

Teacher Learning in In-service Professional Development

Insights from two In-service Training Programmes

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Abstract

This paper attempts to understand teacher learning through formal in-service professional development activities conducted by agencies like the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) in India. Based on the experiences of the professional development programmes conducted by NCERT at the national level and the SCERT of Rajasthan at the state level, this paper, through teachers' pre-training and post-training opinions and reflections on various aspects of the training, brings out the needs and learnings of teachers in the training. Though both the training programmes showed some impact on the participating teachers and teacher learning during the training programmes, this does not ensure that the teachers will be implementing whatever has been learnt in the training. Three stages: pre-training period, while training period and immediate post-training period and the inputs by the training organisations and the trainers during all the three stages play a crucial role in making the programme effective and make an impact on the teachers. Materials for reading and worksheets for during and after activity also matter a lot for making a training programme a learning experience for the teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher's while service training has been recognised as a major input for

quality improvement in classroom transactions and learning outcomes (NCERT, 1968; GOI, 1986; GOI, 1992;

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NCERT, 2005). 'In-service teacher training (INSET) for English language teachers is an important but often relatively ineffective aspect of large-scale English language teaching (ELT) curriculum development' (Waters and Vilches 2012:1). Though emphasis has been on ongoing and onsite teacher education and quite a number of teachers find opportunities to participate in the professional development programmes, the general view of teachers is that 'attend the professional development activities; listen to the trainers; and leave it there itself'. This, 'attend, listen to the trainer and leave it there' practice, though not open, is felt among the teachers. One can hear teachers say, this may be a good method or technique, but this will not work in my classroom. This paper makes an attempt to understand teacher learning through formal in-service professional development activities conducted by agencies like the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) in India.

While the teachers at the primary and upper primary level are regularly trained in some form or other under the scheme of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA), teachers at the secondary level in most state systems are not trained. School systems like the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) and a few school education boards

like the CBSE offer regular training programmes for their teachers at the secondary and senior secondary stages. Most of the teachers at the secondary stage (Classes IX and X) in the state run school systems are not trained for decades (Meganathan, 2012). Thanks to the *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan* (RMSA) scheme, the Government of India's mission mode exercise for education for all up to the secondary stage, all teachers at the secondary stage will now be trained. Opportunities for in-service training are crucial for the long-term development of teachers as well as for the long-term success of the school systems in which they work. Professional development of teachers at all levels is a necessity for achieving the goals of quality education for all. Richards and Farrell (2005) explain the need for it:

- (i) In any school or educational institution, there are teachers with different levels of experience, knowledge, skill, and expertise. Mutual sharing of knowledge and experience is a valuable source of professional growth.
- (ii) Teachers are generally motivated to continue their professional development once they begin their careers.
- (iii) Knowledge about language teaching and learning is in a tentative and incomplete state, and teachers need regular opportunities to update their professional knowledge.

- (iv) Classrooms are not only places where students learn—they are also places where teachers can learn.
- (v) Teachers can play an active role in their own professional development.
- (vi) It is the responsibility of schools and administrators to provide opportunities for continued professional education and to encourage teachers to participate in them.
- (vii) In order for such opportunities to take place, they need to be planned, supported, and rewarded. (p13)

Teacher learning from pre-service to an experienced or specialist stage is perceived in different dimensions. Richards and Farell (2005: 14) further attempt to list them under three categories, viz. (i) Teacher learning as a cognitive process; (ii) Teacher learning as personal construction; and (iii) Teacher learning as a reflective practice. The first approach assumes that teaching is a 'complex cognitive activity' and the focus is on 'the nature of teachers' beliefs and thinking and how these influence their teaching and learning.' In the words of Borg (2003:81) "teachers are active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex practically-oriented, personalised, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs". Teacher

learning as personal construction believes in the constructivist paradigm that knowledge is actively constructed by the learners, here teachers. Teachers based on their day-to-day classroom experience learn to be effective teachers while the third dimension teacher learning as reflective practice assumes that teachers make an attempt to learn from experience through focused reflection on the nature and meaning of teaching experiences (Wallace, 1998; Richards and Lockhart, 1994).

Teacher learning is also seen from a novice and an experienced teacher's perspective. A novice teacher with less or no experience and a teacher with quite a number of years of experience makes a difference in their understanding of nature of the subject, profile of learners, the socio-political contexts and the understanding required for realising the immediate and long-term needs and demands (Needs and demands need not match. Teachers, like learners, need something, but demand some other thing.) of the curriculum and the learners. A teacher with many years of service may not have gained/learnt the knowledge or developed a perspective that is expected or needed for an experienced teacher. Johnson (in his classroom lectures at the Lancaster University and elsewhere) describes it as 'a teacher with 16 years, experience' or 'a teacher with one year experience repeated 16 times'. His humorous statement is no joke

as there are teachers who from their inception (as teachers) do not get to learn much even after decades of experience. Tim (2010) draws the stages a teacher passes through from starting (inexperienced teacher) to a specialist teacher.

What is not making in-service professional development programmes effective? There are blames on the part of the trainers or trainer institutions as well as the teacher’s willingness to participate and learn from the in-service teacher

orientations or training. Adey (2004) and Wedell (2009) regret that most of the in-service programmes do not achieve the desired results and also they tend not to inspire teachers. Fullan (2007) puts the reasons for this state of affairs as ‘lack of awareness of and commitment to what is involved in planning for, implementing and sustaining meaningful teacher learning of this kind’.

The last curricular revision in India culminated in the National Curriculum Framework – 2005

<p>Starting</p> <p>You are a trainee teacher of English taking initial training or you are not qualified as an English teacher but working as one</p>
<p>New qualified</p> <p>You are a qualified teacher of English in your first two years of practices, who is putting initial training into practice.</p>
<p>Developing</p> <p>You are a practising qualified teacher of English more than two years of experience, and still want to consolidate your essential skills.</p>
<p>Proficient</p> <p>You are an experience qualified teacher of English with strong all round knowledge and competence as a teacher</p>
<p>Advanced</p> <p>You are a highly experience qualified teacher, who comfortably takes on leading role such as mentoring and may planning to develop more specialist skills</p>
<p>Specialist</p> <p>You are practising specialist such teacher trainer, materials writer, curriculum and syllabus developer, head of department / manager, testing expert, advisor on ELT issues (Primary, secondary, vocational, etc.), researcher</p>

Figure 1: Stages of Teacher Development (Tim Philips, 2010)

calls for systemic as well as process based reforms in teacher education programmes. The two national focus group position papers (which formed the curriculum revision in language education in India) stress for a need based and (teacher) learning oriented professional development. The position paper on teaching of English (NCERT, 2006:14) lays emphasis on continuous teacher professional development,

“Teacher education needs to be ongoing and onsite (through formal or informal support systems) as well as preparatory. Emphasis must be laid on teacher proficiency in or familiarity with the language, as the teacher is often a role model (for example, for reading). This is also one way to cultivate teacher awareness of or sensitivity to language learning. Proficiency and professional awareness are equally to be promoted, the latter to be imparted, where necessary, through the teachers’ own languages.”

While the position paper on teaching of Indian languages (NCERT, 2006:27) calls for an intensive and innovative teacher training,

“Our classrooms are still dominated by the teacher and textbook-centred language-teaching methods in which the teacher is regarded as the ultimate repository of knowledge and where learning largely takes place through pattern practice, drilling, and memorisation. We hope that

new teacher-training programmes will sensitise the teachers to the nature, structure, and functions of language, language acquisition, and language change, and equip her/him with strategies that can help her/him to build on the resource of a multilingual classroom.”

A recent study by Waters and Wilch (2012:23) on ‘Identifying Best Practice in ELT INSET’ also tells us the reality:

Effective INSET is crucial to the development of improved and new ELT (and any other) curricula. Nevertheless, there is evidence that it is frequently approached in a manner which results in it being less effective than required.

Conducted in the context of the Philippines, the study by Waters and Wilch (2012) attempted to explore INSET at three different stages and dimensions—pre-training planning; while training processes; and the follow-up activities. The first stage should take care of the logistic requirements like providing sufficient advance notice, securing training venue and choosing the right time of the year and training needs of teachers. The second stage of the training, i.e. delivery part of the training should focus on ‘participant centred’ approach, demonstration lessons of many kinds and providing resources, both human and materials. And the third stage is the follow-up stage where the teachers are again in school with new ideas and experience. This

stage would be very crucial but this is the stage which is generally neglected in our school systems. Waters and Vilches (2012:22) emphasise that *'active and extensive educational and school system support is needed in order to ensure that teaching ideas introduced in seminars are implemented. Systematic observation of and feedback on teacher's attempts to implement the training ideas is vital, and need to be approached in ways which take into account situational realities but which also attempt to maximise the potential for teacher learning.'*

TEACHER LEARNING: WAYS AND MEANS?

The next question arises is, 'Can teacher learning take place only through formal in-service training programmes?' This question is relevant for everyone, including the unwilling teacher, desires to learn or learns from every moment of the business of teaching. Teacher learning not necessarily bound to take place only through formal training programmes. It can take place through various ways and means in and outside the school. As Prabhu (2012:1) observes 'it is the teacher who is instrumental in learning, not the system. But the system has to ensure opportunities'.

I am thinking teachers' growth as something that arises from the ongoing activity of teaching—from the daily engagement in the classroom—rather than from any

professional inputs to the teacher from the world of professional specialism. Specialist inputs to the teacher are generally meant to alter or improve the teaching that takes place and/or promote an understanding in the teacher of the nature of /need for such improvement, rather than start a process of growth based on whatever teaching happens to take place. Growth arises from and is sustained by experience, not training or knowledge.

Prabhu (2012:1) also indicates 'four kinds of activities that are likely to start to prompt such a process' i.e., teachers' growth. The first activity is viewing someone else's teaching either live or video-recorded. The second activity, he suggests, is the teacher making pedagogic decision in the classroom in the light of when happens and how he perceived it at the time. The third activity is teacher's communication of his/her current pedagogic understanding to a fellow teacher. The fourth activity a teacher should do is to try to interact with the more explicit pedagogic perceptions of specialists in the field as they appear in the professional literature.

IN-SERVICE ORIENTATION PROGRAMMES

This section presents teacher learning (whether teacher learning takes place or not; how it takes place) in two orientation programmes conducted for English language teachers teaching at various stages

of school education. The first programme was conducted for the teachers teaching in government schools of Rajasthan by the State Institute of Educational Research and Training (SIERT), Udaipur. This was done to familiarise them the new curriculum and materials developed in the state in 2011 while the second programme was organised by NCERT for the teachers of Central Tibetan Schools Administration (CTSA), a special school system set up by the Government of India for the children of Tibetan community living in India. These schools are spread all over the country in different locations. The teachers of Rajasthan are teachers

teachers was conducted for 21 days from May, 2012. The number of teachers of CTSA and the government school teachers of Rajasthan are 40 and 95 respectively. The teachers of Rajasthan were divided into two groups. Trainers for the Rajasthan group include: Three senior teachers from senior secondary schools; one NCERT faculty (that is the author); one independent ELT specialist and for the CTSA group; four NCERT faculty from the department of languages. In both the programmes, the author was the lead person, i.e., Coordinator of the NCERT training and in the Rajasthan group he was the team leader.

Table 1
Number of teachers

Sl. No.	The school systems	Number of teachers	Teaching stage
1.	CTSA	40	Upper Primary, Secondary and Senior Secondary
2.	Rajasthan School Education Board	95 (This group was trained in two batches concurrently)	Upper Primary, Secondary, Senior Secondary and in DIETs

teaching Classes VI to XII and lecturers in the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), district level pre-service teacher training institution, and the teachers of CTSA include teachers teaching Classes VI to XII. The orientation for the Rajasthan teachers was conducted for five days in August, 2012 and the orientation for CTSA

The teachers in both the orientations programmes were asked questions (through a questionnaire which included both closed and open ended questions/statements) on various aspects of language learning and teaching. The questions were developed by the author addressing the areas/ideas an English language teacher is expected to know. The

same questionnaire was administered before and after the orientation (with some modifications). This is in addition to the need analysis and feedback questionnaires. Following sections present the questions and the interpretation of opinions/ideas expressed by both the categories of teachers. The pre-orientation reflection questionnaire consisted of fourteen items and the post-orientation reflection questionnaire consisted of sixteen of which a few are added to the pre-orientation items. The questions posed to the teachers included aspects related to 'What is language?' 'How learning takes place?' and also about teaching of poetry and organising activities in the classroom.

Both the orientation programmes aimed at acquainting the teachers with the emerging trends and the changing perspectives in language learning-teaching and to familiarise them with the National Curriculum Framework-2005 and the curriculum, syllabus developed in Rajasthan as a follow-up to the NCF-2005. The CTSA teachers have been teaching the materials developed as a follow-up to NCF-2005 for about five years and they have not been trained on the National Curriculum Framework-2005 and its philosophy, the pedagogical change in language education as envisaged by NCF and the new materials. Rajasthan's case is different. The state was using the NCERT textbooks, the post-NCF-2005 textbooks but found them very difficult not only for students

also for teachers to deal with in the classroom. So the state went for a curricular revision and developing its own materials. The training for the teachers of Rajasthan was intended to be familiarising them with the ideas of NCF-2005 perspective on language education and to enable them to know the new textbooks and the ways and means to teach them in the classroom. I was involved in both the orientation programmes as a lead resource person or coordinator from planning stage and training materials development stage to the conduct of the training.

The orientation programmes included participant centred approach where the teachers were made to do group work, reflections, reading session, analysis of texts/textbook, developing activities for effective classroom interaction, assessment for learning and every morning report and so on. The themes/area include: *NCF and language education, new language pedagogies, pedagogy of reading, listening and speaking, pedagogical grammar, literature in language classroom, writing, continuous assessment, Action Research, organising activities and group work, assignments and project work.*

THE TEACHERS' REFLECTIONS (PRE-AND POST-ORIENTATION)

(i) How do you think children learn a language?

The first question addressed to them was 'How do you think children

learn a language?’ As can be seen, the responses of both the groups of teachers do not vary much. Majority of the teachers in both the groups have felt that children learn any language naturally. But the percentage varies in both the groups. Surprisingly, more percentage of teachers of CTSA felt that children learn any language naturally while the number of teachers in the Rajasthan group has increased after the orientation. Another surprise is that the number of teachers in the Rajasthan group (who feel that the learners should learn the words and their meaning) has increased slightly after the orientation.

orientation. But their understanding has differed after the orientation. If we take a close look at items ‘b’ and ‘c’ in table below number of teachers in both the groups marked as they would read aloud and then ask learners to read or ask the learners to read first and then read loudly but this has changed after the orientation. Many teachers from both the groups chose not to mark. We may infer that the orientation programme has not made them clear of the reading pedagogy. However, the responses of Rajasthan teachers for item ‘d’ show that they have got some insight into reading. The number of teachers who marked ‘one-to-one translation’ has come

Table 2
How do you think children learn a language?

		Pre-orientation		Post-orientation	
		CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
a.	By learning the grammar of the language	1	2	2	1
b.	They should learn the words first	0	8	4	4
c.	They should learn the words and their meaning	3	20	5	22
d.	Learning with sentence pattern	5	4	3	11
e.	They learn any language naturally	24	46	15	56

(ii) On reading

The second question relates to reading pedagogy. Responses from the groups show that teachers were somewhat aware of how to deal with the text in their classrooms before the

down from 18 to 5. But surprisingly, two teachers wanted to follow this method even after the orientation.

The table on the next page shows how teachers responded to the question, ‘Do you think children

Table 3
How do you teach reading (stories, poems) texts in your class?

		Pre-orientation		Post-orientation	
		CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
a.	I read out the stories aloud paragraph after paragraph and translate it	3	11	2	9
b.	I read the stories aloud once as a whole and ask students to read	20	35	13	17
c.	I ask them to read first and then I read loudly	20	13	13	12
d.	I read sentence by sentence and translate it	0	18	2	5

should understand the meaning of every word as they read?' We can see a marked increase in the percentage of teachers who believe that children need not understand the meaning of every word they read. The pre-orientation responses of both the groups reveal that the teachers were not willing to say yes, but quite a number of teachers chose not to say 'no' in the Rajasthan group.

Surprisingly, there is a decrease in the percentage of teachers who said that there is no need to understand every word one reads.

(iii) On vocabulary learning-teaching

The question relating to teaching-learning of vocabulary brings out an interesting phenomenon. The teachers of Rajasthan group, it could be inferred,

Table 4
Do you think children should understand the meaning of every word as they read?

	Pre-orientation		Post-orientation	
	CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
	Yes	No	Yes	No
CTSA	1	27	3	23
Rajasthan	21	40	19	68

have changed their perception that vocabulary learning happens in context and learners trying to use the word in their interaction, and by using a dictionary. However, there is a marked difference in both the groups in their belief that dictionary and peer interaction are major opportunities for vocabulary learning.

teachers showed a positive increase (from 43 to 64) after the orientation. CTSA teachers' responses show that they have not been able to understand how the textbook intend to deal the vocabulary teaching-learning. We can see the responses to item 'b' teachers, particularly CTSA

Table 5
How should vocabulary be taught?

		Pre-orientation		Post-orientation	
		CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
a.	Find the difficult words and write their meaning in the mother tongue and practice them	0	27	0	12
b.	Allow children to find the meaning of the word in a paragraph / context and then use it on their own	24	32	18	61
c.	Let children find the meaning of the word in a dictionary/group activity	6	22	16	30

a. Vocabulary in the new textbook

Teachers were also asked another question about how the vocabulary part is dealt with in the new textbooks. The responses are contradictory as more CTSA teachers felt that the vocabulary teaching is contextualised and rooted from the reading text before the orientation. The number decreased (from 23 to 17) after the orientation. But the Rajasthan

teachers are not aware of the uses of collocations and word clusters in teaching-learning of vocabulary. It is the CTSA teachers who felt after the orientation the vocabulary learning in the new textbooks is difficult. We can conclude that the orientation has not made much impact on CTSA teachers when it comes to making them understand the objectives of vocabulary learning as presented in the new textbooks.

Table 6
Vocabulary learning in the new textbook

Vocabulary learning in the new textbook		Pre-orientation		Post-orientation	
		CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
a.	Is contextualised, taken from the reading text	23	43	17	64
b.	Word cluster / collocation are effective ways of learning vocabulary	12	36	2	35
c.	Is difficult	0	2	14	0
d.	Will not be feasible as there will not be any time left	0	1	0	0

(iv) On teaching grammar

Though the practice of teaching of grammar has undergone drastic transformations informed by research on language learning and acquisition, teachers tend to believe that teaching formal grammar would also help. The responses of teachers of both the groups show that the new orientations to teaching-learning of grammar (pedagogical grammar) are a felt necessity to enable learners

internalise the grammar of the language in context and through use of the language. As the table below shows that the teachers have developed a perspective for teaching of grammar in contexts.

Teachers were also asked to say why they have marked what they have marked (a or b) in Table 7. The open ended responses of some teachers are shown below at the different stages, i.e., Pre-orientation and post-orientation.

Table 7
Grammar should be taught....

		Pre-orientation		Post-orientation	
		CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
a.	In isolation with single sentence examples	23	9	2	12
b.	In contexts rooted from the reading text	12	60	23	75

Grammar should be taught....

	Pre-orientation		Post-orientation
T1:	In contexts....I think, it is the real practical learning, which a student can use in her/his life	T1:	Through integrated grammar, children can learn different grammar items
T2:	In isolation, if grammar will be taught, children will not know in what context they need to use it	T2:	One can speak/write English grammatically correctly
T9:	It helps the children to learn the structure of sentences naturally	T9:	Students should learn the language naturally not in isolation
T10:	That helps the child to learn naturally the grammatically structures	T10:	To make the grammar for confident reading and speaking
T16:	Because it makes students to understand better	T16:	Grammar teaching in tradition method makes it quite disinteresting
T17:	Because that leaves long lasting impact in students' mind	T17:	Because it's easy to make children understand grammar in context
T18:	We can say so because children will learn how that particular piece of grammar can be used in a text	T18:	Learning becomes deeper, stronger
T23:	Because children can understand grammar when they are given sentence in chunks	T23:	Because it is learnt better in this way and it gives a life in teaching grammar
T24:	That will bring live to grammar	T24:	Because it is functional
T25:	Term grammar creates fear among students. The definitions of terms make them afraid and it promotes rote learning	T25:	So that students can understand of the text material property

Teachers, open response to the above shows that most of the teachers are for grammar in context. Their understanding and ideas about grammar learning (i.e. teaching formal grammar will not help) before the orientation has been reinforced through the training. Teachers are now saying (after the orientation) that moving from language use by learners to language 'consciousness rising' technique where underlying the rules/system of the grammatical item would help much rather than teaching the rules first. This could be stated as a major achievement of the orientations as they reinforced the teachers' belief that formal teaching of grammar will not be of much use. Knowing the grammatical rules for the sake of rules has not much to do in learning of the language.

(v) On NCF- 2005

Teachers were also asked to respond on the ideas of the National Curriculum Framework-2005. Responses of teachers reveal that the teachers are aware of the ideas of NCF and the emerging trends and beliefs about language learning. The responses are clear that the teachers have an understanding of how language learning takes place. One example is that teachers do not believe in teaching grammar formally. We can notice the difference in the responses of CTSA and Rajasthan teachers. CTSA teachers have not much changed their opinion; in fact the number of teachers on items 'a' and 'b' have come down slightly, while the teachers of Rajasthan have shown positive increase in their responses in understanding the

Table 8
National Curriculum Framework - 2005 believes
(Tick the aspects which are correct)

		Pre-orientation		Post-orientation	
		CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
a.	Language is learnt as a whole not in bits and pieces	20	33	19	36
b.	Learning is better when children connect the new ideas with their previous experiences/knowledge	23	50	21	78
c.	Teach grammar seriously	0	0	0	1
d.	Learning is meaning making	11	6	14	7

ideas of NCF–2005. Teachers were also asked to list at least two guiding principles of NCF–2005. Most of the teachers could state more than two guiding principles. Analysis of the same follows the table above.

Like the item iv on grammar, teachers were also asked to list two ideas (or guiding principles) of the National Curriculum Framework–2005 (NCF). The responses show that the teachers have heard of the NCF and some of its ideas. Their responses after the orientation tell that the teacher have been familiarised with the ideas of NCF and its guiding principles. Maximum teachers in both the groups have listed ‘connecting life of children with classroom’ and ‘flexible examinations’. Though there was only one session allotted to familiarise the trainees with the ideas of NCF, in every session the trainers

were referring NCF and the position papers on teaching of English and Indian languages. A few teachers have said that they had not seen or heard of NCF before the orientation.

(vi) On textbooks

Teachers of both the groups are using the textbooks developed as a follow-up to NCF- 2005. The state of Rajasthan has now developed its own syllabus and textbooks for they found NCERT textbooks difficult for the teachers to transact in the classroom. Teachers have seen the new textbooks for Classes VI to VIII. As the table shows that how teachers of the groups differ in their opinion about the textbooks. The decreasing responses of the teachers of CTSA show that the textbooks do not contain stories and themes which children can relate with and do not promote child-to-child interaction. Their understanding of

Table 9
Textbooks

	The textbook you use now	Pre-orientation		Post-orientation	
		CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
a.	Has stories/ themes which the children can relate with	21	29	13	54
b.	Provides scope for child-to-child interaction.	23	22	14	51
c.	Is difficult for the teacher to handle.	0	29	0	29
d.	Children find it easy.	2	3	1	9
e.	Children find it very difficult.	0	16	2	4

the textbook has drastically changed after the orientation. But the responses of Rajasthan teachers has positively increased as the difference in the understanding of the textbooks shows that they can relate the stories with the lives of children and child-to-child interaction is provided in the textbooks. One reason for the CTSA teachers' responses may be that the majority of CTSA children are wards of the Tibetans living in India. Though they are born and brought up in India (for the community has been living in India from the 1950s), their cultural and sociological orientations as a community is different from the communities living in India.

(vii) On conducting class activities

Teachers' response on various types and kinds of activities and tasks that the materials (here only the textbooks) intend to promote language interaction and language

use by learners reveals that the teachers have developed a perspective for developing these activities. For warm-up activities (which include pre-reading and pre-writing) and other while-reading or speaking activities like the group/pair work, the teachers' responses have shown marked increase positively. However, there is a difference with the CTSA teachers who believe that activities like the pair work/group work make the classroom noisier.

(viii) On teaching of poetry

Teachers' response on the purpose of teaching poetry shows interesting responses. Though there is variation in the pre-orientation responses between the groups, one can see the opinions of the groups changed positively in the understanding of teaching of poetry. Teachers of both the groups recognise fully that poetry teaching should not aim at serious

Table 10
Use of classroom activities

Warm-up activities (pre-reading or pre-writing activities) are for.....		Pre-orientation		Post-orientation	
		CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
a.	Taking the learners into the activities	4	18	7	19
b.	Connecting the children with their previous knowledge	18	51	12	67
c.	No use. Teachers can ignore them	1	0	0	1
d.	Initiating discussion on the ideas so that children can understand well	10	21	12	21

Table 11
Pair work /Group work

Pair work / group work		Pre-orientation		Post-orientation	
		CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
a.	Helps in learner-learner interaction. Children attempt to use the English language	21	54	7	75
b.	Is a waste of time. Children will not do anything	0	0	0	5
c.	Makes the teacher see children active and get involved in the activities	11	30	12	25
d.	Makes the classroom noisier	1	1	12	2

grammar teaching/language items. However, seven responses of the CTSA teachers in the post-orientation marking the item 'None of the above' arises some serious questions about the understanding of poetry teaching.

(ix) On the usefulness of the orientation

Teachers' responses about the usefulness of the orientation, both

perceived usefulness (pre-orientation opinion) and experienced usefulness of the orientation (post-orientation opinion) show a marked difference between the CTSA and the Rajasthan teachers. Rajasthan teachers have felt that their understanding of NCF-2005, about the English syllabus, handling of the textbooks, organising activities and other perceptions have been addressed

Table 12
Teaching of poetry is for...

		Pre-orientation		Post-orientation	
		CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
a.	Language learning	4	17	0	16
b.	Enjoyment	18	37	17	56
c.	Grammar learning	0	0	0	1
d.	Vocabulary learning	1	7	0	5
e.	All the above	12	27	3	31
f.	None of the above		1	7	0

well. This is not the case with CTSA teachers. We can infer that this group of teachers take a middle path. The increase in the number of responses in the 'fully achieved' category is very less when compared to Rajasthan group. One reason for this response is that the schools of CTSA are affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) which through the materials of NCERT and its own

provides inputs for familiarisation of new ideas on language education. Teachers of Rajasthan, though have been trained at least once during last five years, the training inputs are generally very conventional.

There was also an additional question in the post orientation reflections. This question was given to find out whether the teachers have felt confident of organising

Table 13(a)
The orientation will be useful or was useful for you in ...

CTSA Group		Pre-orientation			Post-orientation		
		<i>Fully</i>	<i>To some extent</i>	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Fully</i>	<i>To some extent</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
a.	Understanding NCF 2005	15	10		20	18	
b.	Understanding the new syllabus of English	18	14		18	9	
c.	Teaching the new textbooks in English for Classes VI to VIII	15	12	1	17	10	
d.	Organising the activities of the textbook (pair work, group work, etc.)	15	10		21	7	
e.	In devising and conducting assessment activities [Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE)]	14	11		16	12	1
f.	I would feel / I feel confident in teaching English language now with this orientation	18	5		25	3	

Table 13(b)
The orientation will be useful or was useful for you in

Rajasthan Group		Pre-orientation			Post-orientation		
		<i>Fully</i>	<i>To some extent</i>	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Fully</i>	<i>To some extent</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
a.	Understanding NCF 2005	53	20	11	65	10	5
b.	Understanding the new syllabus of English	40	17	12	70	10	12
c.	Teaching the new textbooks in English for Classes VI to VIII	45	13	17	72	10	03
d.	Organising the activities of the textbook (pair work, group work, etc.)	49	16	05	67	13	09
e.	In devising and conducting assessment activities [Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE)]	30	23	34	50	20	01
f.	I would feel / I feel confident in teaching English language now with this orientation	30	27	11	71	16	07

activities and providing an enabling environment for promoting language learning. The responses show that both the groups have developed a perspective on how language learning takes place, organising activities for promoting interactions, use of mother tongue and so on. One may be sceptical about these responses

as they are answered conveniently. However, we can infer that teachers are convinced that these are the ways in which language learning can be promoted effectively. This recognition of the effective and scientifically accepted ways of doing itself could be stated that teachers have started learning.

Table 14
I can now do (Post-orientation)

Say whether the following activities are possible in your classroom after this orientation		Yes		No	
		CTSA	Rajasthan	CTSA	Rajasthan
a.	I can now conduct a group work well	35	66	04	10
b.	Project work is an instrument for language learning	37	55	02	18
c.	Writing involves a process	32	62	07	17
d.	I should use mother tongue also in the classroom	30	71	10	08
e.	I need to create an environment for language learning	38	73	0	01

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The orientations for both the groups of teachers were intended to familiarise them with the new curriculum, materials and the new perspectives in language education. Though the teachers of the groups are different as one group works in an English medium environment and the other (Rajasthan group) works in Hindi medium government schools where the resources are scarce. This study made an attempt to understand whether teachers get to learn anything in the in-service orientation programme. Began with much uneasiness to find out what teachers learn from the in-service training, this study took a shape by observing the teachers' need (as perceived by them), their activities during the training and their post-

orientation reflections. It cannot be established with confidence what the teachers have learnt or have not learnt at all the new ideas and developed a perspective on language education and language pedagogy. An analysis of the responses as discussed in the previous sections show that teachers of both the groups had an understanding about language learning, how to teach language aspects, conduct classroom activities, and ideas of NCF-2005 even before the orientation. Their responses after the orientation reveal that this understanding has improved to a greater extent in most cases while in some aspects the understating has not progressed well. There is no indemnity that the new strategies and ideas learnt during the orientation will be adopted by the teachers in the classroom. If one

goes by the responses of teachers as shown in the previous section, one can believe that teacher learning has taken place in both the orientations. If teachers have learnt something or anything during the orientations, what could be attributed to the reasons for the learning?

The reasons for teacher learning in the orientations could be seen from different dimensions. Firstly, both the orientations were organised with advanced planning. Four months before the start of the orientation, the preparatory work started with the identification of teachers in Rajasthan and information about the programme to the teachers of CTSA. Arrangements of proper venue and reading / study materials during orientation for the teachers were developed before-hand for Rajasthan teachers while NCERT's training package for North-eastern state teachers was used for the teachers of CTSA. Both the materials covered the major aspects of language education and pedagogy. Teachers were, in a way, compelled to read the material for their assignments, everyday class discussions and demonstration lessons.

Secondly, the orientations were participatory in the sense that the aspects were dealt with as teachers are expected to do in their classrooms. For example, reading pedagogy was made known to the participants through a demonstration of reading text as done in a classroom through pair work, individual reading, post-

reading activities, re-reading and so on. Story telling was done by a trainer telling a story and then participants telling the story in groups and in different languages (for promoting multilingualism), and then one group telling to the whole class. Participant centred approach (Waters and Vilchs, 2012) will work when teachers are not treated as the ones who do not know. Listening to the teachers and their problems would help for it makes them feel that the 'trainer is on their side'. This, 'being on the side of the participating teachers', (like teachers being on the side of the learners) would open up the minds of the teachers to come out of their apprehensions. Apprehensions are such that the teachers are crippled with their day-to-day system or logistic related problems resulting in what generally teachers say, "This will not work in our schools." "This can't be done in our large classroom." "Our children are not used to group / pair work which you are advocating." What is needed is to alleviate the apprehensions and enable the teachers to 'move from their apprehension to comprehension'. This movement will not take place easily. Teachers need to trust their trainers who require not only the techniques and strategies, but also compassion to understand the teachers' problems and how the curricular intensions get diluted at the teacher level. As Prabhu (2012) points out teachers in general do not want a specialist view of teaching-learning. They expect

'tips' that would work. This does not mean that training/orientation programmes should not be dealt with theoretical or pedagogical aspects. Moreover, just giving 'tips' is not a professional way of training professionals (if we consider teachers as professionals). Teachers, like learners in the classroom, are curious to understand first the practical benefits in their contexts and then are drawn to the understanding of theory. One difference between the learners and teachers is that teachers can be cynical because of their resource constraints and what they feel as 'not having good students' or 'not learning environment at home' for their learners. 'So all these new techniques cannot work there.' This problem is very common to every school system in the country. What is interesting is that those teachers are willing to find ways and means till they raise the first two problems like 'not having good students' and 'no learning environment at home'. It becomes difficult to deal with teachers who feel 'nothing can be done to change the situation or to make our learners learn.' This is what I would call, 'cynicism' and this I feel is dangerous for the learners who the teacher teaches and for the teacher herself/himself as she/he becomes hyper critical (not to say frustrated) of every idea or practice which comes. They become very resistant to change. Let's see some of the statements of teachers in the first open session in which they were asked to discuss

their training schedules and talk about their problems.

RAJASTHAN GROUP

'Our children can't read even the letters of the alphabets even in Class VI.'

'Their parents are mostly illiterates and daily coolies. They can't help their children in learning.'

'We don't have any facilities in the school. Only thing available is the textbook.'

'Our children can't learn English.'

'Most of the training programmes tell us many many things. But they don't work in our classroom.'

CTSA GROUP

'Our problem is different, our children don't have much motivation. They know English, but they are unwilling to learn because they get money from everywhere.'

'We have facilities and can create resources but our management is highly hierarchical and everyone exercises her/his power.'

'We can't do much as the system only wants us to produce 100 per cent result.'

One can see 'we' and 'they' thinking is more than half of the teachers. Purpose of this paper is not to explore the other sociological aspects, but we need to recognise that this (teacher thinking) is important for understanding the learner. A teacher need to recognise that her/his students are capable of learning because cognitively

every child is capable of learning, though it depends on other factors like motivation, support, interest, environment for learning, etc. One session discussed 'Who my learners are and their language merits and problems' informally helped the teachers to come out their negative thinking about their learners. But this was a problem which surfaced every time.

Thirdly, we adopted 'consciousness raising technique', through activities and tasks, teachers' attention was drawn to the underlying rules/principles or the 'why' and 'how' of ideas is expressed. Let me cite an example from my own session. One of the sessions I took was on listening and speaking, I took up mutual dictation in which teachers in pairs had to read out alternate sentences to their partner. Having done the dictation activity, their attention was drawn through recall. They were able to say that the activity was able to integrate the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and how the neglected areas of listening and speaking are included well in the activities.

Fourthly, the teachers were given freedom to modify the schedule prepared first by us. Their demands for new areas/topics were taken, accepted and included. Making them partners in the planning and processes of the orientation helped in owning the responsibility (responsibility of mutual learning and sharing of practices and experiences). Use of

audio and video in the orientation helped them to understand how the videos, not necessarily in language education or educative (like the Hollywood movie on a Mathematics teacher, *Stand and Deliver*) could make the orientation lively and enjoyable. We need to understand that teachers have to learn not very consciously i.e. they would feel that this I can do in my classroom and there is an element of fun to learn. Lecture-cum-demonstration is not the method for achieving this. Our methods have to be interactive and reflective. They need to be prompted to connect with what they are doing in their classroom and verify with what the trainer is trying to give them. One of the activities we did in the two programmes was to raise slogans on various aspects of language learning-teaching. There were charts displayed on the walls, they were asked to raise slogans like, 'Grammar is learnt implicitly, don't teach formal grammar in early years.' At the end of the orientation programmes, teachers were able to create (with understanding) about twenty slogans which were later converted into staffroom posters.

Fifthly, needless to say the teachers (trainees) should be aware of what the orientation programme/training is going to achieve for them. This will help in making teachers know of the expectation of the orientation and also an accountability of learning or knowing the aspects through the orientation. 'What' should be made

known to the trainers? A typical content of the orientation should be seen from the perspective of enhancing teachers proficiency (wherever needed), the pedagogical knowledge, understanding the learners and her/his contexts, pedagogical knowledge with reference to each language aspect like reading, writing, pedagogical grammar, assessment processes, materials development and creating resources, system related issues and problems with regard to language education, classroom research (Action Research) and so on. This makes the teachers understand her/his professional role as a teacher individually and in the system. Both the orientations attempted to make the teachers aware of the content and the expectation from the teachers. This could be said as one reason for the success of the orientations.

Lastly, trainer learning is as important as teacher learning in any orientation or training programme. Selection of trainers makes all the difference. Trainers need to have an understanding of the emerging ideas and be able to provide an enabling environment for the teachers. Instructing the teacher the theoretical aspects only as precepts may not create an impact. Cater to the needs of teachers as to how to do and then draw their attention to underlying principles (if any or needed). In the Rajasthan group I was the only trainer— from NCERT while in the CTSA group, there were four trainers—all from NCERT. The mixed

group of Rajasthan was felt both as a merit and demerit. Merit is the diverse experiences and ideas, and the demerit is that understanding of ideas of NCF–2005, changing perspectives in language education and language learning. Trainers need to understand that teachers (and these teachers will become master trainers in future) are individuals who represent an institution called school. Both their individual perceptions and school practices and experiences influence their response to the training. Trainers who meet them only for some time need to understand and reflect this aspect to deliver their best.

We can conclude that the teachers have learnt new ideas, particularly NCF perspective on language education, changing / emerging trends in language education, teaching of vocabulary, grammar in contexts, organising activities and so on. The responses of the teachers also reveal that the orientation has helped them to equip themselves with new pedagogies. The pre-orientation arrangements like, information to the teacher well in advance, training materials for the teachers to read and to do activities during the orientation and knowledge and strategies of the trainers are major factors which will support the teacher learning in the in-service training programmes. Content of the orientation concentrating on language proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and assessment processes, materials development, and system related issues and classroom research helps

in greater teacher involvement in the activities. Selection of trainers is important for the conduct / processes and the learning of teachers. Trainer learning from the orientation/training is instrumental for the quality improvement of orientations and teacher learning.

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