the characterization of reflection by participants in the study.

6.4.4 The characterization of reflection

This sub-section of the thesis provides evidence about how Nigerian English teachers perceive reflection. According to Johnson (2009: 20), the knowledge base of SLTE has traditionally been drawn from disciplines like SLA and theoretical linguistics until now: 'with little from the work of L2 teachers and L2 teaching itself'. Johnson argues that 'we accept as legitimate knowledge that is generated by and from practitioners as they participate in the social practices associated with L2 teaching' (2009: 22). In the light of these arguments, I present the characterization of reflection by Nigerian English teachers who present from their own perspectives their constructs of reflection. Insights gained from participants' constructs of reflection in the study, was mainly from two sources: an analysis of metaphors used by participants to describe reflection during the interview and analysis of questionnaire B (Appendix 3) from 12 participants' response (6 of these were interviewed).

6.4.4.1 Constructs of reflection

Questionnaire B probed respondents' perception of reflection by asking through a first question that asked: 'what is your understanding of reflection or reflective practice?' Respondents described their perceptions of reflection in their own words. During analysis, one response was discovered to be a quote from an article about reflection and was discarded because I wanted explanations that were more original to participants' experience. However, I cannot be sure where respondents' constructs come from. However, they had all completed either the CICTT and/or the CIDTT course. Extract 47 shows participants' responses to this question.

Extract 47

1. Reflection is a conscious critical examination of self in practice to gather data for the purpose of bringing about positive changes and improvements in professional outcomes.

2. Reflective practice is a process of looking at what you do in the classroom, analyzing and evaluating it.

3. Reflective practice is thinking about a process that *had taken place* and evaluating the process.

4. Reflective practice is a self-appraising practice, where the teacher/trainer relives each teaching/learning session with the view to improve on their practice

5. Reflection or reflective practice to [my] understanding is *looking back* at the experience got from the course training and applying it to my *present* teaching practice.

6. To my mind, reflection is deep thinking that involves looking inwards.

7. Thinking carefully of, pondering over past experiences or knowledge.

8. Reflection has to do with the ability to think and create new ideas and also look for better ways of improving on a particular activity.

9. Thinking over a process, the challenges encountered how they were solved as well as the lessons learnt and using it to plan for *the future*.

10. Sitting back to think about what happened, how it happened, what you did, and what you should have done to make things better.

11. Reflection is a process that enables me considers (sic) my work or experiences and records (sic) my thoughts in a diary for *future use*. Reflective practice helps me reflect on action for continuous learning.

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In Extract 47 words used to associate reflection with thinking are underlined. Highlighted words show the context of reflection as participants' perceived it while time constructs are italicized. Words used by respondents to describe reflective thinking are: *critical, examination, self, looking, analyzing, thinking, process, self-appraising, relive, learning, experience, deep-thinking, pondering, knowledge, ideas, create and thought.* Not surprisingly, they are similar to words, which are used to describe reflection in the literature (Dewey 1933, Schön 1983; 1987; Freire 1978; Jarvis 1992; Day 1993; McClure 2006). When all three groups of words were identified they were categorized into the framework below (figure 16).
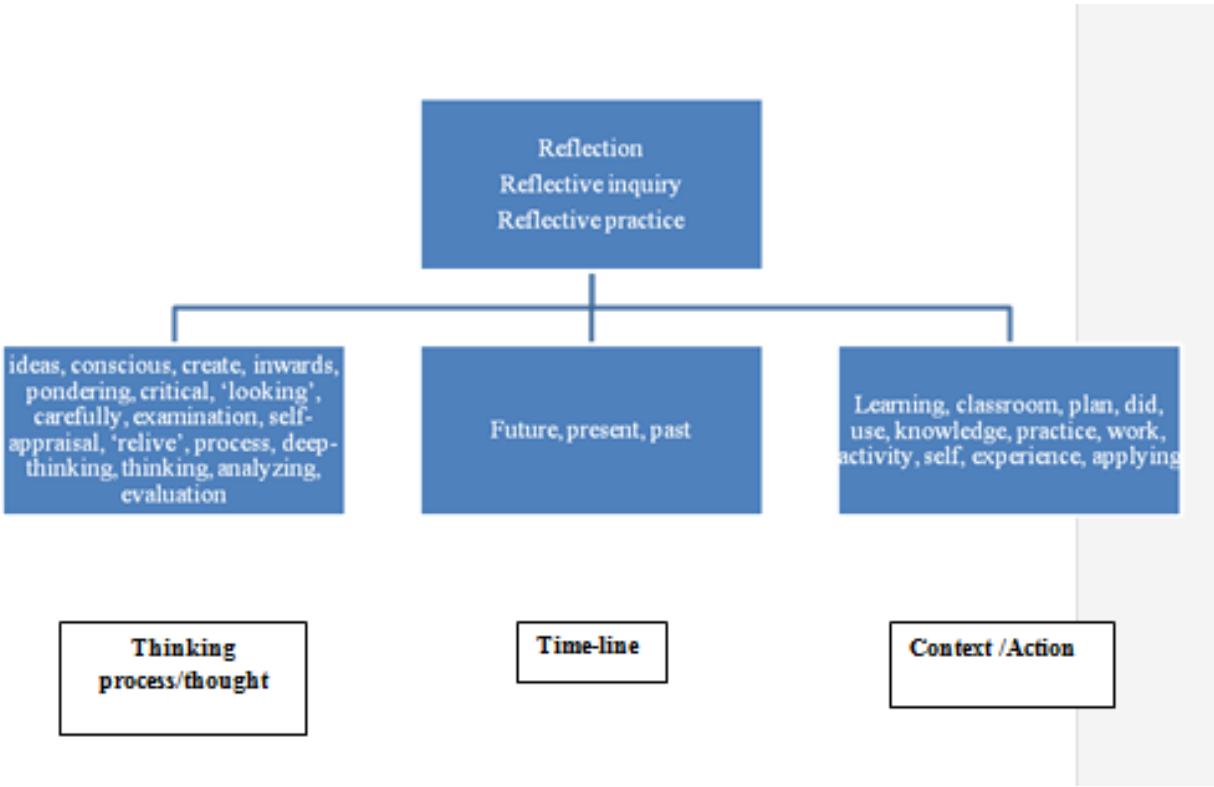
Figure 16 Construct of reflection from Questionnaire B responses

Figure 16 shows that respondents did not construe reflection as ordinary thought but as analytical or evaluative thinking process that was used to engage with self, experience and practice over a period of time. This was compared with the literature. For example Johns (2000) states:

> reflection is a window through which the practitioner can view and focus self within the context of her own lived experience (…) to take more appropriate action in future situations (Johns 2000: 34)

Johns identifies reflection as a practitioner's method of gaining a perspective of self in a specific context (lived experience) for a future purpose. The categories in Figure 16 correspond to constructs of reflection in the literature, which describe reflection as inseparable thought and action (Dewey 1933, Schön 1983, 1987, and Freire 1978). However, in emphasizing the rigour of the experience, Dewey (1933: 38) observes that 'reflection is a complex, rigorous, intellectual and emotional enterprise that takes time to do well'. Rodgers (2002: 844) also emphasizes on the time element of reflection in terms of development: reflection is 'a complex, rigorous, intellectual, and emotional enterprise that takes time to do well'. Farrell (1999) describes how difficult it was for a group of EFL teachers to develop structured reflective thinking during a 16-week study period. When I ask a participant about the length of time she uses to reflect, she replies:

Extract 48

```
861   Lola   It depends (.) it may not actually have duration (.) reflection may not
862          actually have duration (.)  it depends on what you're thinking about and
863          what you reflect to achieve (.) so it may not actually have duration (.) some
864          issues may require maybe few minutes' reflection (.) some may require
865          maybe a day (.) some can even take up to weeks for you to be able to come
866          up with something (.) it takes you some days (.) weeks (.) it depends on the
867          issue at hand and the steps (.) the necessary steps that you need to take via
868          reflecting (Lola/861)
```

Lola responds that reflection does not have a specific duration, suggesting its continuing nature. Her estimation is that an episode of reflection may last between a few minutes and a few weeks, depending on the issue and process followed (L 861-866) including the actions that are related to the reflection processes: 'the necessary steps you need to take via reflecting' (from data: testing and experimenting, talking to learners, discussing with colleagues, etc.). Time emerged from the study as a key ingredient to the developing of reflective thinking. It took the intervention group several months of meeting to develop a more concrete perception of reflection that they could articulate and link with their classroom experience (illustrated by Rihanna in this study). My earliest research journal records show that the head teacher and administrator of the Lagos school (where the intervention took place) had observed before the study started that participants were very busy and had little time for professional development

> The idea of teacher-led professional development seems to be attractive for this school. In terms of cost it would be less than getting a trainer to train all teachers. They [the head teacher and school administrator] talked about teachers' unwillingness to spend more time on professional development. They observed that their teachers are too busy (Researcher journal entry 23/11/09)

At the end of the study I asked participants about the limitations they faced in their meetings regarding the process of learning to reflect or to become a reflective teacher. Extract 49 shows their response.

Extract 49

123	Ariel	Time
124	Anne	Time
125	Angela	Time
126	Katherine	Time
127	R	Time? What do you mean by time?
128	Rihanna	You know we are very busy here and we have lots of things to do so the time
129		is always militating against our meeting
120	R	Okay (.) any other limitations apart from time?
121	Rihanna	Majorly it is the time (.) there's time constraint and em (.) maybe when we go
122		into the project we are into (...) then we'll now look at other challenges we
123		may be facing but to get us coming together you know, you have to you
124		know, we keep you know, it's like we're begging, come let's meet or
125		whatever because people are always busy, very busy. (Focus Group 2)
126		

In Extract 49 participants concur that time was their greatest challenge during the study. In Liou's (2001) study of reflection of student teachers in Taiwan, he discovered like Farrell (1999) that his students could not develop critical reflection within a six week period. Teacher educators and school administrators may need to create space for teachers or trainees to develop reflective thinking.

I carried out further analysis of Extract 47 to determine the similarities in participants' perspectives of reflection. See Table 17.

Item	Similarity of descriptions	Responses in Extract 47
1	Reflection is simplified as thinking	3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 10, & 11 (7 participants)
2	Reflection is associated with critical thought/thinking/evaluation and analysis.	1, 2, 3, 4 (4 participants)
3	Reflection is associated with past action	3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10 & 11 (7 participants)
4	Reflection is associated with current action	1, 2, 8 & 11 (4 participants)

5	Reflection is associated with process or structure	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 & 11 (9 participants)
6	Reflection is associated with self and practice	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 & 11 (10 participants)
7	There is an object of the reflection	1-11 (11 participants)
8	Reflection has specific purpose	1-11 (11 participants)
9	Reflection is result-oriented	1, 4, 5, 8, 9 & 11 (6 participants)
10	Reflection is applied	1, 4, 8, 9 &11 (5 participants)
11	Reflection results in 'new knowledge' or improvement	1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11 9 (7 participants)

Table 17 Similar descriptions of reflection

Table 17 shows the different descriptions of reflection (paraphrased). The right column shows responses from Extract 47 that indicate similar constructs from different respondents, while numbers (1-11) on the right column of the table refer to individual respondents that made these responses. Apart from items, 2 and 10 (reflection is critical thinking/reflection is applied) over 50% of the sample have similar constructs of reflection. The idea that reflection has specific purpose (use) and there is something (an object) to reflect about is common to 11 participants, while reflection as being contextualized in self and practice was construed by 10 participants (Item 6). 9 participants construed reflection from a perspective of structure (Item 5); 7 participants perceived it as a way of improving practice (Item 11).

6.4.4.2 Dynamic and non-dynamic views of reflection.

Analysis of participants' descriptions of reflection shows two different perspectives. These are not mutually exclusive: a non-dynamic (static) view of reflection which examines without corresponding future action and a dynamic view of reflection that looks to the future (action-oriented). For emphasis, this is illustrated in tabular form.

Non-dynamic views about reflection	Dynamic views about reflection
1. To my mind, reflection is <u>deep thinking</u> that involves <u>looking inwards.</u> 2. <u>Thinking carefully of</u>, <u>pondering</u> over past <u>experiences or knowledge.</u> 3. Sitting back <u>to think about</u> what <u>happened</u>, how it happened, <u>what you did</u>, and what you should have done to make things better. 4. Reflective practice is a process of <u>looking</u> at what you do in the <u>classroom</u>, <u>analyzing</u> and <u>evaluating</u> it.	5. Reflection is a <u>conscious critical examination</u> of <u>self</u> in <u>practice</u> to gather data for the purpose of bringing about positive changes and improvements in professional outcomes. 6. Reflection has to do with the ability <u>to think</u> and <u>create new ideas</u> and also <u>look</u> for better ways of improving on <u>a particular activity.</u> 7. <u>Thinking over a process,</u> the challenges encountered how they were solved as well as the lessons learnt and using it <u>to plan for the future</u>. 8. Reflection or reflective practice to [my] understanding is <u>looking back</u> at <u>the experience</u> got from the course training <u>and applying it</u> to my *present* teaching <u>practice</u>. 9. Reflection is a process that enables me <u>considers</u> (sic) my <u>work or experiences</u> and records (sic) my <u>thoughts</u> in a diary for future use. Reflective practice helps me reflect on action for continuous learning.

Table 18 Dynamic and non-dynamic views of reflection

Table 18 illustrates four participants' descriptions of reflection that are non-dynamic and ruminatory. These are distinguished by the non-connection of reflective thinking with

future practice. Respondents who held this view saw reflection as a way of thinking about practice but without mentioning a plan for the future. Their descriptions show that reflection looked inwards (Item 1), backwards (Items 2, 3), at current practice (Item 4) without looking specifying the future. Static or non-dynamic views were evaluative no doubt but they fell short of the expectations of future application to practice. On the other hand, a dynamic view of reflection shows clearly that reflective inquiry is relevant to present and future practice through some application or some purposeful intention to bring the learning forward into practice. Dynamic views of reflection show the complete cycle of reflection that connects present, past and current action with future action. This reflects the position of Hoyrup and Elkjaer (2006: 36) when they say that reflection 'illuminates what the self and others have experienced, providing a basis for future action'. More participants in the sample connected their constructs of reflection to its relevance for the present or future by using words and expressions like: 'applying it to my present teaching practice' (Table 18: 8), 'bringing about positive change' (Table 18: 5), 'looks for better ways', (Table 18: 6). According to Rodgers (2002: 846): 'we make sense of each new experience based on the meaning gleaned from our own past experiences, as well as other prior knowledge we have about the world-what we have heard and read of others' experience and ideas'. This process of learning is described by Claxton (2006) as only ending in the grave.

6.4.4.3 Metaphors for reflection

During interviews I explored participants' constructs of reflection through metaphors when I noticed that it naturally occurred in their descriptions. According to Block (1992: 51-53) metaphors are used as 'explanatory vehicles'. Participants' metaphors provide further insight about their characterization of reflection.

Participant	Metaphor	Comments by participants
Delores	Mirror	'At times I don't even like … what I see in the mirror … at times I see myself looking worried … then it will now bring er (.) into my consciousness (.) 'oh you need to relax!''
James	A chewing goat 'ruminating'	'it's healthy for a goat because some of the pasture he took earlier were not well grinded by the teeth maybe because of ... so as the goat stays back (.) he brings it up again and then chews it again'.
Kenny	Propeller	'It's a propeller of learning'
Manny	Moment of truth	'Um (.) yeah (.) it is a moment when you tell yourself the truth… you may not even realise that it was a mistake then but now while you're sitting down (.) that is when you tell yourself the moment of truth'
Gloria	Cooking	'Now if you just steam when you are supposed to marinate you will get a different result … if you don't taste what you have steamed or marinated you will lose the opportunity you could have got (.) you could have discovered that oh I should have done this instead of this'
Nicky	Back of the palm	'There's no way you look at the palm (.) you'll automatically look at the back of your hand because it's just something natural'
Lola	Ladder	'In reflection it comes step by step (.) gradually you know (.) it is piling up (.) building up from step to step till you get to where you are going to (.) so you start from somewhere and reflection must start from somewhere (.) so I see it as a ladder climbing till you get to where (.) till you reach your target'
Rihanna	Oasis	'There is dryness, there is no light (.) everything is dry and no comfort and then you suddenly discover this little you know (.) stream of water and it's like 'oh! Thank God! At least I have water (.) Oh!''
Stella	A motor engine	I will just call it the engine (.) the motor for the practice

Table 19 Metaphors of reflection from the study

Not every participant was asked for a metaphor during interviews. However, when I asked it was usually about the end of interviews, and I asked for a little explanation of the metaphor from each participant. An analysis of these metaphors was carried out through a process of comparison and categorization that looked at meaning in the light of participants' other statements during interviews and by comparing all metaphorical constructs.

Delores and Manny had similar constructs for reflection, as a mirror or 'moment of truth' it showed them their mistakes, limitations and shortcomings. However, this was so that an intervention of some sort could take place as Delores suggests: 'then it will now bring er (.) into my consciousness (.) 'oh you need to relax!'. This view of reflection was a teacher-centred view that showed the teacher what they were like and their need to change. James and Gloria used metaphors that showed reflection as on-going process. It was also a teacher-centred view of reflection. James described it as a goat regurgitating the grass it had already eaten, to re-chew it again and again. This he said was a healthy process: 'it's healthy for a goat'. On the other hand Gloria uses cooking as a metaphor to show the different operations that take place within a reflective process, she suggests it is a very selective process: 'if you just steam when you are supposed to marinate you will get a different result'. From Gloria's account we can infer that she perceives reflection as a systematic process that shows the careful consideration that Dewey (1933) describes. In the process, she recommends that the cook (teacher) 'tastes' as she goes along showing the testing and experimenting that she associates with reflection.

Kenny, Lola and Sylvia construed reflection in terms of progression as: propeller; Ladder; 'a motor engine'. Lola explains it: 'it comes step-by-step (.) gradually you know…till you get to where you are going'. While Lola gives a description of gradual movement, Kenny and Sylvia illustrate reflection as a powerful source of energy that moves learning or practice forward. Nicky construed reflection as a natural thing that was always present: she describes how one looks at one's palm and automatically looks at the other side of the hand. Rihanna who was learning to integrate reflection into her practice with the support of the TG describes it as an oasis in the desert: 'there is dryness, there is no light (.) everything is dry and no comfort and then you suddenly discover this little you know (.) stream of water and it's like 'oh! Thank God! At least I have water (.) Oh!''. These descriptions are no different from the other participants have described. They are spoken with conviction and demonstrate that reflection is an important part of practice. It helps teachers to self-examine, explore their practice, make informed decisions through gradual and quick processes, and develop new ideas and knowledge over a period of time. When Nicky describes reflection as the opposite side of the palm, she brings the views of researchers like Akbari (2007) into focus:

> teachers have always been reflecting on what they have been doing in their classes. It would be impossible to imagine a context in which we have human interaction on a cognitive level and no reflection going on (Akbari 2007: 200)

It reinforces the idea that reflection is not unfamiliar as do Zeichner (1996) and van Manen (1995) who argue that teaching is itself reflective and teachers have some form of reflection in their practice. In the following section, I describe the spectrum of reflection I have identified.

6.4.4.4. A Spectrum of reflection

The idea that reflection involves a range of experience is captured by Boud et al (1985) when they describe reflection as 'a generic term for those intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to a new understanding and appreciation' (1985: 19). These intellectual and affective activities are grounded in the contextual experience of individuals and may therefore be as diverse as they are similar. In my analytic memos I muse on the possibility that there is a reflective spectrum (based on my analysis of data):

> there appears to be a reflective spectrum. From shallow to deep, spontaneous to deliberate, intuition to practice (…) the further down the spectrum the more structured and more regular, the more continuing the type of reflection (Memo/August 2011).

The idea that reflection is a spectrum is not new. It is part of the assumptions used for the operational definition of reflective teachers (Copeland et al (1993) cited in Day 1993: 84) one of which is 'the demonstration of reflective practice is seen to exist along a continuum or 'reflective spectrum'. Data shows reflection as shallow for some (5.1.1), spontaneous for Delores and Rihanna (Extracts 41 & 42), it is intuitive for Mary (Extract 38), deliberate for Manny and Sylvia (Extracts 5 & 30) and deep for Nicky and Gloria (Extracts 32 & 35).

This reflective spectrum can be likened to the experience of learning and development which, as Claxton (2001) describes as only ending in the grave. In addition, the idea of reflective practice as a continuum is not foreign to Schön's theoretical framework as

Schön (1983: 31) describes it as: 'a dialogue of thinking and doing through which I become more skillful.' This suggests that practitioners are at different stages of an experience of reflection. This was identified in the study on the basis of participants'

- Engagement with reflection (the scope of reflective thinking)

- Frequency of use of reflection (how regular)

- Ability to articulate the experience (showing concrete experience of reflection).

Teachers in the study were found to engage in reflection in different ways: some rarely, others randomly and many at different stages of regular use. The reflective spectrum I plotted was determined by how these teachers articulated their experience of reflection, how often it was used, how it influenced their practiced and how it made them more collaborative. Figure 17 illustrates the different participants who were interviewed and my perception of where they could be on the spectrum which represents their developing use of reflection in practices.

Criteria used for spectrum: engagement (scope), frequency of use and ability to articulate reflection

Zones of intuitive reflection   **Zones of more systematic**

reflection

Jordan---Grace—Kenny—Mary - Rihanna   James- Lola- Nicky -Delores-Gloria-Manny--Sylvia

Rare; irregular; random; need led   *More regular; current; informed by formal course*

Random records and experiments   *Use of diaries, notes, experiments; colleagues*

Openness in process   *Openness; wholeheartedness; responsibility*

Some self-assessment   *Self-assessment; evaluation of practice*

Gathering information/selective use   *Use of information & experience to guide practice*

Information Zone   ***Zone of informed practice***

Figure 17 The reflective spectrum-of-use identified in the study

Figure 17 shows participants as I placed them on the spectrum. Engagement with reflection represents my perceptions about the depth of reflection used. For example, some participants connected different phases of reflection to different classroom experience or engaged in more structured ways (e.g. Manny; Extracts 5 & 6) while some reflected more intuitively (e.g. Mary: Extract 38). The frequency of use of reflection on the other hand had to do with the frequency of the experience. More regular users were placed in what I call the 'zone of informed practice', where their reflections were deliberate and perceived as a valuable teaching tool, for example, Sylvia (Extract 30) who integrated it as a teacher learning tool used to mentor or supervise colleagues. The ability to articulate the experience was also important, because I observed that participants like Mary (Extract 38) and Kenny (extract 10) had some form of reflection in their practice but could not articulate this clearly. While those who were more regular users could give clearer descriptions of what they had done and why they did it (Sylvia: 17).

At the two ends of the continuum were Jordan (shallow) and Sylvia (deep). Jordan was coded as the information gatherer in the study. She showed very little evidence of reflection and told me she had not heard about action research or reflection. She talked about her learners in ways that showed no evidence of classroom explorations or informed interventions:

> I try to use different methods (.) as I teach them I try to relax them at times (.) you know (.) play with them (.) make them to laugh but not taking me for granted (.) so I change methods at times (.) if I use this method (.) if I see that the children are maybe (.) you know at times they take you for granted (.) they see you as a

playful… they will make noise about it and I change that method (.) I keep on changing method because my method of teaching matters a lot in having effective learning (Jordan/26).

Although Jordan shows some concern for her learners and tries to make her classroom friendlier or change methods, it does not appear to be informed by any reflective experience or by the identified needs of learners. From her example it appears to come from a classroom management intent which is more self-centred ('but not to take me for granted…at times they take you for granted') than learner-centred. In the one hour we discussed during the interview, I could not draw any evidence of reflective thinking or reflective inquiry from her talk. What stood her out was her love for information, which she mentioned that she always gathers from friends. Extract 50 shows one episode.

Extract 50

117   Jordan   Well (.) I learn a lot from people (.) I learn a lot from people
118   because I might know as an individual thinking that I have known
119   it all (.) not knowing that there are so many things I have not
120   known (.) so when I interact with people you know (.) I gather
121   more information (.) just like now that most of us came and some
122   dropped (.) [her colleague would not join the study] I did not drop
122   because I want to have information (.) because I feel that no
123   information is wasted (.) this thing that we are doing I know that I
124   must learn at least something from it (.) [the study] that was why I
125   stayed there (Jordan/177)

Above, Jordan describes how she learns from other people: she does so by gathering information during her interactions. She is obviously curious and willing to know new things but there was no corresponding evidence of being reflective in her interviews. It is possible that she is reflective in some way. However, she admits she does not know the concept. Although one of her colleagues would not join the study, she accepted to join because she hoped to learn something from it. Jordan is put on the spectrum

because she is part of the PLG, a TG started by Kenny, her colleague at school. I compare data from Rihanna, the teacher from the intervention group with Jordan's and there is a difference in both teachers' relationship with their colleagues as illustrated by data:

> if I'm teaching a topic now and I have a challenge I can ask them in the meeting or just tell them this is what I've been experiencing with my children in the class (.) what do you suggest or how best do you think I can present this topic? (Rihanna/187: Extract 1)

Rihanna's relationship with colleagues is a more dynamic one than described by Jordan. It revolves around professional context and connects back into the classroom. While Jordan says: 'when I interact with people (…) I gather more information' (a general thing); Rihanna actually asks for specific information. The difference is that Jordan's information gathering process is passive and receptive, while Rihanna's is active and productive; it involves some inquiry. On the spectrum, after Jordan was Grace. Grace was the teacher who said she reflects only while she is school and did not think about the school after leaving it each day. When I asked her if she reflects after school she replies: 'I don't know (.) my kind of person is when I'm out of the system some other thing takes my attention' (Grace/183). Earlier in the interview she describes her understanding of the use of reflection in her practice (Extract 51).

Extract 51

168	Grace	Yeah (.) so at that point you the teacher also have to reflect on
169		what is the next thing for me to do to get this child to be able to
170		identify nouns because now you have seen that you have a child
171		that can't identify a noun in the class (.) so you have to think over
172		it immediately (.) know how to strategise to let the child be able
173		to identify (.) so at that point reflecting (.) thinking (.) can come in
174		which can also come at the end of your lesson (Grace/168)

Grace explains that the teacher has to reflect when she finds that a child is not able to carry out a task (L 168-172). She says as a result 'you have to think over it immediately (.) so at that point reflection (.) thinking (.) can come in'' (Lines 171-173). When she says 'at that point reflection (.) thinking can come in' it suggests that she is speaking hypothetically or does not often use reflection in her practice.

Further down the spectrum were Manny and Sylvia. Manny had a long experience of reflection, which he describes as having been irregular before the formal course. He was probably the most articulate in his discussions about reflection which he had unknowing used in his practice at least eight years before the interview and in our interview he talked about it with a professional development focus, albeit in a general way (Sylvia talked about reflection in a more balanced way; with a focus on children including descriptions of classroom life and her development).

Extract 52

10	Manny	As a professional it has always been there (.) even though we did some of
11		these things unconsciously it was not given the impetus that we see from
12		the course (.) you know these are some of the things that we take for
13		granted even though we have been doing them we have not given them the
14		prominence that they deserve (.) but the course now gave me an
15		opportunity to take reflection more seriously than it has ever been done (.)
16		and it also gave me the opportunity of realising one thing (.) that reflection
17		plays a very important role in learning not just for me as a teacher but also
18		for my learners (.) so I think it has always been there even though we
19		haven't been doing it you know as regularly and as painstakingly as it
20		ought to be done (Manny/10)

Manny describes reflection as something that has always been in his practice, although it was not a conscious thing until he took the course (L 10-12). In speaking about reflection, he describes as one of the things teachers take for granted, suggesting that reflection is may be implicitly present in most teachers' practice (L 12-14). In L 15-16 and 19, he describes the opportunity of taking reflection more seriously, which he got from the course. His use of the expression 'more seriously' suggests a crossover from implicit to explicit practice and from intuitive to deliberate practice. His experience of reflection shows in his expression of its value for both teachers and learners (L17-18).

Sylvia is at the end of the spectrum because she uses it beyond her own classroom. As a supervisory tool (6.2: Extract 20), she used it to shape other colleagues' perspectives of teaching and learning. Sylvia's perspective of reflective practice is shown in Extract 53

Extract 53

10	Sylvia	Reflective to me is kind of self-appraisal for the practitioner (.) in
11		other words I take on a session (.) teaching-learning session (.) with
12		the learners (.) I may be observed (.) I may not be observed (.) but as
13		I am through with the class I sit back (.) run through the whole
14		session (.) ask myself questions (.) did I really realize my objective?
15		Did the learners learn as I desired? Were there things I did that I
16		shouldn't have done or how did the learners respond to a particular
17		strategy? That's just how I see reflective practice (Sylvia/10).
18		

Sylvia had done the same courses that Manny had completed (they both took the CICTT and CIDTT). Sylvia stands out for having a more practical view of reflective practice and because it appears to be more regularly integrated into her practice as both a teacher

and supervisor. Extract 53 is her response to a question I asked her, to find out her construction of reflective practice. She starts by talking about herself and the exploratory process she goes through in a process, which is first teacher-centred. Using WH questions she explores her practice beginning from herself in self-corrective ways. For Wharton (2012: 490) 'reflection involves uncertain questioning, self-criticism, exploring, trying out ideas and acknowledging the messy nature of reality'. Sometimes (as one participant puts it) teachers make mistakes and they cannot work away from the classroom and pretend that nothing happened. These messy situations are straightened out by teachers' reflective inquiry, or as she says:

> you walk in to a class and you make a mistake (.) we make mistakes every time we walk into a class and you can't just walk away and pretend that nothing happened (.) you need to go back and sit down again and like call back the class before and say okay what do I do to better this thing? So when you get back after the class (.) the next time (.) you are already on guard (Nicky/369)

Nicky, who explains some of the messy situations Nigerian English teachers encounter was classified within the zone of informed practice. Her reflective practice was informed by the CICTT course. However, her use of reflection was identified as being more individualistic.

Two main distinctions are made in the spectrum (Figure 17): zone of systematic reflection (zone of informed practice) and the zone of intuitive reflection (the information zone). The information zone is where teachers gathered information without necessarily processing them through a structured reflective process (e.g. Jordan). While in the zone of informed practice reflection was in more regular use in practice, thus

informing the decisions made by these teachers in their classrooms. I suggest that while the information zone was characterized by random and intuitive reflection. Kenny illustrates a participant who is currently progressing through this zone.

Extract 54

68	Kenny	I think most of the inspiration (.) most of the (.) what really gave (.)
69		what really propelled me to go into that [starting the PLG] I'll say
70		meeting people has really helped me and also the first time I met a
71		you we had a chat on that (.) we really talked (.) then I came back
72		home (.) I tried to incorporate this thing into my own programme
73		(.) at times the school might have their own programme (.) I'm not
74		trying to disobey them but I want what will (.) I'll be able to
75		achieve a goal (.) at times I go like the school will tell me that look
77		(.) this thing you must make sure that you write test (.) CA
78		[continuous assessment test] (.) so one of the things I do (.) yes we
79		write CA but I don't believe all the time writing (.) writing (.)
80		writing CA (Kenny/68).

Although Kenny had started a TG he could not yet clearly talk about his experience of reflection. He could not also clearly justify his position or actions in clear ways: 'I tried to incorporate this thing [reflection] into my own programme' (L 72). However, from his account it is clear that he is developing a different perspective about learners in his school, although he says he is trying not to disobey the school (Lines 71-75).

The zone of informed practice was characterized by more regular reflections which integrated some structure, for example, by taking down notes for analysis or writing reports of classroom experience (Manny: Extract 6 & 6.4.1.2). Teachers like Manny and Sylvia in this zone, were more critical of themselves and of their practice and collaborated more with peers than those in the informative zone. In Table 20 I provide a

table of extracts from each of the teachers in the spectrum. Where extracts of data are shown in the main body of discussions, I indicate this with the description 'in text' showing where these extracts can be found in the thesis.

S/N	Names	Extracts from Thesis
1	Jordan	Extract 50, 6.1.3; 6.4.4.4 (in text)
2	Grace	Extracts 24, 51
3	Kenny	Extracts 10, 21; 6.1.2, 6.2.4 (in text)
4	Mary	Extracts 38, 40, 44; 6.4.21 (in text)
5	Rihanna	Extracts 1, 4, 7, 9, 16; 6.1.3, 6.2.1 (in text)
6	James	Extracts 27, 31, 33, 45; 6.2.1; 6.4.2.3 (in text)
7	Nicky	Extracts 12, 19, 20, 32, 37,
8	Lola	Extracts 15, 18, 29, 43, 48
9	Delores	Extracts 22, 23, 426, 41
10	Gloria	Extracts 11, 35, 27
11	Manny	Extract 5, 6, 10, 28, 46, 52; 6.4.2 (in text)
12	Sylvia	Extracts 14, 17, 25, 30, 53; 6.4.4.4 (in text)

Table 20 Extracts from interviews by participants

Participants in the study are shown in Table 20 by identity and the extracts in the study. These extracts are from Chapters 5 & 6. Occurrence in data was not used to plot the spectrum, but depth of reflection, ability to articulate the experience and frequency of use. Jordan (Number 1) was identified in the study as the least reflective but with

potential for entering into some form of reflective inquiry through participation in the Progressive Learning Group. Rihanna (Number 5) was placed on the spectrum before the zone of informed practice, as there was no clear evidence of <u>systematic</u> reflection in her practice even though from her accounts there is some evidence that she had begun to integrate reflection into her practice with the support of the TG. All teachers between Number 6 and 12 had taken a formal teacher development course that integrated reflective practice in classroom experience which were linked to several formal assessments. James (Number 12) however, was the exception. Although he had taken a reflective course, he was not required to show clear evidence of reflection from his classroom. The six teachers who are identified in the zone of informed practice are not all regular in their use of reflection. Sylvia (Number 12) is the furthest along the spectrum, for her experience, ability to talk clearly about reflection of and the frequency of use of reflection. She was the only participant in the study who used reflection as both a tool for teaching (van Manen 1995) and as a tool for supporting other teachers' practice by instigating reflection during the post observation interviews that she carried out with younger colleagues.

Summary

In this chapter, I described how participants in the study used reflection in very specific ways in their classroom practice and experience of teaching and learning. This was to support their development as teachers, to increase their teaching skills, improve learning experience for their learners and to develop new perspectives of practice and the possibilities. I also described constructs of reflection from the study, which are not too

different from what the literature says about reflection. Finally, using my analysis of data and the coding of individual participants in the study (by their experience of reflection), I was able to plot the spectrum of reflection-in-use that was identified in the study. Findings in this study suggest that as Dey (1993) and Copeland et al (1993) state that there is a continuum of reflection. Findings in this study show that each participant construed reflection differently and its use was multifaceted. This suggests that in TEd, teacher educators need to understand that reflection is used in specific ways. Teacher educators will therefore need to develop specific tools to support the development and use of reflection by teachers or trainees. In this study, participants were found to have encountered reflection in different ways: intuitively, through the challenges of practice; through formal courses or through their encounters with me, the researcher. According to Rodgers (2002: 850), 'the impulse to reflect is generated by an encounter with, and the conscious perception of, the potential significance inherent in an experience' (Rodgers 2002: 850). However, she concedes that not everyone recognizes this potential. In the following Chapter, I conclude the study by summarizing my findings and evaluating the study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusions and Evaluations

Introduction

In this last chapter of the thesis, I share my conclusions and evaluations of the study by providing a summary of the main findings, my contributions to knowledge, the implications, limitations of the study and directions for future research. By using exploratory, interpretive research, I have challenged my assumptions and increased my understanding of reflective inquiry and the ELT context in Nigeria. The new perspectives I have gained from the study are significant for my development as an English language teacher educator, for participants in the study, for the Nigerian teacher development context and for SLTE in which reflection is central.

7. 1 Summary of findings and research question

The research examined the use of reflection in Nigerian English teachers' practice, through classroom observations, exploration of reflection in a TG and through questionnaires, individual and focus group interviews. Its aim was to evidence the potential of reflection for classroom practice and teacher development. It also aimed to make the implicit knowledge of these Nigerian teachers more explicit, thus creating

more awareness about the benefits of informed practice. It was also a response to calls for more detailed data-led descriptions of reflection (Rodgers 2002, Wright 2010, Mann and Walsh 2013) and arguments that show a need to reconsider current ways in which reflection is integrated into teacher education (Lytle and Cochran-Smith 1991, Fendler 2003, Akbari 2007, Hobbs 2007, Otienoh 2009). A research question was used to explore reflection within the Nigerian ELT context: *'how do Nigerian English teachers use reflection?'* Four major findings were drawn from data in answer to this question. They show that in the context, reflection is multifaceted, was used in specific ways and contributed to the development of teachers and learners. They also show why participants reflected. In data, it was usually from a need to know 'what is this?' 'I want to know' (Nicky: 6.4.1.5: Extract 37; L 552), a need to develop competence (6.1.1), a need to support learners (6.2), a need to improve oneself (6.3.1), a need to improve practice or to revisit a successful classroom experience to learn from it or to motivate oneself (6.1.1, 6.3.1: Extract 25). In each instance it contributed to the development of the reflecting teacher. In the following sub-sections I provide summaries of findings.

7.1.1 Skill-centred reflection

Skill-centred reflection was identified in data as a way in which reflection was used to improve practice, through a skill-centred focus. Data indicates that participants used reflection to develop teaching competence, to innovate in small ways in their classrooms and to problem-solve (6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3). In the process, they reactivated redundant

skills, shared 'new' ideas with colleagues and replicated actions that they had discovered in theirs' or colleagues' practice through discoveries, small experiments and interventions which had been made to support learners. In data this was not always a deliberate well thought out process. For Rihanna, it came from participation in the intervention TG meetings (study Group C) and from surprise that by carrying new ideas into her classroom from the TG, she could try them out adapt them successfully and thus add her voice to new discussions about practice in the TG ('so when I try out something and it works for me (…) I am bold (…) to talk about my experience'- 6.1.3 p. 212). Manny, another participant (who did not know what reflection was at the time) made his implicit knowledge more explicit by exploring his practice (from surprise at his success) through a structured reflective process and replicated these successful strategies in his practice (6.1.1: Extracts 5 & 6). Kenny brought some innovation into his government school classroom to make teaching more effective for his overpopulated classroom (6.1.2), illustrating how reflective thinking can support actions that improve practice. Thus data verified Schön's (1983: 68, 1987: 40) positions that practitioners' surprise at some outcome of routine practice could generate a reflective experience and that competent practitioners have a way of generating new 'knowing-in-action' from indeterminate zones of action, in this case- classrooms.

7.1.2 Learner-centred reflection

Findings from data show that participants used reflection in learner-centred ways. It also shows that a reflective process was started by participants' concerns about learners'

needs. This came from a need to improve practice for learners' sake. This was sometimes associated with feelings of inadequacy which teachers responded to by exploring their practice from the perspective of learners. In data this was found to have been carried out through small experiments after observing learners (observations of learners' body language or other feedback), by trying to understand their needs, attempts to find more suitable approaches to learning, and by looking for new ways to facilitate learning (6.2). Thus data also shows an interdependent relationship between teachers and learners (6.3). By reflecting, James recognized himself as a learner as (did Mary and Rihanna) and was able to create a more democratic classroom by telling his learners he was one of them ('I'm only a bigger learner coming to learn with you' (6.2.1: James/207). They also challenged their own assumptions and came to recognize that as L2 English teachers, they were learners also. Their actions allowed their learners the possibility of thinking more independently from knowing that their teachers did not know everything. These teachers' actions are not the norm in Nigerian classrooms. By becoming more autonomous in their approach to teaching (by departing from the status quo) they became more autonomous teachers. Evidence like these suggest that the corresponding relation of autonomy between teachers and their learners (Sinclair et al 2000) and the teacher-learner autonomy that Ushioda et al (2011) advocate for L2 teachers are in process in some Nigerian classrooms.

Guilt emerged in data as a factor that made participants more reflective. For example, Rihanna's guilt came from not having had a teaching qualification; even before I got into the study [this research] I learnt to read up materials (.) I'll go on the net (.) search and

you know (.) try to find out how I can do stuff in my classroom' (Rihanna/178: 6.2.1: p. 219). Brookfield (1995: 30, 92) suggests the need for teachers to challenge their own assumptions by examining themselves from their own perspectives and from that of learners.

7.1.3 Teacher-centred reflection

Findings show that reflection was also teacher-centred. It corresponded with the desire to make learning more effective for learners, and brought about a reflexive process of self-exploration, self-assessment and self-correction (6.2.1). Participants were found to use reflection in ways that focused on themselves for self-improvement. Two strands of this category are identified in data: self and professional (in the sense of community): while 'self' looked inwards, the 'professional' looked outwards to other colleagues for perspective (Brookfield 1995: 35), for ideas or to share 'new knowledge'. From Manny we know that it was a process of wanting to belong ('I want to see myself where <u>I actually belong</u> (.) make myself see where I am and where I ought to be in the next level (.) what are others doing? I could compare their practices with mine,' (6.3.1 Extract 28 L458-60). For Delores it was a process of wanting to 'become'. According to Delores 'it [reflection' makes me to be a better person (.) a better teacher' (6.3.1: L 14-15). While Manny's statement points to the professional community, Delores' points to herself. These encounters suggest that reflection may help form their identities as teachers and as professionals within a larger community. Data also shows that through a reflective

process teachers could motivate themselves by reliving and exploring what Noels (2009) describes as a pleasurable teaching experience (Noels 2009: 297). This is exemplified by Sylvia in the study (6.3.1: Extract 25).

7.1.4 Knowledge-centred reflection

Participants used reflection in knowledge-centred ways. Data indicates that participants made sense of teaching and learning through a reflective process that was either introspective or extrospective when the teacher reached out to other colleagues (as explained in 7.1.3). It involved a forward and backward movement that connected experience and learning in a process of reflection through self-exploration or by exploration of classrooms or other perspectives (learners', colleagues' and perspectives from received knowledge). Dewey explains that to: 'learn from experience' is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence. (1916: MW 9:147). It was a reflective process that showed itself in descriptions from participants like James who said: 'reflection goes all round (.) you could go back to a particular thing you had already concluded on and rethink it as if you have never thought of it to be able to get results (.) so I can't say it's a straight path (.) that description will be wrong (.) so it's all round (.) you go over issues that you have earlier gone to conclude about and even make new suggestions again' (6.4.1: Extract 31 L 758-762). Through a reflective deconstruction process, participants like Gloria explored for new understandings and were able to analyze

situations or make 'diagnosis' of classroom problems (6.4.1.3: Extract 35: L 363-371), thus generating personal knowledge. These descriptions confirm the theories of Dewey (1933: 107) that there are phases of reflection in learning experience. They also verify Schön (1983, 1987) who theorizes that practitioners can develop new ways of knowing from practice by participating in two modes of reflection: reflection-in-action or reflection-on-action (see 3.2). In the following sub-sections, I share my contributions to knowledge.

7.2 Contributions to Knowledge

The four findings that emerged from the study are original contributions to knowledge because they are outcomes of detailed data-led studies about reflection in an L2 English teaching context which demonstrate some of the theoretical perspectives of Dewey (1933) and Schön (1983, 1987). The findings which have been summarized above are significant because they illustrate that reflection is used in different ways and for specific purposes. They also provide some insight about how teachers think in practice. By carrying out this study, I have gone a little beyond where Dewey and Schön stopped by providing descriptions and evidence of reflective processes in Nigerian classrooms.

In this research, my explorations looked for 'a community consensus regarding what is 'real', what is useful, and what has meaning' (Lincoln and Guba 2000: 167). By exploring the use of reflection in Nigerian English classrooms, participants have demonstrated through 'a first hand-sense of what actually goes on in classrooms' (Eisner

2001: 137) that reflection has meaning, is useful and real. The study therefore answers to questions raised by Rodgers (2002) about the need to prove the authenticity of reflection and its values for TEd (2002). Participants' descriptions of their use of reflection in practice have verified van Manen's (1995) and Zeichner's (1996) positions that teaching is itself reflective. The idea that reflection is a tool for teaching (van Manen (1995) is also evident. This is significantly illustrated by the experiences shared by Manny who gives an account of a structured process of reflective inquiry he carried out five years before encountering reflection in a formal course: thus demonstrating that teachers have always reflected in their classrooms Akbari (2007). Nevertheless, from data we know that some teachers may prefer to reflect on other things rather than their own practice (6.2.4) as Sangani & Stelma, (2012) assert.

The integration of Nigerian English teachers' voices in discussions about reflection is a contribution to knowledge. According to Lytle and Cochran-Smith (1991):

> conspicuous by their absence from the literature of research on teaching are the voices of teachers, the questions and problems they pose, the frameworks they use to interpret and improve their practice, and the ways they define and understand their work lives (1991: 83).

From teachers in the study, we catch a glimpse of teacher thinking that suggests that Nigerian English teachers are no different from their colleagues in classrooms across the globe: they pose similar questions (6.4.1.2), find similar ways of answering them and try to make sense of teaching and learning through a reflective process: their 'knowledge', as practitioners in significant. In the process we can share the knowledge that comes

from their classrooms. As Johnson (2009) says, we need to 'accept as legitimate knowledge that is generated by and from practitioners as they participate in the social practices associated with L2 teaching' (2009: 22). In the following sections I describe other contributions to knowledge.

7.2.1 Triggers of reflection

Findings inform us that reflection has triggers. The four main findings in the study contribute to this idea which is also mentioned in summaries of findings. In data, triggers for reflection are associated with teachers' need to find ways of supporting learners (6.2), by a need to explore self or practice for a range of reasons (6.3) and by their need to reassure themselves in practice (6.1.1, 6.3.1). For example in skill-centred reflection, the need to develop competence originated from a desire to improve performance by creating more effective learning experience or by the need to identify successful learning strategies. This resulted in explorations of practice that looked for alternative ways to amend teaching approaches, carrying out classroom experiments and innovate in small ways (6.1). Triggers also came from feedback received from learners through the comments they made in class, body language and from classroom activities (6.2). Data shows that learner feedback could trigger an introspective process of reflection which identified the inadequacies or limitations of the teachers (as is explained in 7.1.2). The exploration of self within practice led to a self-oriented, teacher-centred reflective process. Although findings about triggers are not conclusive

in the study, they do demonstrate that experience is critical to the development of reflective thinking. Knowledge about triggers could be influential in the designing of TEd programmes.

7.2.2 The relevance of a formal course

The study included different types of teachers from primary, secondary, private and government schools. These teachers also had varying experiences of reflection, before and during the study. Two major groups of teachers can also be identified from the study: those who had no formal experience of reflection and those who had participated in a formal course. The development of both groups of teachers is significant in the study as they prove that reflection can be carried out by both groups. It also shows that reflection can be learned in formal and informal learning contexts.

From participants who took formal courses, we learn that teachers can retain learning about reflection and transfer it into their practice long after the course. However, the absence of strong theoretical perspectives about reflection in their course preparation is evident in their practice. As I have shown through the study, that Nigerian ELT practitioners use three types of knowledge in their classrooms: experiential knowledge, received knowledge and intuitive knowledge (Wallace 1991, Atkinson and Claxton 2000, Wright 2005, Claxton 2006, Clandinin and Connelly 1987). These knowledge would need to be challenged as Brookfield (1995) says: not only from perspectives of

self-exploration but by examinations of self and practice through other eyes (the perspectives of colleagues and learners) and from interactions with theoretical perspectives that include practitioner research and peer review. Participants were not aware of these positions about reflection. Their inability to demonstrate the use of critical reflection may come from this lack of theoretical perspective. Although critical reflection could not be evidenced in the study, data shows that participants reframed and reconstructed knowledge of teaching and learning through an ongoing reflective process of thinking and doing to develop personal knowledge (Dewey 1938, Schön 1983, Day 1993, Rodgers 2002). This confirms Dewey (1938) which states that: 'there is no intellectual growth without some reconstruction, some reworking' (Dewey 1938: 64). Most participants in the study used one or two lenses in practice: self and learners (Brookfield 1995). Findings suggest that participants like Rihanna were beginning to develop the third critical lens through the intervention group. Manny appears to have a measure of the third lens (Extract 34). However, this is not very clear in the study. While data shows that teachers made a progression towards the learning community of other colleagues there are no clear indications that this guided their practice.

Although from Rihanna we find a possibility that reflection can be scaffolded through one's experience in a teacher group, there are obvious limitations to the kind of reflection she develops. These encounters show that theoretical perspectives of critical reflection may need to be taught in the context along with other perspectives of reflection as findings show that reflective inquiry was more structured among teachers who had taken a formal reflective course. In 3.4, I discussed some of the challenges of

integrating reflection into TEd, teacher resistance and the possibility that academics view reflection differently from teachers. My explorations suggest that this difference in perspectives may come from the type of reflection used in practice. While academics are known to use the fourth critical lens (Brookfield 1995) teachers in the study did not do so. The absence of critical reflection in the study group may have other explanations which are not covered by this study. This raises further questions that are discussed later in this chapter.

7.2.3 The difficulties of becoming reflective

Data provides some insight into why some Nigerian English teachers may not want to be reflective. Illustrations come from participants like Grace (6.3.1: Extract 24), for whom reflecting on practice is a restricted activity: limited only to her time in school. Although she does not say why she takes this position, the literature suggests that it comes from deliberate distancing of self from school when teachers feel that their opinions are not relevant to school administrators nor are they considered useful for school reform (Goodson 1992). Kenny a participant in the study explains that his colleagues were willing to try out his own ideas gotten through an experimental process, try them out and return to acknowledge the effectiveness of such ideas. However, they are not interested in reflective explorations of practice. He describes these colleagues as being passive and 'slaves to the textbooks' (6.2.4). Gloria magnifies this reality in the study by suggesting that the attitudes that teachers like her have to break may come

from a flaw in the ways teachers are prepared for practice in Nigeria. She explains that it is difficult to become something other than what one has been 'moulded' to be; 'for me reflection is like trying to break me up again and re-mould me' (6.4.4.1: extract 36: L 72). This suggests that reflecting may be a difficult experience to begin. It is this very difficulty that I encountered in my experience on a CELTA course (see 1.1). I reflected not because I wanted to but because I had to pass the assessment. It is possible that if I had more learning about reflection at the time, it would have been an easier and more voluntary process. Findings from the study also suggest that reflection may be difficult to develop in TGs if teachers are too busy to meet regularly to discuss and resolve their challenges. These are significant findings within the Nigerian context where there is a knowledge gap about reflection, reflective practice and critical reflection.

7.2.4 The reflective spectrum-of-use

Although Copeland et al (1993) suggest that there may be a spectrum of reflection; data-led studies of reflection do not demonstrate this possibility. An outcome of the study was the examining of the use of reflection from three perspectives: frequency of use, the scope of reflection and the ability to describe the experience in more concrete ways as evidence that it has been experienced. This illustrates that reflection can be used in a range of ways, it can be carried out intuitively or more deliberately, can be in a sense, deep or shallow: it can inform practice more regularly or rarely, and can increase in scope and use. This suggests that teachers who reflect may be at different points of a

continuum of reflection. By creating a reflective spectrum-of-use from my perception of participants' position on a continuum, I illustrate a possible progression of these teachers from un-structured to more structured reflection; through the information zone where ideas from colleagues are mostly informative, to the zone of informed practice where information becomes learning through a reflective process which feeds back into practice. Participants who had taken a reflective course were identified as being further down the spectrum-of reflection-in-use. This idea of a reflective spectrum-in-use would need further research. However, it could form a basis for carrying out needs analysis of candidates in TEd programmes.

7.2.5 Reflection is multifaceted

Findings show that reflection is multifaceted as Boud et al (1985) suggests. This is illustrated by the four major findings which show the different ways that participants used reflection in their practice, illustrating the purpose of the reflection, the type of reflection carried out and its scope in practice. For example, knowledge-centred reflection illustrates the use of reflection to make sense of teaching and learning by integrating the different types of knowledge that participants have encountered over the years. It demonstrates that received knowledge from theoretical perspectives and knowledge acquired from a craft model of teacher education are still relevant to practice, because through a reflective process, espoused theories or imitated experiences can be reframed and reconstructed into relevant knowledge. In data (6.4) teachers approached

reflection from different perspectives through its use in practice. Therefore participants' understanding of reflection may be construed according to how it was perceived in use. The data also suggests that their perspectives of reflection could be dynamic or non-dynamic: depending on a perception of reflection as ruminatory (non-dynamic) or as an ongoing process that connected with future practice (dynamic).

In the light of findings about the multifaceted nature of reflection, the debates about a need for a common definition of reflection may not be as necessary because reflection can be used in a multiplicity of ways, as a tool for practice, for knowledge construction, as a reflexive tool, for personal or professional development, to increase skills, or to find new ways to support learners (Dewey 1933, Schön 1983, Shulman 1987, Clandinin and Connelly 1992, Stanley 1998, van Manen 1995, Breen et al 2001, Freeman 2002, Rodgers 2002, Mann 2005, Wright 2005).

7.3 Implications

Progressive explorations of modern concepts of reflection, reflective practice and critical reflection have brought more insight about professional development. They support current views about teacher development, which must take the individual, their professional context, and the socio-cultural and political contexts in which they reside into consideration. Findings shows that ultimately, reflection is a process of emancipation, transformation and change (in the individual, their practice and possibly,

context). It is a process whereby teachers or trainees can reshape their professional lives, expectations and contexts by challenging their own assumptions as well as the assumptions of those who control their profession and expectations about it, from the outside. My findings suggest that Nigerian English teachers would benefit from a fuller perspective of reflection and its values in practice. These perspectives in my opinion require an integration of the theories of Dewey (1933, 1916), Schön (1983, 1987) and Brookfield (1995). The following diagram is my attempt to synthesize these three theoretical positions of Dewey (reflective thinking), Schön (reflective practice) and Brookfield (critical reflection) into a common framework of change which could be taught in the context.
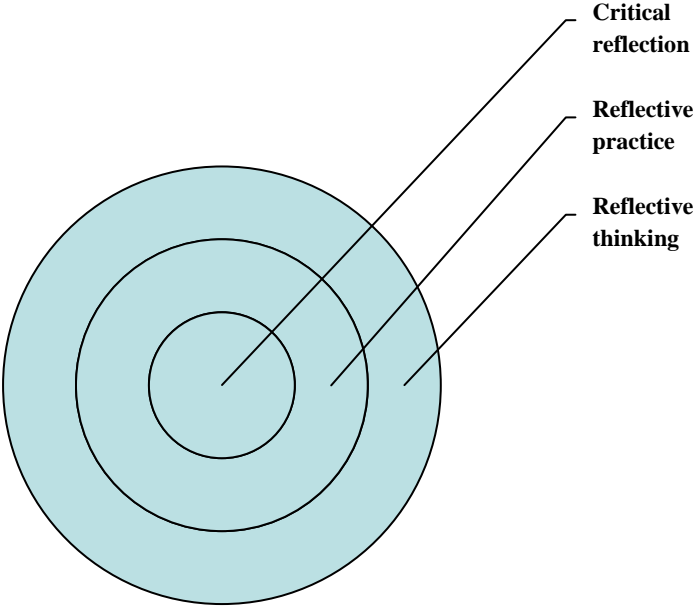
Critical reflection

Reflective practice

Reflective thinking

Figure 18 A tripartite view of reflection

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By analyzing the three positions of Dewey, Schön and Brookfield, I have created the model above to describe the potential of reflection at three different levels where awareness and change are common denominators. Since awareness is a dynamic phenomenon, reflection is emergent and at outer, inner and core levels. Starting from the outside of Figure 18, the first level (reflective thinking) starts with self-awareness where thought and action merge to bring a measure of change to the practitioner at the level of cognition or in the affective domain, opening to the individual new possibilities. This is a level which many teachers in the study are at, with or without a theoretical frame work about reflective inquiry (as my research shows). At this level reflection can either be deliberate, intuitive or spontaneous depending largely on how reflective a person is and drawing largely from a need to problem solve as all teachers do. This level may be identified in formal and non-formal learning and is characterized by being less regular or less habitual, characterized often by one off experiences, which may be considered significant or insignificant by the teacher. It could also be characterized by individual action. At the second level of practice, context or professional awareness (reflective practice), the practitioner's reflective thought and action are applied within their immediate professional context to bring about change in self and practice. This level subsumes the first level; connecting cognition and affect with social interactions and professional context. It is characterized by regular and more directed reflection that may not necessarily be instigated by a need to problem solve like a person who reflects intuitively for a more specific and random purpose. The reflection at this level of inquiry is rooted in regular or habitual practice based on a range of needs and criteria, which emerge from professional practice or classroom context. Here reflection assumes more

structure and is more robust because it can be used in multiple and specific ways to guide practice as its true benefits have been identified by practitioners. At this level reflective inquiry is less individualistic; the practitioner is drawn into a teaching and learning community (which could possibly be described as a community of practice (Lave & Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998)), by a need to test, validate, and share 'new knowledge'. Fewer teachers (in the study) are at this level. It is thought that many teachers who claim to integrate reflective inquiry into their practice do so in inauthentic ways: According to Dyke (2006), for many, reflective practice is 'used in common sense terms rather than with reference to the literature' (Dyke 2006:115). In other words, it is questionable. A clearer understanding of reflective inquiry may help teachers in this mould transit from questionable positions about reflective practice into a position where it is more real and more relevant to their practice. Findings from this study, suggest that Nigerian English teachers are at the first two levels where they use some form of reflection: reflective thinking and reflective practice but not critical reflection.

At the third level (the core) there may be fewer practitioners (no research participant was found at this level). Here the practitioner's awareness increases to include engagement with the socio-political context where the principles and policies that guide the preparation of teachers and expected practice (including their welfare, inherent limitations and consequences, broad or narrow expectations of teachers and the ways the profession is expected to be practiced) are constructed and applied (possibly imposed) by those who are non-teachers. They also engage with and participate in developing theoretical perspectives from higher education (Brookfield 1995). These are viewed as

opportunities for engagement with change. Ultimately, when teachers can begin to engage at core levels, they are potentially able to liberate themselves and their profession from the limitations of self and those imposed by administrators and policy makers; for even if change is not yet visible at the core, the potential for systemic change has emerged. The practitioner at this level retains all the characteristics of the two other levels and increases in awareness about change with a new ability to engage with it at socio-political levels. This model it comes from my interpretation of data, the literature on reflection and my experience as a teacher educator in Nigeria.

Through the model, I illustrate the possibility of merging the three theories of Dewey (1933), Schön (1983, 1987) and Brookfield (1995) to support the development of teachers and teaching in Nigeria. This could become in practice, a transformational cycle of reflection for all levels and types of teacher education programmes with potential to transform teachers' thinking, their practice and critical awareness of practice and socio-political context, as it affects their profession. It could provide a more complete understanding of the relevance of reflective inquiry in the experience of becoming or being a teacher. According to Vieira and Marques (2002: 4)

> the emancipatory goal of reflective teacher education implies that the quality of teacher development must rely on the notion of *transformation*, here conceived as the goal and the process of education, involving enhancing and empowering the individual (Vieira and Marques 2002: 4).

Vieira and Marques posit that reflection must be presented in ways that focus on transformation and in ways that emancipate and empower individuals. They describe

this as the goal and process of education. This reflects van Manen (1995: 33) who argues that reflective thinking is important both as a tool for teaching and an aim of education. According to Freire (1990; 13) all human beings have a capability to become more critical. However, they need to be provided with 'the proper tools for such encounters… [to] deal critically with it' (Freire 1990: 13). The need for Nigerian teachers to have the right tools for critical reflection is evident in the study.

The multifaceted nature of reflection revealed in data suggests that the professional development of Nigerian English teachers needs to consider the specific ways they use reflection in their practice, how they perceive reflection and where they might be on the continuum of reflection (the spectrum of reflection-in-use) which shows their variation in 'opportunity, ability, or propensity to reflect" (Copeland et al 1993: 348).   Because reflection in the context has been shown to be multidimensional, teacher educators will need to identify more specific tools for integrating reflection into professional development. Wright and Bolitho (2007) show us that these can be carried out through classroom activities, explorations of metaphors and by lively discussions. Edge and Mann (2013) show a collection of small innovations carried out by teachers in L2 contexts through the use of web tools, portfolios, peer observations, etc. From descriptions in data of how they used reflection in practice, this could include the creation or integration of specific learning experience in training rooms or practice to trigger reflection. For example: activities that integrate problem solving, intervention for learners' specific needs, learner observation and identifying strategies to meet specific learner needs, etc.

The potential difficulties Nigerian teachers could face in developing reflection will also need to be addressed. Time and space would need to be created for reflection in practice or in training programmes. Teachers would benefit from knowing that that they can revisit an engaging teaching experience through reflection to motivate themselves. Motivating experience can be shared in training rooms or in TGs. Through activities that explore assumptions, teachers can also begin to confront their personal or cultural assumptions which hinder teaching. The dearth of collaborative teacher culture which was illustrated by responses to questionnaires will also need to be addressed, by encouraging membership or formation of TAs and TGs and by teaching the benefits of collaborating with other colleagues through joint projects, peer observation of practice, collaborative explorations of practice and other collaborative activities which would be relevant for the context.

7.4 Limitations

In this study, evidence from data relies on participants' understanding and perceptions of what reflection is. It comes from their own experience and as in most research on reflection, I cannot say if their explanations correspond exactly to what they have encountered or done in practice. However, participants were from different schools and different parts of Nigeria and their claims resonate in each others' descriptions. It is possible that my interpretation of interviews was limited by my own experience as a teacher educator and as a new researcher. However, by providing detailed extracts of these in the study, other researchers have an opportunity to further explore the data.

The use of a semi-structured questionnaire for this study (as secondary data) was a limitation. Clear responses about reflection could not be gotten from this questionnaire which also looked for information about the professional development in the context. Question 2 of Questionnaire A was discarded because it was misleading (5.2.2). Questionnaires may not be the best way to obtain data about reflection.

Some of my research limitations have been highlighted in 4.5 including the small sample used for the study and time constraints from participants' busy lives. Therefore time and contact with participants was limited allowing for fewer interactions with individual participants even though the research was carried out over an extended period (2 years). A range of data collection methods was used in the study (4.3), resulting in different types of data analysis which was carried out over several months. A simpler research design with fewer research instruments (field notes and a recorder) could have achieved the same purpose. A case study with fewer participants is another possible modification of the research design used. This would allow for different layers of in depth interviews about reflection which could provide richer data. As a young researcher, this study was a learning experience, and the experience of analysing a range of data from different sources has increased my understanding of research as well as challenged my assumptions about it.

7.5 Directions for future study

A few questions rose during the study which calls for further research. Teacher identity was found in data as part of a process of reflective inquiry (6.3.1). It showed itself in two participants (Manny and Delores) who expressed a yearning to become or belong. In Extract 22: l 14-15, where Delores talks about reflection, she says: 'it helps me (.) it makes me to be a better person (.) a better teacher'. The expression 'it makes me...' could be explored in the context of teacher identity which has been conceptualized by contemporary researchers as 'a process of continual emerging and becoming' (Miller 2009: 173). Reflection could contribute to this process in more ways than have been identified in this study.

The need to explore the role of reflection in motivation also emerged from the study when Sylvia described how she reflects by returning to a successful experience in order to motivate herself (6.3.1: extract 25). In 2.3 I described the challenges of Nigerian teachers and the poor perception of the society of these teachers. I observed that their work conditions and environments were unsuitable and that they are further challenged by having to teach in over populated classrooms with little or no resources. This is de-motivating. Therefore, the Nigerian context would benefit from research that shows the connection between reflection and motivation as illustrated by Sylvia, who looks inward to find the motivation to teach what is difficult to find outside. Such a study could help address issues of teacher apathy that are discussed in the Nigerian literature and mentioned by participants like Kenny and Lola (6.2.4).

The study showed a distinct difference between teachers who had completed a reflective course and those who had not taken one. While the earlier group was more deliberate in their use of reflection, the latter had a more intuitive approach to reflection. Although I discuss this phenomenon in this study, further research will need to be carried out about this difference. Both groups of participants however, showed no use of critical reflection in the study despite having successfully carried out small innovations, interventions, experiments and amendments in their practice. As I highlight the need for Nigerian teachers to adopt the critical lenses that Brookfield (1995) describes, I understand that the use of these lenses would change the ecology of Nigerian classrooms: particularly the last lens (theoretical perspectives) which is used in more academic environments. This calls for more studies on the types of reflection that are suitable for primary and secondary classrooms. While I agree that teachers need to be more critical about their practice, I also recognize from data that others strands of reflection can be effective in practice. Bloomfield (1995) acknowledges that one can be a good teacher by using the first two lenses and that excellent teachers use the first three lenses (perspectives from self, learners and colleagues). Therefore, my proposal that Nigerian teachers will benefit from a tripartite view of reflection (as described in the implications section of this thesis) will need to be subjected to further research to explore its possible benefits for the context.

Research questions that could be drawn from this study are as follows:

- How can reflection support the development of teacher motivation?

- What role does reflection play in the development of teacher identity

- What kind of reflection is needed in primary and secondary classrooms?

- Would critical reflection change the ecology of primary and secondary classrooms?

My progression as a researcher is important and continues. In the next few months, I will be writing articles from my study. For example, 'reflecting to receive motivation to teach young learners'; 'is intuitive reflection real reflection?' During my study, I sent an abstract to TESOL International and hope that it will be chosen for the 2014 convention. This would be an improvement on the poster presentation I carried out in its doctoral forum this year. My immediate plan for the future is to attend conferences to relate with my peers, present papers and form collaborations on L2 TEd. I am also interested in finding out if there is a similar learner/teacher correspondence in L1 teacher development as illustrated by James and Mary in (6.2). I would therefore consider a postdoctoral if the opportunity arises.

Summary

In this study, I have described how Nigerian teachers used reflection. Findings show that reflection is multifaceted and used for specific purposes by teachers in the context. Findings also suggest that in the context reflection was not fully critical even though different participants used of one, two or three of the critical lenses that Brookfield

(1995) describes (the perspectives of self, learners and colleagues) in their practice. The multifaceted nature of reflection identified calls for teacher educators to identify specific tools for teaching reflection in the context. As I close this thesis, I open up more possibilities for myself in learning as I am now better positioned to interact with teachers in learning situations as a colleague in a profession in which we have common interests. I would like to make a call to Nigerian teacher educators TEd institutions, government and policy makers to join me in further explorations of reflective practice in Nigerian teacher education. According to Dewey, education 'must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience (…) the process and goal of education are one and the same thing' (Dewey 1897: 79). This idea reflects the common goals of TEd in Nigeria's NPE which is 'to encourage further, the spirit of inquiry and creativity' (FRN 1989: 38). For me this journey has just begun.

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Appendix 1 Statistics of registered Nigerian English teachers

TEACHERS REGISTRATION COUNCIL OF NIGERIA

TRCN

STATISTICS OF REGISTERED ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS BY STATES [07/04/2011]

S/N	STATES	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	TOTAL
1	ABIA	326	102	428
2	ADAMAWA	129	9	138
3	AKWA-IBOM	489	124	613
4	ANAMBRA	100	83	183
5	BAUCHI	173	114	287
6	BAYELSA	58	87	145
7	BENUE	75	142	217
8	BORNO	23	6	29
9	CROSS RIVER	334	92	426
10	DELTA	686	281	967
11	EBONYI	93	227	320
12	EDO	28	10	38
13	EKITI	77	119	196
14	ENUGU	417	126	543
15	GOMBE	59	9	68
16	IMO	114	134	248
17	JIGAWA	59	16	75
18	KADUNA	284	173	457
19	KANO	359	240	599
20	KATSINA	81	17	98
21	KEBBI	4	14	18
22	KOGI	59	4	63
23	KWARA	163	174	337
24	LAGOS	425	505	930
25	NASARAWA	30	62	92
26	NIGER	129	57	186
27	OGUN	243	179	422
28	ONDO	542	211	753
29	OSUN	46	204	250
30	OYO	295	134	429
31	PLATEAU	98	56	154
32	RIVERS	254	198	452
33	SOKOTO	193	74	267
34	TARABA	19	6	25
35	YOBE	21	6	27
36	ZAMFARA	19	35	54
37	FCT, ABUJA	162	211	373
	TOTAL	6,666	4,241	10,907

Appendix 2

Default Report [▾]

Displaying 25 of 25 respondents

Response Type:
Normal Response

Collector:
Timi Hyacinth PhD Student, University of Warwick
(Web Link)

Custom Value:
empty

IP Address:
192.168.1.10

Response Started:
Thursday, February 3, 2011 4:31:17 AM

Response Modified:
Thursday, February 3, 2011 4:44:55 AM

1. Have you heard about any of the following terms before: reflection, reflective practice or reflective inquiry?

Yes

2. Do you think that teachers or teacher trainees should actively persist in questioning or trying to understand any teaching or learning related issue/subject and/or be carefully considerate of any beliefs or knowledge they engage with or come across in their practice?

Yes

3. Choose the description that best reflects your views about teacher training in Nigeria

It is adequate

4. Do you think teachers need ongoing professional development?

Yes

5. If yes, why do you think teachers need ongoing professional development?

They need to be dynamic in their approaches to teaching English in their classrooms They also need to update their knowledge of English which may have become obsolete with time.

6. Which is the best place for teacher professional development?

In a higher educational institution

7. Please state why?

The higher educational institution provides them the opportunity of having an improved knowledge about English

8. Which of the following is more realistic and can add to the professional development of practicing teachers? (you can choose several answers)

A short course at a university or college

A short course outside a university or college environment

school based workshops and seminars

External workshops and seminars

Informal Teacher group meetings

Attending teacher association meetings

Informal chats with colleagues

surveymonkey.com/MySurvey_Respons...

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Self study

Internet research/browsing for information

observing other teachers

Engaging in problem solving or reflective practice

Carrying out action Research

9. Which of the following have you done in the last one year?

A short course outside a university or college environment

school based workshops and seminars

External workshops and seminars

Informal Teacher group meetings

Attending teacher association meetings

Informal chats with colleagues

Self study

Internet research/browsing for information

observing other teachers

Engaging in problem solving or reflective practice

Carrying out action Research

10. What prevents more teachers from participating in voluntary professional development?

Most of them are busy with making ends meet because they are not well-paid.

Appendix 3   Questionnaire B

Dear Participant, kindly answer the following questions and send to me at timipre@yahoo.com. By answering these questions you agree to allow the inclusion your views in a PhD study. Your responses will remain anonymous and will also feedback into the planning and implementation processes of new professional development courses. Please reduce the font size when typing in the box, if necessary.

1. What is your understanding of reflection or reflective practice?

2. In your experience is reflection on practice a difficult or easy process?

3. What challenges did you face; in looking back on, and evaluating your own practice?

4. In what conditions was reflection more suitable for you (e.g. time, place or period)?

5. What part did language play in recounting your experience of reflection?

6. Did you reflect in English, in another language or with images?

7. If you visualized, how did visualizing help you to reflect on your practice?

8. What other things or strategies helped you to reflect on your practice

9. Mention the different reasons why you reflected on your practice during the period of your course?

[   ]

10. Recount the challenges you faced when trying to reflect for assessment purposes

[   ]

11. After completing the course, do you still reflect?

[   ]

12. What are the benefits of reflecting?

[   ]

13. In your opinion is reflection a natural or artificial process?

[   ]

14. Looking back do you think there was any form of reflection in your practice before you started the course?

[   ]

15. Do you think reflection should be taught?

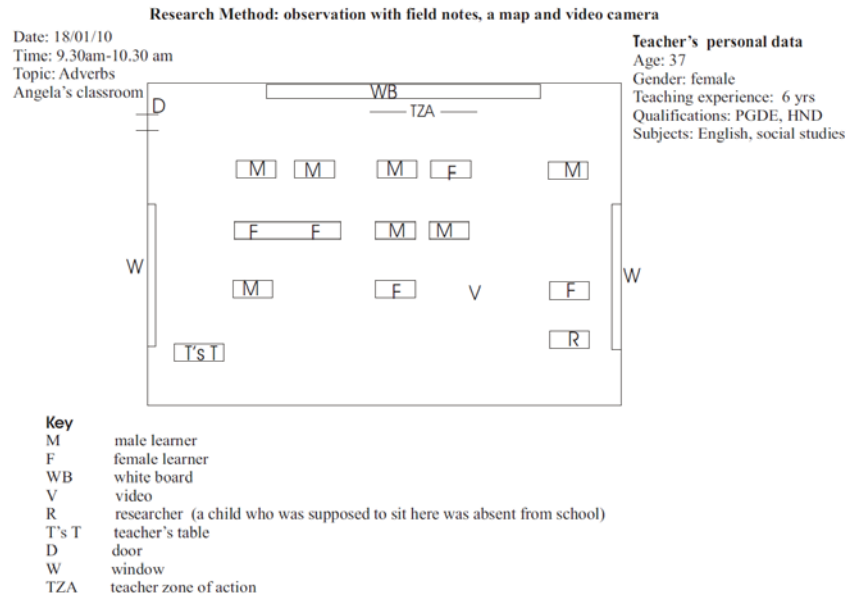[   ]

16. If possible, please try to describe the process of reflection that you followed or now follow in your practice

[   ]

Thank you for responding.

Appendix 4

| 13 | R: | So what do you achieve by being reflective? |

14	P:	Um, so many things. It helps me; it makes me to be a better person,
15		a better teacher, um, in my decision making, em, everything;
16		thinking about the approach to use and before I teach in a class
17		now, I look at the lesson and objectives, I think of what do I do to
18		achieve a better result, or after teaching a subject I go back to look
19		at the objectives. Were they really achieved? The areas I feel that
20		were not properly achieved; I start thinking maybe I should have
21		used a better approach, I shouldn't have taught it the way I did er, to
22		get a better result. And when I do, when I try another approach I see
23		I get a better result. I look at the children I teach, I look at their
24		background, I look at their level of understanding, I now say okay
25		em, this level maybe will not be, the approach I used before will not
26		be, maybe that was the cause of them not understanding better
27		then I will think of another approach which when I use it I see that I
28		get a better result.

29	R:	So when do you prefer to or when do you find yourself reflecting in
30		your practice? Is it after the lesson, before the lesson, is it within the
31		lesson or when?

32	P:	Right now, before the lesson when I'm planning I reflect. Even when
33		I'm teaching I reflect. As I'm teaching, the er, response of my
34		children make me at a point I reflect. After the teaching also I
35		reflect. So I see myself doing it.

36	R:	Is there any difference between reflection that takes place during
37		your teaching and the type that takes place, and the one that takes
38		place after your teaching?

39	P:	Yes, yes. The one that takes place after, em, then I'm relaxed, I start
40		thinking oh here I got it wrong, I should have done this. But when
41		I'm teaching or I just take note when I observe the children and at
42		times I'll just go and jot something down. When I observe the
43		children and look at them I em, maybe if I'm teaching vocabulary,
44		spelling, I'll look at it oh I shouldn't have used this method; this
45		other method would have been better or at times when a child says
46		something em, it just drops in my mind that ah, this child has made
47		an important point. I just record it somewhere then later on I look at
48		it and start reflecting. Even when I come home at times when I'm
49		done with my house chores I lie down on the bed before I sleep off, I
50		start thinking of the day's job.

Comment [T4]: PERSONAL ELEMENT

Comment [T5]: PROFESSIONAL ELEMENT

Comment [T6]: PROCESS OF REFLECTION

Comment [T7]: BETTER RESULTS

Comment [T8]: WHEN REFLECTION TAKES PLACE

Comment [T9]: 1. There seems to be a connection between physical sight and invisible sight in reflection, when the reflecting teacher says, 'I see', it is not only physical but suggesting the identification of a new insight, new understanding, a pattern not previously seen. Does this happen after observation or during and after observable events. Does observation and visible records of events (seeing) act as a trigger for reflection or as what?
2. The recording of events or reflections appears to aid the connection of visible evidence with insight. The process of thinking about these physical and invisible records (memory) records appears to trigger reflection

Comment [T10]: TAKES PLACE: RELAXED

Appendix 5 Map and Field Sample Notes (field notes after typing them)

Research Method: observation with field notes, a map and video camera

Date: 18/01/10
Time: 9.30am-10.30 am
Topic: Adverbs
Angela's classroom

Teacher's personal data
Age: 37
Gender: female
Teaching experience: 6 yrs
Qualifications: PGDE, HND
Subjects: English, social studies

WB

D — TZA —

M M M F M

F F M M

M F V F

R

T's T

W W

Key

M	male learner
F	female learner
WB	white board
V	video
R	researcher (a child who was supposed to sit here was absent from school)
T's T	teacher's table
D	door
W	window
TZA	teacher zone of action

Interaction Patterns
(T=teacher, S=student, SS=students)

T-SS (presentation, questions, comments, answers, commendations)
T-S (initiated by teacher-several times , using questions and answers, uses learners as resource for correcting wrong answers)
S-T (initiated by learner-twice: a new student from South Africa: offers an answer, asks question)
S-SS, SS-SS/SS-T (unrelated to learning: an interruption/argument, when a girl announces to the class that another girl likes the new boy). Note there is no group or pair-work in this class.

Language
Teachers' Tone: friendly and involving; stresses her words, uses a lot of repetition and questions to reinforce learning; uses 'clarification' to check understanding: 'is it clear?' Sign posts before moving on to a sub-topic; lots of explanations and examples.

Teaching and learning Process
T starts by setting the context; asks learners questions during this process, receives solicited answers, writes on board. Altogether, T presents lesson for about 20 minutes using a range of teacher talk and questions and answers; then asks: 'any questions?' Only one child responds with ' I don't know anything because I'm new' (He's the new boy from South Africa). T distributes workbooks with help of learners sitting at front of class, they pass books behind them. Chorus reading from page 10, teacher instructs learners, describes what they should do, provides example. Learners do an exercise in their books. Teacher moves around classroom checking learners' work, guiding certain learners and marking in between. Recaps the lesson, uses some questions and answers.

Appendix 6 Sample Initial Data Reduction Process

Stella	Rihanna	Teacher Group
Self-appraisal/Sits back.../Had been refl without a particular direction/ never used it effectively Random previously, no structure...not organized Was not directed at prof improvement Course taught her that ref shld be integrated with practice Became a learner again, started studying to know more. Found it useful for problem solving Language of ref...visualize, examine Replays session from class, use note pad Could deviate from stereotypical pract thru Could pick out words that needed reinforcement thru refl Without refl teachers practice bound, attached to scheme of work/Refl helps her identify that learning has not been complete then she repeats/More observant, may not have identified need in class but from real in comes back to mind...capturing images that are diagnostic/Then returns to the child to find answers, ask quests./If I had not had the time to replay…would not have been able to do any thing with what I noticed../ Refl helps you diagnose without asking questions/Refl helps to measure like stetoscope/Helps teachers to explore limitations that are personal, eg gender /Helps to self-correct Personality of teacher affects possibility of ref/ Experience can control teacher negatively, unless you are open to change /Refl awakens teachers to learners specific not general needs/ combats stereotypes Dev exploration/Ref brings innovation, makes teacher think,look for new ways/Refl makes her reach out to colleagues/She appears to be a crusader in sch...	Previous practice has ref but now more conscious/Now deliberate/Tg discusses issues from classroom, gather contributions, return to practice suggestions in individual classrooms/Tg not liked when teachers busy previous reflec led by need to make learning more comfortable for learners and by need not to be a failure. Lack of professional exp motivated refl. Also hunger to make a mark: intrinsic motivation led her to refl/No use of diaries before study/Starts from what did I do? Trying things before formal refl/ Used to carry out personal study thru inter Outcomes validated by child's performance Was urged by HT to improve in study, later discovered that refl is a way/Refl makes her more efficient/Tg helped to rub minds, encouraged boldness to share experience, trying out/Refl previously was used regularly only when encountering a challenging situation/Recorded prev refl in her mind...no structure and recalled them when they were needed /Tg made a previous teacher meeting more meaningful/Compares it to a chat room for professionals prof view of tg/Tg was time to catch up...on learning?/Previous method of accepting workshops from outsiders was take what you can take, lacked understanding of what she was doing/well...good teaching was more coincidental /learned to sit back and reflec during the study/Discovered new details about children teaching other children concepts and has now transferred it to her own...	Time /rubbing minds Benefits of TG Personal development Professional development Sharing discoveries Ideas just came/ it dropped in my mind/Experimenting Bringing latent talent to fore/ materialising dreams/Fumbling in the dark Practical learning/Theory and practice/Change/Self-discovery/Deconstructing/ breaking down theory Classroom/ TG as laboratory Group explorations and effect on personal explorations Issues/ not problems (a new perspective)/Something drops into the mind/Sharing ideas Compulsion/Reflective actions triggered by need Seeking opinion through TG Space to reflect/Bending to aid a child: becoming more flexible/Types of reflection (2) types/Immediate reflection Delayed reflection/Reflection is natural/Becoming more learner centered/Becoming more aware of teaching and learning processes etc/Contact with researcher: through research group...

Appendix 7 Sample Categorization & Coding after Data Reduction Process

CODE	REDUCED DATA	REFINED CATEGORIES/ CONCEPTS
Learner-centred reflection	teacher is thinking ahead on how to support all learners/reflection during teaching may be triggered by negative feedback not essentially by need to understand/ it is driven by a need/reflection in classroom more specific/Previous reflection was on how to develop herself, was not learner-centered/Reflects a lot in class but delays action for another lesson/Experiments with son/Does not implement reflections in class but waits for another opportunity/Experiments/ Picks ideas from learners/Does not need the cane/Understands learners more/Large classes can be helped by/reflective teachers/Reaching out to individual learners/Noticing learners needs/reflec led by need to make learning more comfortable for learners/Replays session from class/Bending to aid a child: becoming more flexible/ Learner centered focus/ RP enlightens teacher about mistakes as opportunities for learners/ Outcomes validated by child's performance/ Discovered new details about children /teaching other children concepts and has now transferred it to her own biological children/ Understands learners more/ Immediately coming up with a strategy like song in classroom/observing learners/ Then returns to the child to find answers, ask quests/ If I had not had the time to replay, would not have been able to do anything with what I noticed of learner/ Helps teachers to explore limitations that are personal, eg gender/ Refl awakens teachers to learners specific not general needs/ Looking thru child's perspective and yours/ Refl by teachers help learners excel/ Refl teachers more apt at creating active learning session/ Their learners are able to explore and are free to learn/ Experiments/ Experiments/ Transfers liberation he feels to learners and allows them take ownership of learning/ Stereotypes harmful to learners/ Reflective practitioner presents himself to learners from a more considerate perspective/ Refl helps her identify that learning has not been complete then she repeats	Learner-centred focusing

Finding new ways to facilitate learning

Reflecting to understand learners' needs (through feedback

Finding appropriate pedagogic styles

Narrow experimenting |

Appendix 8   Video Consent Forms

Consent form for video recording for research, teaching and learning purposes

Place of video recording: _____

Date of video recording: _____

Researcher's Name: Timi B. Hyacinth (t.b.hyacinth@warwick.ac.uk)

 Researcher's Institution: Centre for Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick, UK

Dear Parent/Teacher,

I will be making a video recording of an English lesson where my focus will be on the teacher's classroom practice. The video will be used to obtain data for my research on teacher professional development and to help the lesson teacher or other teachers in the study (who are in the same school) to explore their teaching practice.

Teacher and children's images will not be shown in the PhD thesis or in any journal article. Children's talk will also be excluded since they are not the focus of the study. All video recordings are carried out according to ethical guidelines required by the University of Warwick UK.

 The tape will not be copied and will be stored in a locked cabinet at University of Warwick and is subject to the same degree of confidentiality and security as all educational research is in the United Kingdom. The tape will be erased as soon as is practicable within the study.

You do not have to agree to your child/ward/self being recorded. If you do not want the camera to focus on your child, please inform the class teacher in advance. Your child will not be affected or prejudiced if you request this. You may, if you wish, view the tape recording of the recording.

If you consent to your ward/child being recorded, please sign below.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN/TEACHER

I have read and understood the above information and give my permission for my child/ward/self to be video recorded.

_____ Date _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Teacher **BEFORE** the classroom observation

Appendix 9 **Consent Form (HSSREC)**

Participant Identification number where applicable

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┌ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ┐
│                           │
└ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ┘
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CONSENT FORM

Project Title: A study of reflection in Nigerian ELT

Name of researcher: Timi Hyacinth
(to be completed by
participant)

I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated   **DATE:**

On information sheet

For the above project, which I may keep, for records and have had the opportunity to ask any questions I may have.

I agree to take part in the above study and am willing to:

Be interviewed, to have the interview recorded and participate in any activities related to the study

I understand that my information will be held and processed for the following purposes:

For a PhD study on Reflection in Nigerian English Language Teaching and for any other academic purposes.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

_____   _____   _____

Name of Participant   **Date**   **Signature**

_____   _____   _____

Researcher   **Date**   **Signature**