

Student Teachers' Learning and Professional Development in Second Language Teacher Education

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Abstract

This article is a review on student teacher (ST) learning in second language teacher education (SLTE) and it aims to establish a context for ST learning for professional development in SLTE research and frame its contribution to the current research literature. To achieve this, it conducts an overview on concepts of interest, and it places in perspective some of the key previous findings relating to the research at hand. Broadly, it is to serve as a foundation for the debate over perspectives of second/foreign language (S/FL) student teachers' (STs') learning to teach through their professional development with reference to both coursework and practicum contexts.¹

Keywords: student teacher learning, second language teacher education (SLTE), professional development

Introduction

When we refer to teachers we tend to characterise them as ordinary individual human beings and social beings. Both aspects must be considered for a working overview of teachers' developing professional beings, which is, obviously, necessary for the purposes of the present discussion (James, 2001).

Given that these – personal and social – complicated, complex and multi-dimensional aspects contribute to the constitution and development of teachers' professional identities, this journey begins when the individual becomes a learner of teaching at their teacher education institutes. Indeed, it even begins before they go to their institutions, through their preconceptions and beliefs as students; however, the student teachers' (STs') time frame is most relevant, as the sphere of influence of teacher development does not extend to before the decision to become a teacher is made. STs are expected to transition from primarily being students to being primarily being teachers as individual and social professionals at some point during their teacher education (or training, in the case of in-service and other pre-service facilities) (Danielewicz, 2001). However, this leaves the question: How does this transition and transformation happen? (Kanno & Stuart, 2011).

Kanno and Stuart (2011) state that STs' classroom practice (e.g., the practicum classes) helps with nurturing them as teachers and their emerging identities in turn shape their practice. Accordingly, the present review seeks a deeper perspective in looking at STs' learning from professional development perspective throughout the coursework and practicum process, which are the basic components of second language (L2/SL) teacher education.

STs' learning as part of their understanding of their professional development is the main theme of this review, in which I claim that English as a Foreign Language (EFL)/English as a Second Language (ESL) STs need to understand how and what they learn about their profession for developing ownership of their profession (Forde et al., 2006). I suggest that this can be achieved through critical reflection on and enquiry into their professional development during their initial teacher education (ITE) and practicum. Understanding this aspect is a critical process within approaches to professional identity development in teaching, enabling STs to reflect on their teaching practices, acts, behaviours and emotions. These

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understandings regarding their reflections, perceptions, views, thoughts, opinions and emotions while learning their profession are supposed to be centred on the sense of ownership of the profession that increases with time and experience.

Based on the argument above, this review has two parts. In the first part, the key concepts and their use in the present review are discussed. The concepts of 'teacher education' and 'teachers' professional development' are carefully examined in terms of their ability to deal with S/FL STs' professional identity construction in the second and third parts. Then, briefly, a discussion on the concept of 'sociocultural theory' (SCT) in second language teacher education (SLTE) is provided by drawing on some studies from relevant research in SLTE to support these conceptualisations.

In the second part of the study, a review on 'second language teacher education', 'second language teacher/student teacher-learning' and 'second language teacher/student teacher identity' is provided. ESL/EFL STs' professional development is examined through the lens of Vygotskian SCT. I argue in this study that this perspective can enable us to understand the effects of the complexities and complications in the EFL STs' learning and teaching experiences during the coursework and in the practicum on their understandings of their professional development.

Due to the terminological diversity within the teacher education field, preferred terms must be chosen and used consistently for clarity. I used the term 'student teachers' (STs) for pre-service teachers and teacher trainees, referring to the people who receive a three or four-year ITE in a faculty to become a teacher. However, I used the term second language teacher education (SLTE) instead of foreign language teacher education (FLTE) and language teacher education (LTE), given its common use in the literature.

1. Teacher Education, Teacher Training and Teachers' Professional Development

The concepts of 'teacher education', 'teacher training' and 'teacher development' are often used interchangeably both in general education and in SLTE literature (Wallace, 1991; Ur, 1996); nevertheless, these terms are distinguished for the conceptualisation of teacher education and professional development in this review study.

'Teacher education' is a key component and context for learning to teach and practice in which STs' professional development is fostered. Particularly over the past decade, it has been identified as a central variable in the transformation and reform of educational systems at national and local levels. According to Freeman (2001), teachers must engage in their own professional learning in order to improve student learning. The ways in which such professional learning – known as 'teacher learning' (Kennedy, 1991) – is organized and accelerated make a difference in terms of its durability and long-term efficacy.

According to Williams (1999), education involves cultivating an ability to think flexibly in solving problems and dealing with unpredictable demands thoughtfully while developing the individual personally/professionally on a long-term basis.

Commonly, the terms 'training' and 'education' have been used interchangeably to refer to the professional preparation of teachers. According to Ur (1996), many researchers prefer 'teacher education', given that 'training' may imply unthinking habit formation and an over-emphasis on techniques and skills.

According to Freeman and Johnson (1998a), teacher education is the formal label that describes the sum of various interventions that are used to develop professional knowledge among practitioners. As such, teacher education signifies how teacher educators create professionals in the field. The process of teacher education requires differing strategies depending on which constituents of teaching are to be addressed and the kinds of change in teacher performance that are sought. They propose reconceptualization of teacher education as the form of institutional response to how people learn to teach (Freeman & Johnson, 1998a).

Based on Freeman's and Johnson's (1998a) and Ur's (1996) views, the present review uses the term 'education' to describe the process to refer to the more varied and general learning that leads to the development of all aspects of the STs as individuals and members of society.

Freeman (1982) distinguished between 'training' and 'development', stressing that 'training' deals with building specific teaching skills such as how to design a lesson plan or how to teach a reading passage. 'Development', on the other hand, focuses on the individual teacher and the process of reflection, examination and change, which can lead to improved performance and to personal and professional growth (Freeman, 1982). Similarly, for Richards and Farrell (2005), 'training' refers to activities focusing on teachers' responsibilities directly and is typically aimed at short-term and immediate goals,

while 'development' refers to general growth that does not focus on a specific task. Indeed, training and development each seeks change in what the teacher does and why; however, they differ in the means they adopt to achieve that purpose, and in conceptualizations of 'teaching'. Thus, this distinction between training and development further indicates a difference in scope, since training addresses specific immediate needs, while development is less task-based. However, development has a broader scope, including long-term concerns such as how a teacher can be encouraged to grow, to explore new avenues and ideas, and, thereby, to avoid professional atrophy or the feeling that he or she has done it all before (Freeman, 1982).

This position is also based on some evidence from the research in SLTE over the last decade, which has focussed on a shift from searching for better ways to train teachers to trying to describe and understand the process of how they learn to teach through their self-awareness or reflection. In line with this recent shift of emphasis from the notion of training to that of development, the idea of teacher exploration (i.e., exploratory approach) is seen by myself as the researcher as a sort of 'liberating tool' for teachers from the pressure of identifying an optimal (or better) way of teaching, as proposed by Gebhard and Oprandy (1999).

1.1. Teachers' Professional Development

According to Clarke and Newman (1997), "Professionalism operates as an occupational strategy, defining entry and negotiating the power and rewards due to expertise, and as an organizational strategy, shaping the patterns of power, place and relationships around which organizations are coordinated" (p. 7). For Evans (2010), professional development is a "professionalism-influenced practice that both contributes to and reflects perceptions of the profession's purpose as well as the general ethical code underpinning this practice" (p.29). This view emphasises the personal aspect in contemporary professional development. Ozga (1995) and Trotman (1996) similarly describe professionalism not as an absolute or an ideal, but as a socially constructed, contextually variable and contested concept.

When we look at 'professionalism' from the 'teachers' professionalism' perspective, dominant discourses assert particular realities and priorities (Sachs, 2001). For instance, Hargreaves's and Goodson's (1996) and Sachs's (1999, 2001) views of teacher professionalism include a focus on teachers taking greater responsibility for defining the nature and content of their daily work. Hargreaves (2000) and Helsby (1995) claim that 'professionalism' refers to the quality of what teachers do, and of the conduct, demeanour and standards that guide them and this conception.

Research in the last 20 years has shown that the majority of the teachers engage in professional activities to become better teachers, rather than for simply meeting certification or contractual requirements. They regard professional development programmes as the most promising and most readily available paths to growth on the job and as a process to increased competence and professional satisfaction (Fullan, 1991, 1993). For them, becoming a better teacher means enhancing student learning outcomes (Huberman, 1995; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996; Fullan, 1999). Nevertheless, research also shows that teachers tend to be quite pragmatic, focusing on the day-to-day operation of their classrooms (Guskey, 1986; Fullan & Miles, 1992; Korthagen, 2001; Schelfhout et al., 2006).

Along with these aspects, Forde et al. (2006) asserted that there are increasingly complex demands on teachers in the 21st century; for being considered 'professional', certain personal and work-related characteristics, such as autonomy, commitment, ownership of the work, and self-direction are implied.

To Mann (2005), 'professional development' is career-orientated and has a narrower, more instrumental and utilitarian character, while 'teacher development' is more inclusive of personal and moral dimensions, as well as other unique characteristics, which is reflected elsewhere in the literature (Pennycook, 2001; Pettis, 2002; Johnston, 2003; Postholm, 2012).

In terms of SLTE, professionalism of English teaching is keenly promoted, within both the industry and related academic fields, as providing language teachers with professional training and qualifications and developing standards for English language teaching and for English language teachers. To Richards (2008), there was a much higher level of professionalism in SLTE and English Language Teaching (ELT) when he wrote than previously, implying that English language teaching is seen as a career in a field of educational specialization since it requires a specialized knowledge base obtained through both academic study and practical experience.

Leung (2009) contrasts two different dimensions to professionalism. The first is 'institutionally prescribed professionalism', which is a managerial and administrative approach to professionalism that embodies the views of ministries of education, teaching organizations, regulatory bodies, school administrations and so forth. The second is 'independent professionalism', which refers to teachers' own views of teaching and the processes by which teachers engage in reflection on their own values, beliefs and practices.

Therefore, with the individual teacher development perspective, there has been a movement away from 'one-size-fits-all development' to greater appreciation of the context in which teacher education efforts are situated (Lewis, 2000). Training and education programmes need to introduce teachers to the range of development tools and processes available in order to encourage engagement and commitment in personal development. Such bottom-up teacher development is important to individual language teaching development, but also significant for the teaching profession as a whole (Mann, 2005).

Acknowledging the validity of some top-down conceptions of professional development, the present section has sought to frame professional development at the personal level more than at the institutional level, broadly as expounded by Leung's (2009) second dimension of professionalism, 'independent professionalism'.

In accordance with this principle, the personal-level conceptualization of professional development seems more appropriate for the present review. As seen in this section, the significance of professional teacher development is emerging as a priority and necessity in teacher education (Lin & Xun, 2001). It is hoped that understanding these aspects of ST's professional development will contribute to our understandings of STs developing identities as professionals, informing both pedagogy and policy.

2. Defining the Sociocultural View

The term 'sociocultural' has gained significant prevalence in the field of SLTE in the last decade (Firth & Wagner, 2007). The sociocultural paradigm in language teacher education introduced the notion of identity as a prominent construct (Velez-Rendon, 2010). It offers a framework that points out how language learning and teaching experiences and outcomes are framed by the interaction of a multiplicity of social factors that situate learners and teachers in different positions (Norton, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Pavlenko, 2003a; Velez-Rendon, 2010).

The sociocultural perspective posits that the knowledge of the individual is constructed through the knowledge of the collective activities termed 'communities of practice' (C(s)oP) by Wenger (1998, 2008). This view "...locates learning in the process of co-participation, not in the head of individuals" (Hanks, 1996, quoted in Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 13). Wenger calls this 'collective learning', which takes place in a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of 'a shared enterprise' (Wenger, 2008, p. 45).

Wenger et al. (2002) describe CoP also as "... groups of people who share a problem, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an on-going basis" (p. 4). Over time, this group of people develop "... a unique perspective on their topic as well as a body of common knowledge, practice, and approaches", and a "... personal relationships and established ways of interacting" –they may even develop "... a common sense of identity, so they become a community of practice" (Wenger et al., 2002, p. 5). The radical departure from the conventional conception of identity, professional or otherwise, inherent in SCT supports the idea that human consciousness develops in specific social activities in the CoP (Wertsch, 1985, 1991; Johnson, 2006). In this case, learning becomes a progressive movement to and fro between external, socially mediated activity and internal meditational control by individual learners. This view embraces the idea that human cognition (and, as discussed below in the context of cognition, professional identity formation) is formed through sociocultural activities rather than being separated from the social, cultural, and historical contexts whence they both emerge (Johnson, 2006, 2009).

SCT is also a theory about how humans think through the creation and use of mediation tools that is extended to various domains including second language learning and teaching (Swain et al., 2011). It is formulated through Vygotsky's (1978) persistent focus on the relationship between the individual's physiological aspects and the socially and culturally produced contexts and artefacts (i.e., language) that transform the individual's cognitive and mental functions. From a Vygotskian perspective, the source of learning and development emerges from social interaction instead of solely from the mind of an individual (Swain et al., 2011). Thus, SCT suggests that knowing, thinking and understanding flow from the individuals' participation in the social practices of learning and teaching in specific classroom and school situations.

SCT has contributed to SLTE in many ways. An increasing amount of research is taking place regarding teacher cognition using the SCT framework. With the research on the mental lives of teachers, it has been found that their own interpretations of their own acts in the classroom, their background and prior activities, and the contexts they work in have a tremendous effect on the way of becoming teachers in terms of the reasons for doing the things they do (Borg, 2003; Freeman, 2002a, 2002b; Woods, 1996), validating SCT in this context. Tellingly, it has not been possible to predict the effect of choices of materials and methods in a mechanical way (i.e., one ignoring the variables introduced by SCT).

In the following parts of the present review, we will deal with this theory again to understand how SLTE is affected by it and how professional development of students can be demonstrated through this perspective.

In this light, in the following sections, answers to two critical questions are sought: What sorts of 'learning to teach' experiences are needed to initiate the processes of teachers' professional development? More fundamentally, what are these processes? These questions are crucial because there has been a lack of research into the 'learning to teach' and teaching experiences of STs during their Initial Teacher Education and practicum and how STs constantly negotiate their professional development and developing professional identities in relation to these particular activities and relationships.

3. Teacher and Student Teacher Learning in Second Language Teacher Education as a Source of Professional Development

According to Richards (2008), SLTE is influenced by two factors: First, a reconsideration of its knowledge base and instructional practices as a response to changes in understanding of the nature of SLTE; second, the external pressures resulting from the expanded need for competent language teachers worldwide. These factors seem to affect many aspects of SLTE: a rethinking of the knowledge base of SLTE, a move towards a sociocultural view of teacher learning and a focus on teacher cognition and the growing professionalism of the field, with the accompanying acknowledgement of the role of professional development in teaching and teacher learning (Richards, 2008).

3.1. The Knowledge-Base of Second Language Teacher Education

It has been suggested by some researchers (Singh & Richards, 2006; Richards, 2008; Johnson, 2009; Nagatomo, 2012) that SLTE programmes should help STs become aware of the knowledge they bring with them into the programme so as to support them to integrate the theories they learn into philosophies of teaching, since teachers teach from a knowledge base developed through their educational experiences as language learners and teachers, as well as their experiences as students, teachers and members of various communities outside the realm of language education (Freeman, 2002a, 2002b; Johnson, 2006; Johnston & Goettsch, 2000).

Research in the field has shown that, in most SLTE programmes, the focus has primarily been on the knowledge in subject matters such as testing, SLA, reading, linguistics, discourse analysis or methodology, not in pedagogy. This knowledge has often been transmitted by the lecturers to the prospective language teachers and it is done largely through intuition and experience; consequently, the programmes very often tend to focus on the debate about content and, to a lesser extent, how to deliver content effectively (Wallace, 1991; Woodward, 1992; Ur, 1996; Richards & Nunan, 1990; Richards, 1998; Singh & Richards, 2006).

However, in addition to the content-based knowledge, 'personal practical knowledge' has been defined as deep-rooted, moral personal knowledge evolving from individual personal and professional experiences (Clandinin, 1985, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 1987) in SLTE. Based on this identification, the importance of 'knowledge of self' (Golombek, 1998) should be recognised along with (or at the centre of) the STs' identity formation process, as is assumed for the purposes of the present review.

3.2. Teacher and Student Teacher Learning

Teachers' engagement in their own professional learning in order to improve student learning has been seen as a necessity in recent decades, and this kind of professional learning is defined as 'teacher learning' (Kennedy, 1991; Freeman, 2002a, 2002b). Therefore, there has been a growing body of research on teacher learning since the mid-1990s, both in mainstream Teacher Education (TE) (Hargreaves, 2000; Guskey, 2002; Lieberman & Mace, 2008; Warford, 2011) and in Second Language Teacher Education (Underhill, 1992, 1997, 1998; Borg, 1998; Evans, 2002; Freeman, 2002a, 2002b, 2001; Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Richards, 2008; Farrell, 2001, 2012; Sakamoto, 2011; Trent, 2012; Wyatt & Borg, 2011). The research has shown that teachers should and can improve their professional expertise and knowledge throughout their

careers. However, although the teacher is the most significant element among many sources within the extremely complex classroom language learning environment (Allwright & Bailey, 1991), in the rush to understand this complexity, teachers themselves are often overlooked, and they are portrayed as mediums to students rather than as individuals who think and who are learning autonomously.

In teacher learning, the question of how teachers learn to teach has been crucial. According to Freeman (2001), teacher knowledge is built on the teacher's experience as a learner; experiences as a teacher; understanding of theory and research; on-going reflection on learners and their learning processes; and soliciting and acting on information from students about their own learning.

Consequently, there has been a debate among SLTE researchers over whether the knowledge base should remain grounded in "core disciplinary knowledge about the nature of language and language acquisition" (Yates & Muchisky, 2003, p. 136) or focus more centrally on how L2 teachers learn to teach and how they carry out their work (Freeman & Johnson, 1998a; Yates & Muchisky, 2003; Johnson, 2006; Tarone & Allwright, 2005; Widdowson, 2002). However, the two approaches are not mutually exclusive, and the cumulative effect of studying what language is and how it is acquired is far from certain to translate into effective second language (L2) teaching practices (Freeman & Johnson, 1998a, 2005a, 2005b).

According to Tedick (2005, 2009), many researchers described content-based (i.e., language learning) approaches to (EFL)/ (ESL) teacher education as embedding two misconceptions: (1) the foundation of language teacher education is transmittance of knowledge about the language and pedagogical content and (2) that this knowledge will naturally be applied in practice.

In the traditional (learner-centred) view, learning is seen as a transmission process. When couched within a transmission model, the process-product paradigm examined teaching in terms of the learning outcomes it produced. In product-process research, "The aim is to understand how teachers' action led—or did not lead—to student learning" (Freeman 2002a, p. 2). Thus, traditionally, the problem of teacher-learning has been often viewed as a question of improving the effectiveness of delivery, or reducing teachers' resistance to change (Singh & Richards, 2006).

According to Lieberman and Mace (2008), related research helps us understand that learning, rather than being solely individual, is actually also social and happens through experience and practice. Hence, people learn from and with others in particular ways (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Wenger, 1998). They learn through practice (learning as doing), through meaning (learning as intentional), through community (learning as participating and being with others) and through identity (learning as changing who we are). Professional learning so formed is rooted in the human need to feel a sense of belonging and of making a contribution to a community, where experience and knowledge function as part of 'community property' (Lieberman & Mace, 2008, p. 227). Hence, in the search of ownership of their profession, teachers', pre-service teachers'/ student teachers' (STs') professional development should be refocused, at least to a significant extent, on the building of learning communities. This notion carries weight in light of the sociocultural perspective as well.

3.3. Models of Teacher and Student Teacher Learning

There are various models of teacher-learning suggested by different educators. Teacher-learning can be identified in reference to Wallace's (1991) three models of teacher learning. (1) The applied science model proposes that teachers learn to be teachers by drawing on research-based theories and applying that knowledge into their practice. (2) The craft model refers to learning to teach in the way apprentices learn crafts. (3) The reflective model requires teachers to learn by reflecting on their own experiences. Under this model, they apply what they have learned through reflection into their practice with the purpose of further, iteratively, refining their professional abilities. In the reflective model, the role of the ST is to develop by means of their reflections (Swan, 1993; Ur, 1996; Richards, 2002, 2008).

Self-analysis and perceptions are the underlying themes of teachers' self-reflections and reflective teaching. They are influential in understanding what teachers do and think before, during and after lessons (Bartlett, 1990; Richards & Lockhart, 1994). However, a broader, social and political view of reflection emphasises the social contexts, suggesting that STs and their learning processes can be described or understood by taking into consideration the sociocultural contexts in which their learning takes place (Freeman & Johnson, 1998a, 1998b). Zeichner and Liston (1996) suggest that reflective practice cannot be formed by thinking about teaching content; rather, it involves questioning the assumptions and values that the

teacher/ST brings to the classroom and critical examinations of the institutional and cultural contexts in which teaching occurs.

3.4. The Paradigms of Teacher and Student Teacher Learning in Second Language Teacher Education

To better understand teacher learning, it is crucial to look at it through different paradigms. The following subsections present and discuss the core paradigms in academia and practice.

3.4.1. The Positivist, Cognitivist and Constructivist Paradigms in Student Teacher Learning

The positivist paradigm describes a human as an empty vessel, a 'tabula rasa', who is passive in the learning process (Prawat, 1996). However, in the mid-1980s, cognitive learning theories and information-processing models shifted the focus of research from the positivist paradigm to questions about what teachers actually know, how they use that knowledge and what impact their decisions have on their instructional practices (Shavelson & Stern, 1981). Teacher education continued to focus on content knowledge and teaching practices; however, teachers were conceptualized as decision makers and were expected to benefit from making their tacit knowledge and decisions explicit (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Freeman, 1991; Johnson, 1992, 1999; Johnson & Golombek, 2003).

In the constructivist paradigm, the individual comes to the fore. Within the constructivist paradigm, the social context is seen as decisive for how the individual learns and develops. Individuals construct knowledge and learn through mediated acts in the relationships with one or more persons and the environment in which they live and act (Postholm, 2012). From this perspective, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural view on ST learning is central.

3.4.2. The Sociocultural Paradigm in Student Teacher Learning

From a Vygotskian perspective on learning, cognitive development (and thus, in this respect, professional development) is "... a socially mediated activity" (Johnson & Golombek, 2003, p. 730). The zone of proximal development (ZPD), which measures the distance between what a learner is able to do and a proximal level that they might attain through the guidance of an expert-other, and mediation (which the former describes) are the key concepts here. These two constructs present a view of learning as a 'process of apprenticeship' (Lortie, 1975), where apprentices/STs collaborate in social practices with teacher educators and peers in the faculty, and supervisor/cooperating teachers, peers, students, parents and other critical people in the practicum school to acquire and construct new forms of interaction and thinking (Vygotsky, 1978). As Warford (2011) asserts, mediated concept construction includes the core of the Vygotskian view of developmental processes, where facts cannot be simply transferred to learners (STs); rather, STs take the facts and appropriate their own meanings by means of cultural tools (Golombek & Johnson, 2004). This process matures in systematicity and complexity as teacher knowledge is constantly reshaped to adapt to the dynamic nature of schools and classrooms, thus comprising situated learning (Lempert-Shepell, 1995).

Vygotskian SCT's distinctiveness from traditional cognitive approaches lays in the social dimension of consciousness, in which all mental processes are primary in time and fact (Zuengler & Miller, 2006). Thus, "...the individual dimension of consciousness is derivative and secondary" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 30). To Lantolf and Pavlenko (1995), even though Vygotskian SCT does not deny a role for biological constraints, "...development does not proceed as the unfolding of inborn capacities, but as the transformation of innate capacities once they intertwine with socioculturally constructed mediational means" (p. 109).

The current perspectives of teacher learning and ST learning common in the research indicates that L2 teachers, as users and designers of genuine forms of knowledge, can make decisions about how best to teach their students within complex socially, culturally and historically situated contexts (Johnson, 2006).

3.5. The Role of Context in Student Teacher Learning and Situated Learning

SCTs of teacher learning see the concept of learning as situated social practice, which includes mediation, discourse, social interaction and participation structures. These, in turn, are situated in ideologies – both the participants' own and that of the institution running the course – about what learning is and should be (Singh & Richards, 2006).

The STs' socialisation and participation mentioned above are performed in the appropriate new discourses through which STs construct new knowledge, gain new memberships and negotiate their professional identities in these communities

(Burns & Richards, 2009). According to Pennington (2001), teachers situate their identities in a way such that different sides of identity are switched on or off as a response to context and circumstances. These contexts influence how learning, and what kind of learning, takes place (Velez-Rendon, 2010).

The location of most teacher learning in SLTE programmes is either a university or teacher training institution, or a practicum school, and these contexts generate different potentials for learning. All of these settings provide different ways (or patterns) of learning to teach. Lecture/course rooms, for instance, are settings for the emergence of social participation that can either enhance or inhibit learning of teachers/STs (Reeves, 2009); practicum schools are settings for the learning patterns to manifest through the practice and experience of teaching. Both involve induction to a CoP (Lave & Wenger, 1991) as well as involving participants with a common interest collaborating to develop new knowledge and skills. STs' socialisation into the profession, in this way, involves participating in these C(s)oP, which allow them to engage in particular activities, such as daily lesson preparation; classroom teaching; and interaction with peers, course lecturer, supervisor lecturer, supervisor teachers, co-operating teachers, students and parents (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Richards, 2008). Two aspects of the situated learning theory are particularly significant to this study: 'learning-in-practice' (Lave, 1996, p. 155) and 'identities-in-practice' (Lave, 1996, p. 157; Wenger, 1998, p. 215). Regarding learning-in-practice, according to Lave and Wenger (1991), STs engage in learning not for its own sake, but they learn so that they can participate in the practices of the community to which they wish to belong. From this perspective, the next section looks at the lecture room and then the practicum school as the settings for learning-in-practice.

3.6 Lecture/Course Room Element of Practicum (in Student Teachers' Learning from the Situated Learning Perspective)

From the situated social perspective on learning, an SLTE lecture/course room can be conceptualized as an emerging CoP for learning-in-practice (Lave & Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998). As Singh and Richards (2006) put it, learning in the lecture/course room depends on the discourse and activities that coursework and class participation involve. Freeman (2002a) proposes new functions of the lecture/course room as teaching the skills of reflectivity and to provide the discourse and vocabulary that can serve participants in renaming their experience. This could encourage a reconsideration of traditional modes of teaching in SLTE programmes and a focus on the course room as a community of learners engaged in social practices and the collaborative construction of meanings.

This view of learning (dialogic and collaborative inquiry) draws on SCT and the notion of identity construction and stresses how the social processes of the lecture/course room contribute to and shape learning. Key to the teacher-learning processes are the roles of participants, the discourses they create and participate in, the activities that take place and the artefacts and resources that are employed (Singh & Richards, 2006).

3.7 The Practicum Element of Student Teacher Learning from the Situated Learning Perspective

In the practicum school, STs' work includes how to apply contemporary ideas in practice of teaching. Hence, the practicum school can be viewed as a landscape where STs are encouraged to try out new professional identities, rather than simply being passive learners. Working collaboratively with the supervisor/cooperating teacher and peers can create both formal and informal social relationships in the practicum, which condition STs' relative success in learning.

In the school (practicum), under the situated learning perspective, the supervisor and cooperating teachers are expected to mentor and nurture STs; be models for best practices for planning and organizing teaching, building good rapport with students, managing the classroom and conveying subject matter knowledge; give STs the right amount of control and independence; provide appropriate and constructive feedback; and adapt their roles to meet individual STs' developmental needs (Glenn, 2006; Velez-Rendon, 2003, 2006).

Through this engagement – that is, learning-in-practice – STs may deepen their understanding and perceptions of issues around pedagogic practice and, of interest in the context of the present study, their professional identity construction. In the process of doing so, "... the STs' professional identities can be shaped and reshaped when her/his experience is critically theorized, rather than taken as the truth" (Singh & Richards, 2006, pp. 6–7). As an outcome, STs' professional identity and the CoP in the faculty course room and practicum school are reciprocally constituted through participation.

According to Myles et al. (2006), ideally, the practicum as a learning opportunity is well fitted to the CoP model; however, as Lave and Wenger (1991) point out, the social structure of this practice, its power relations and its conditions for legitimacy

define possibilities for learning. However, critics have argued that there may be situations where the CoP exhibits, for example, power relationships that seriously inhibit entry and participation (Britzman, 1991; Danielewicz, 2001). These relationships can be significantly problematized by the multiple identities both individuals bring into this situation (Agee, 1996; Graham, 1993; Rorrison, 2010). Therefore, collaboration and acceptance of differences are essential for the development of effective professional relationships.

Since STs often perceive a gap between the theoretical course work offered on campus and in the practicum, problems may emerge from the challenges for locating practicum schools, constructing meaningful cooperation with schools (and teachers), including developing coherent links between the campus-based and school-based academic strands, training supervisor/cooperating teachers and recognizing them as an integral part of the campus-based programme.

3.8 Student Teacher Learning and Professional development from the Vygotskian Sociocultural View

According to Farrell (2011), throughout their careers, teachers construct and reconstruct, usually tacitly, a conceptual sense of who they are (their self-image), and this is manifested through what they do (in their professional role). Thus, for understanding (and influencing) teaching and learning, it is necessary to understand teachers and their professional, cultural, political and individual roles, "... which they claim or which are assigned to them" (Varghese et al., 2005, p. 22). Thus, understanding their roles does not only involve understanding how they teach but also how they learn to teach.

As Lieberman and Mace (2008) put it, people learn through meaning (learning as intentional), through practice (learning as doing), through community (learning as participating and being with others) and through identity (learning as changing who we are). This process shapes and reshapes the identities of STs within the social interaction of the classroom (Richards, 2008), which can be explained by the "profound connection" between professional role and practice (Wenger, 2008, p. 149).

The concept of identities-in-practice, as Kanno and Stuart (2011) put it, implies a reciprocally constitutive relationship because identities develop only as one takes part in the practices of a community and learns the ways of being and doing in the community. Thus, ST learning means to 'become' (i.e., to cultivate a professional identity as) a language teacher, so it cannot be limited to discovering more about the skills and knowledge of language teaching (Singh & Richards, 2006). From the Vygotskian sociocultural perspective, the overall aim of a teacher education programme can be best perceived as the professional development (Singh & Richards, 2006; van Huizen et al., 2005). STs' professional identity being developed through guided participation (Rogoff, 1990) involves commitment to an image of teaching that is both publicly and personally meaningful and underlies and directs the acquisition and further development of professional knowledge and skills (van Huizen et al., 2005). Thus, teachers' learning and professional development are crucial on the building of learning communities, as claimed by Wenger (van Huizen et al., 2005).

Summary

In this review article, through an overview on student teachers' learning and their professional development, a conceptual basis was established.

Regarding professional development, the present study adapted Freeman's (1982) definition, positing professional development as growth both personally and professionally. It also employed Danielewicz's (2001) definition: "... our understanding of who we are and of who we think other people are. The present study also adopted the view from Singh and Richards's (2006) that ST professional development and identity is woven through the ideologies, discourses, contents and approaches of the practicum school and the faculty, and the individual ST's own desire to find meaning in becoming a teacher. Thus, this view underlines the transformative dimension of teacher education programmes, looking at the transformations of STs from students to teachers from first-hand analyses concurring with Danielewicz's (2001) professional identity as transformative re-imagining of self.