

A Review of English Language Teacher Training Programmes in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviewed the contents and objectives of three English language teacher education programmes offered by government and non-governmental organizations to in-service secondary school teachers in Bangladesh. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect additional data from the programme coordinators who were trainers as well. The aim of the study was to find out whether the training programmes created opportunities for teachers to engage in critical reflection on their own beliefs in order to develop a critical approach towards their teaching. Hence, this study drew on the extensive literature on teacher beliefs and critical reflection to advocate the need for designing teacher development programmes which focus on these two aspects. The study sought to establish the advantages of helping teachers to articulate their beliefs so that they can themselves identify whether their beliefs are in sync with language education today. This can be possible only if teachers reflect on their core beliefs about teaching that propel them to teach in a particular way. The study found that the training programmes which were reviewed all focused on classroom practices. None of the programmes focused on helping teachers to articulate or identify their beliefs so that their awareness of their own beliefs could help them appreciate the need for implementing what they were being trained to do in the classroom. It was argued that if teacher development programmes created opportunities for teachers to collectively and critically reflect on their pre-existing beliefs, it could help them use their newly acquired skills more effectively and convincingly.

Keywords: critical reflection, teacher beliefs, teacher educators, teacher training modules.

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INTRODUCTION

English Language teaching in Bangladesh is beset with problems in various ways. Language learners fail to gain proficiency in English despite learning it since the first year at school. There are many issues that need to be addressed to bring about a radical change for the better. The resistance of the stakeholders to change, the age-old examination system and the teach- to- the- test mindset, all have a role to play. According to Hamid (2011), “The principal causes of failure of Bangladeshi ELT can be located in state policy and planning” (p. 198).

In such a scenario, teacher training programmes can play a pivotal role in bringing about a change for the better. Teacher training programmes are held regularly to overcome the obstacles to effective teaching/ learning of English. Despite a change in some areas of teaching, effective English language learning has not materialized in the mainstream education system as yet. Therefore, it was important to study the contents of the teacher development programmes to gain an understanding of the causes behind this failure. Ohata (2007, p. 3) stated that, “The essential difference between teacher training and development is whether the element of personal growth is involved or not in the teacher learning processes”. Language teaching entails both “low-inference skills like ... how to set up group work, and how to use strategies for effective questioning, eliciting and giving feedback, ...” and “high-inference decision making in terms of when and why teachers behave the way they do in the classroom...” (Britten, 1985; Medley, 1979 cited in Ohata, 2007, p. 3). Ohata (2007, p. 1) further pointed out that “language teacher education for the last decade has undergone a shift from searching for better ways to train teachers to trying to describe and understand the process of how teachers learn to teach through their self-awareness or reflection”. This observation serves as the rationale to undertake the present study.

This research was underpinned by the conceptual understanding that language teaching entails much more than just a theoretical and practical knowledge of the language. Effective teaching stems from a teacher’s beliefs and attitudes and the way she thinks about her teaching practice. These unobservable cognitive processes have a strong impact on one’s teaching. Therefore, it is important to take teacher cognition into account when designing teacher development modules. Most teacher training programmes focus on teacher behaviour but as Borg (2012) stated in an interview given to Birello, there is much more to teaching than just a set of behaviours. According to him, “Beneath the behavior there are beliefs and knowledge and related constructs which influence what teachers do” and therefore, there is a need to “understand what they believe, what they know, their attitudes, their feelings” (Birello, 2012, p. 88).

Training teachers to teach effectively is important, but it is also important that the teacher is aware of their own beliefs and attitudes to understand why they need to teach in a particular way. Consequently, Mann (2005) emphasized a distinction between teacher training and teacher development writing that, “the role of teacher training is to introduce the methodological choices available and to familiarize trainees with the range of terms and concepts that are the ‘common currency’ of language teachers” (p. 104). On the other hand, teacher development is seen more as an exercise in self- development. Self-development requires an awareness of one’s own attitudes and beliefs and that cannot happen without reflection.

The way in which a teacher designs their lessons, their attitude towards the learners, and their classroom practices are all shaped by their core beliefs in relation to teaching. Whether a teacher is likely to try out innovations learnt in training programmes depends largely on how much their

core beliefs support those practices, and those beliefs are unlikely to change or even reaffirmed without critical reflection. Thus, this study took into account two crucial aspects of teacher development, teacher beliefs and critical reflection, as inter-related constructs because awareness of the former cannot be achieved without the latter. This led to the need to review the content of different language teacher training programmes to establish whether concepts such as teacher beliefs, and critical reflection constituted any part of their objectives.

The research questions driving this study were:

1. Do the EL teacher training modules take into consideration such components as teacher beliefs, critical reflection and collaborative dialogue as essential to a teacher's professional development?
2. Do the teacher trainers have the opportunity to incorporate these concepts in their teaching?

This study drew on the constructivist view of learning. "Within a constructivist conception of learning, beliefs are thought of as critical in terms of what and how the candidates make sense of what they are studying" (Richardson, 2003, p. 4). As Barcelos and Kalaja (2013) pointed out, "It is crucial to find out about [teacher] beliefs about language learning and teaching as these might be reflected in their practices not only in classroom contexts but also in out-of-classroom contexts with possibly far-reaching consequences." (p. 1). Farrell (2016a) highlighted that "many teachers are not consciously aware of what their beliefs are or how they impact their instructional decisions; in other words, many of these decisions and resulting images of teaching are of a tacit nature" (p.2). Teachers come to training programmes with preexisting theories and convictions about teaching, which they may or may not be aware of, which shape their teaching practices.

Reflection is important for teachers to become aware of their own beliefs and attitudes. Without critical reflection, no change can come about in a teacher's beliefs and approach to teaching language. Introducing teacher beliefs in a teacher development programme without introducing the concept of critical reflection would render the programme ineffective. Reflection in education has been an important concept since Dewey (1897). Mezirow (1990) later spoke of critical reflection in making a distinction between reflection and critical reflection saying that, "While all reflection implies an element of critique, the term critical reflection" refers to "challenging the validity of presuppositions in prior learning" (p. 6). Cirocki and Farrell (2017) also made a distinction between reflection and critical reflection. They uphold Baldwin and Fook's contention that, "critical reflection enables teachers not only to reconstruct practical knowledge by identifying presumptions underpinning their actions, but it also gives practitioners the means to recognize possibilities for personal and social change" (p. 7). This study advocates the need for critical reflection by language teachers.

TEACHER BELIEFS

Teachers must be aware of their beliefs before they can understand the need for change or for teacher educators to decide what changes are required. Teacher beliefs act on two levels, their beliefs about what is the right way to teach and what their learners need, and their beliefs about their own efficacy i.e. their belief in their own capability to perform a certain task. Both have a strong role to play where teacher performance is concerned. Borg (2011) noted that changes in teacher performance are more likely to happen if teacher beliefs also change.

Findings of the research that has been undertaken on in-service teacher beliefs revealed that teacher education has some positive role to play in bringing about a change. Research findings

have been mixed. Phipps and Borg (2009) found the impact nominal while Brown and McGannon (1998) “noticed little difference in teachers’ beliefs before and after the three-week practicum except in their views on error correction. The authors recommended that more guided reflection be provided” (cited in Crandall and Christison, 2016, p.16). A part of a longitudinal qualitative study carried out by Borg (2011) aimed to find out the impact of eight weeks of intensive teacher training in the UK on in-service teachers’ beliefs. The objective of one of the modules of the course was to “develop candidates’ beliefs about teaching” (cited in Borg, 2011, 371). The findings of the study indicated that the programme had a significant, although not consistent, impact on the beliefs of the participant teachers. A similar study by Xiong (2016) also showed that teacher education does impact English teachers’ beliefs quite considerably. Here again the impact was not the same on all teachers. Hence it becomes clear that awareness rising of teacher beliefs through reflections have to be wisely incorporated into teacher development programmes for them to have a positive impact.

CRITICAL REFLECTION

When a teacher’s beliefs about teaching language is not in sync with the approaches being taught in teacher training programmes, the teacher’s beliefs and conceptions about teaching and learning need to change and develop with the changes in teaching/learning situations. Farrell and Guz (2019, p. 2) asserted that a teacher’s classroom practices are influenced by their “theories and beliefs” which “serve as a filter through which instructional judgments and decisions are made”. Their case study on an in-service experienced English teacher revealed through her reflections that most of her practices matched her beliefs but there were instances where there were also mismatches. They emphasized that, “Since language teachers’ beliefs about successful teaching form the core of their teaching behavior, thus it is vital that opportunities be provided for practicing language teachers to articulate and reflect on their beliefs and classroom practices”. Hence, the importance of critical reflection is iterated in the raising awareness about a teacher’s beliefs which may or may not need to change.

A study done by Hacker and Barkhuizen (2008) found that when teachers are able to articulate their own understanding of their experiences and reflect on it, there is a progression in their theories of language teaching. Another positive effect of reflection that they found was the “confidence regarding personal theories generated through the process of reflection” (p. 176). Thus it is established that reflection in teacher development programmes can play a vital role in bringing about an intrinsic change in the way teachers approach teaching.

Anderson (2020) synthesized the various definitions of reflections to state that “reflection is conscious, experientially informed thought, at times involving aspects of evaluation, criticality, and problem-solving, and leading to insight, increased awareness, and/or new understanding” (p. 1). Hence, critical reflection generates reflective practice and involves “contemplation with an openness to being changed, a willingness to learn, and a sense of responsibility for doing one’s best” (Jay, 2003, p.1). Reflective practice is important not only because through such practice, “teachers develop their own theories of teaching English or advance existing ones” but also because they can link theory to practice by delving into their “own beliefs about teaching” and through the process “enhance their own teaching, self-efficacy and professionalism” (Cirocki & Farrell, 2017, p.8).

Farrell’s (2016b) analyses of fifty-eight academic journals from 2009-2016 revealed that whether teachers reflect “on their identities, beliefs, theories, or their own teaching” they “do

recognize the developmental value and transformative potential in the activities of reflection” (p. 5). Despite there being argument against the validity of the claim that reflection has an impact on teacher effectiveness (Akbari 2007, cited in Anderson, 2020, p. 2), both Stronge (2007) and Farrell (2016) observed that reflection has a positive influence on language teachers’ practice as well as cognition, raising “greater understanding of self and awareness of own beliefs” (cited in Anderson, 2020, p. 2).

Critical reflection, however, does not always mean reflecting on one’s own. Reflective dialogue has been proven to promote professional growth. As Cirocki and Farrell (2017) noted, “reflective practice is a spiral process where teachers systematically monitor, evaluate and modify their teaching. It is based on teacher conviction, informed by evidence-based inquiry and strengthened through collaboration with others (p. 8). The importance of reflective dialogue in teaching practices was affirmed by Little (2009) when he wrote that “the internalization of higher cognitive functions depends on reciprocity, and the symbolic tool that makes internalization possible is language, understood as an inescapably dialogic phenomenon” (p. 151).

Dialogue is the verbal articulation of the reflections of teachers through which they can collaborate and reach a consensus on what needs to be done. Marchel (2007) wrote that critical dialogue between teachers is not just about getting “new perspectives on challenging situations” but it “is necessary for examination of personal biases that often informs teaching practice” (p. 4). When collaborative reflection takes place, it becomes more critical and one is compelled to question oneself and others. Reflective discussions, therefore, not only give clarity to one’s thoughts but also provide answers to questions, opening up new perspectives. When convincing answers are found, long held beliefs are likely to either change or be reaffirmed.

METHOD

This study was a qualitative one examining the design and objectives of language teacher training programmes for in-service secondary school teachers. Teacher Training modules of three secondary school teacher training programmes offered by one government and two non-government organizations were reviewed and the objectives of the programmes were evaluated to determine whether teacher beliefs and critical reflection made up any part of the training courses. The first programme reviewed was an ongoing project by a non-government organization. The second programme was run by a government institution under the Ministry of Education and was also part of an ongoing programme held every year. The third programme was also run by a non-government organization. All three programmes were mainly aimed at training teachers from outside the capital. Data was also collected through semi-structured interviews of the programme director of the first programme and two teacher trainers from the other two programmes, who were also the programme managers/directors. Due to the pandemic and a lockdown in the city, phone interviews were carried out. The interviews were recorded, and later transcribed, and translated where necessary. The objective of the semi-structured interviews was mainly to find out if the trainers met the trainees for any kind of reflective dialogues during or after the training programmes were over. The interviewees were allowed to speak at length about the programmes and relevant data were extracted from the details provided by them.

A content analysis was done of the modules, and data from the interviews were compared to look for recurring themes.

FINDINGS

This section includes the overview of the programme modules as well as a report on the findings from the semi-structured interviews.

PROGRAMME 1

The printed participant resource book with the details of the programme objectives was provided to the researcher on request. The main aim of the training according to the resource book was to instill in school principals and teachers the need to develop core skills like critical thinking, problem solving, and leadership skills in their students. The course objectives for school leaders sought to:

- Focus on raising awareness and deepening school leaders' understanding of why these core skills and competencies are important for their students
- Introduce some appropriate tools to monitor and assess how these are presently being taught and supported in their schools
- Introduce some strategies to help school leaders improve the provision of core skills

(British Council, 2015, p.5)

The objectives for teachers were to imbue in them the deep learning skills through practical experience and to make them understand what these skills entail. The teachers were trained to incorporate the core skills in the existing curriculum to enable them to nurture those skills in their students. According to the resource book, the workshop session was designed in a way to effectively promote interaction between teachers and students. The teaching techniques included questioning and dialogue, group work, assessment, lesson planning, and use of learning materials. The module introduced teachers to the practice of “plan-teach-reflect cycle” and the workshop session was designed to help participant teachers develop activities they could use. Teachers were required to work on those activities and further refine them in collaboration with their colleagues in their respective schools. In the introductory session teachers were given a checklist to elicit the questioning techniques used by the teachers. The second day workshop sessions were divided to three parts.

School-based follow-up sessions were an integral part of this programme. The participants had to execute the activities they had planned during the workshop sessions and reflect on their effectiveness with their colleagues with the purpose of improving those activities. In the participant resource booklet, instructions were given to the trainees to hold four reflective sessions with their colleagues with clear guidelines on how to start the reflective sessions. Teachers mainly reflected on what they had implemented in their own classrooms, what had worked and what had not.

When asked, the programme director mentioned that a pool of school ambassadors had been appointed to ensure the implementation of the training and one of their duties was “to visit classrooms to see whether teachers are using these ideas or not” (interview). She spoke of her own visits to some schools where 80% of the participant teachers were trying to implement their

learning. She added that, “our teaching system is mainly guided by our assessment system” and ensuring high scores by students is the main objective of stakeholders. This was why head teachers were included in the training programme. It ensured that the authority had a greater understanding of the objectives of the training module which in turn would ensure that teachers did not face opposition from them when trying to implement their learning. The director said that the teachers “also talk about challenges that they don’t have the infrastructure and the class size is very big ... plus the school managing committee doesn’t allow them to do all the things”, all of which hindered the implementation of certain practices.

The programme director noted that in order to ensure administrative support, a MOU has been signed with MAUSHI (Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education) with appointment of observers to assure the school authorities that the training objectives are geared to bring about a positive change in the way teaching is practiced not only in language classes but in classes of other subjects too. This suggested that convincing the stakeholders about the need for training teachers on objectives that move away from the norm would require much more than just changes in the content of the training programmes.

The skills that the teachers were trained on dealt with classroom practices. Mainly, they were taught how to incorporate the teaching of core skills into the existing curriculum. The training modules had no section devoted to teacher development as such which focused on trying to understand what teachers believed about their own ability or what their teaching beliefs were. The programme director revealed that teachers spoke about their practices informally before sessions but trainers did not get the opportunity to make the trainees reflect on their teaching beliefs during or after the programme was over. The programme objectives in the resource book did not include those aspects of teacher development either. Thus there was no way of finding out whether the trainees’ beliefs matched what they had been trained to practice.

PROGRAMME 2

This programme was based on classroom teaching and focused on the Communicative Approach to language teaching. The objectives were that the trainees would be able to:

- demonstrate enhanced capacity
- develop their own English
- handle the new text book efficiently
- motivate learners to participate in various language practice activities
- construct listening, speaking, reading, writing vocabulary and grammar tests
- recognize the English sound system and develop better pronunciation skills
- evaluate the effectiveness of language laboratory in the teaching of four skills especially listening and speaking

(NAEM, 2019, p.3)

The course content also included sessions on designing tests and educational management.

According to the programme director, even though the duration of the course was 21 days, in effect, the actual sessions came to around 14 days with six weekends and two days of study tour. Each group of trainees consisted of about 30 -35 teachers. The teachers were from different educational zones of Bangladesh because the objective of the organization was to ensure that teachers from all over the country had the opportunity to receive the training. Each day there were three sessions in five hours. When asked if there was any way to monitor the participants to see whether they implemented what was learnt the trainer said, “No...no... that is not there

anymore... earlier it was there but now there isn't ...there is no scope for monitoring ... we need to do something in that area... I really feel frustrated about this" (translated).

The teacher trainer/course director said that they did not get the opportunity to speak with the trainees before the programme but during the orientation "there is a one-hour session when teachers introduce themselves and speak about their earlier training and what they teach ...but it is very informal". She added that, "suppose I am teaching reading skills, so before I start I find out what they know about it...that is what other trainers do too" (translated). When asked whether there were sessions for reflection, the course director/trainer said that there were seven days of mandatory micro-teaching, at the end of which "self-reflection is required of each teacher". So any reflections that were done were on their own micro-teaching and not about the beliefs that underpinned their practices.

PROGRAMME 3

The third programme was also run by a non-governmental organization which runs similar teacher training programmes on a regular basis across 60 districts of Bangladesh. This two-day training programme also focused on classroom practices. The objectives of the training module included different aspects of classroom management, teacher's role in the classroom, techniques for effectively teaching the four skills, importance of effective feedback, the changing role of teachers in the 21st century, and Communicative Language Teaching as opposed to Grammar Translation Method.

A great deal of emphasis was given on "rapport building" (interview) with not only the trainee teachers but with the head teachers, and senior members of the administration of the relevant schools. The programme manager emphasized the need to build rapport with the school head and senior members of the administration to convince them of the need for training the teachers. This was again an indication that new objectives in the teacher development programmes would not be easy to implement.

According to the programme manager, the follow up sessions take place at different levels. At one level the "Programme Organizers visit the schools, talk to the head teachers and observe the classes conducted by the trained teachers. Similarly, trainers also visit the classes of the trained teachers" to see "how they are implementing and whether they are implementing the things they learnt in the training" (interview). Sometimes trainers from the head office in Dhaka, also randomly visit certain schools. The organization also sends a monitoring team to the schools to act as the "third eye". There was no session allocated for reflections in the programme brochure and the programme organizer also did not speak of such sessions.

DISCUSSION

The data from the modules and the interviews showed that all three training programmes were geared towards improving classroom practices of teachers. The first programme took into account the importance of learner autonomy and focused on how students could be taught to become critical thinkers and acquire problem-solving skills, which in itself was a step forward for the way teaching is conducted in our classrooms. However, the objective of this study was to find out whether any of the training programmes focused on teacher development as opposed to training them on effective classroom practices.

The director of the first programme revealed that the reason for including head teachers in the training programme was mainly to convince them about the growing need for teaching the core skills to language learners. The manager of the third programme also said that after signing a contract “we arrange a three-day management training for the head teachers, assistant head teacher and senior members” so that “they can understand why the training is necessary for the teachers for capacity development...”. This indicated that the need for administrative support to try something new cannot be overstated. The second programme was run by the government so the organizers did not worry about administrative constraints in the implementation of the teaching practices teachers were trained in. If authorities need to be convinced to offer training on innovative classroom practices, it can be concluded that incorporating aspects like teacher beliefs and critical dialogic reflection in teacher training programmes would also need convincing.

In the first programme, after each “sequence of activity” teachers were expected to have a “follow-up meeting (with one or more colleagues) consisting of:

Twenty minutes: reflection on classroom activity ...”

(British Council, 2015, p.44)

So, teachers were expected to reflect on the activities they had planned and implemented on the basis of their learning. The reflective component in the second training programme also involved reflection by trainees on their own micro-teaching. However, there was no way of knowing whether teachers actually implemented what they had learnt once the training was over (interview). The third programme did not have an explicitly mentioned reflective session incorporated within the training module. A positive aspect of Programme 1 was that it emphasized reflective dialogues, encouraging teachers to reflect with fellow teachers. So the concept of collaborative reflection was established.

Although this research is in no way denying the usefulness of the kind of skills being taught in the training sessions or negating the importance of the kind of reflection teachers engaged in, this study advocates reflective practices that go a little further in which participant teachers delve into their own beliefs and opinions to become aware of why they had been teaching in one way and why they were being asked to do some things differently.

Dialogues and reflection on participant teachers’ core or even peripheral beliefs did not form any part of the training programmes reviewed. There was no data in the resource books to indicate that teacher beliefs were addressed at any point. Interview data also revealed that trainers did not incorporate such concepts while talking to teachers informally. Data clearly pointed to those discussions being about teacher practices in class and their knowledge about CLT.

Data from the interviews also revealed that the follow up activities of none of the programmes involved meetings between trainees and trainers at any point where they could reflect on the reasons for incorporating the innovations they had been trained to implement, and whether trainees actually believed in the viability of such changes

Richards and Farrell (2011) have noted that “teacher learning involves not only discovering the skills and knowledge (academic and pedagogical) of language teaching, and how to apply these in teaching, but additionally what it means to be a language teacher in terms of developing the identity of a language teacher in a particular context” (cited in Farrell, 2018, p. 2). The latter was not seen to be the focus of any of the training programmes.

What Britten and Medley (cited in Ohata, 2007, p. 3) referred to as ‘low-inference skills’ such as how to engage students, ask questions effectively, and give feedback effectively were part of the training modules reviewed but it is the high-inference skills that need to be incorporated into these programmes. Developing the content and theoretical knowledge of English language teachers is definitely a necessity, but teachers like any other professionals should be able to use their own judgement and discretion as to how best to teach a particular class. Every class is different, and every teacher faces a challenge unique to their particular situation.

A teacher’s core beliefs shape their classroom practices. Language teachers in Bangladesh are mostly products of Grammar Translation Method. Their own teaching practices follow in line with GMT. According to one teacher trainer, there is a need for teachers to be cognizant of current practices such as CLT. Therefore, both the second and the third training programmes focused explicitly on the CLT approach because it was clear that for a majority of in-service secondary school teachers, the trainings that were imparted provided skills needed to be developed in order to effectively teach the content of the text book. The first programme’s objectives may have been different but the teaching approach used “interactive pedagogy” following practices similar to those used in Communicative Language Teaching.

There was no way of knowing whether the classroom practices teachers were trained to implement were in sync with their core beliefs about language teaching and whether there was a need to bring about a change in their beliefs. If teachers merely do what they are taught to do but do not believe that that is how language should be taught, they cannot implement their learning convincingly or effectively. Additionally, chances are that they will revert to teaching as they think best when the monitoring and follow up sessions are over.

Therefore, there is a need for teachers to have a clear vision of their own beliefs and objectives, and be aware of their own ability as well as their limitations. Only then will they be able to work round their constraints. This is unlikely to happen if teachers do not engage in critical dialogic reflection, not just about their practices but also about the ‘why’ behind their practices. It is important for them to be able to articulate their beliefs on reasoning behind particular practices in class, and their hesitation to try one thing while feel quite comfortable trying something else. These reflections would help them become aware of their core beliefs about their teaching. Teacher educators also need to know what the trainee teachers’ beliefs are in order to ensure the success and effectiveness of their teaching. And, if need be, the process for change can be initiated.

CONCLUSION

The importance of the existing teacher training programmes cannot be overstated and this study does not in any way downplay the need for the training being imparted to our teachers at present. This study merely advocates that in the rapidly changing teaching and learning situations of recent times, it is imperative that teacher training programmes also incorporate in them certain components that involve teachers in reflective inquiry through dialogue which allows them to be aware of their own beliefs. If teachers begin to understand why it is necessary to teach something, for example a language skill, in a particular way, it would be easier for them to initiate that change as well.

Teacher education programmes need to help teachers not only to identify their own beliefs but also to understand how those are impacting their practices. Phipps and Borg (2009, p. 389) have found that “collaborative exploration (e.g. among teacher educators and teachers) of any tensions which emerge is also desirable and the teacher learning that ensues from such dialogic exploration of teachers’ practices and beliefs has the potential to be more meaningful and long lasting”. The task of teacher educators, therefore, should be to raise awareness through dialogue and make teachers not only reflect on their beliefs but also to articulate them. “If pre-existing beliefs prove to be unacceptable, then they need to be challenged” (Valcke, Sang, Rots, & Hermans, 2010, p. 624). Teacher educators know that there is always a resistance to change. Hence, the need for ensuring a positive change in the beliefs of teachers through critical reflection, and helping them to consciously think about their beliefs and talk about them. This cannot take place without dialogue between teachers and teacher trainers.

So far, in Bangladesh, the attempt to bring about change through teacher education has been from an external source whereas there is a need to bring about a change in teachers from within too. Hence the need for creating opportunities to critically reflect on their own beliefs, and for dialogues between teachers and their trainers. Teachers’ individual personality affects how they respond to dialogizing reflectively, and teacher educators need to be sensitive to the individual responses of the teachers. They need to be discerning as to whether teachers can articulate their reflections and to what extent. Moreover, if teacher education programmes are to introduce awareness raising aspects of reflection on teacher beliefs into their courses, it is crucial that the trainers too are aware of the importance of this issue. Hence, it is necessary for teacher educators themselves to be equally convinced of the importance of teachers being aware of their beliefs and their need to change.

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