

# **THE CHANGING LENS: A SITE-BASED OBSERVATION OF CLASSROOM EXPERIENTIAL MODELLING**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study examines evidence of learning amongst twelve ESL teachers from different primary schools in Kuala Lumpur who were involved in a site-based collaborative support programme. The programme facilitates effective learning amongst the participants in which learning is seen as a progression through a cycle of four stages: of (1) having a concrete experience followed by (2) observation of and reflection on that experience which leads to (3) the formation of abstract concepts (analysis) and generalizations (conclusions) which are then (4) used to test hypothesis in future situations, resulting in new experiences. "Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 2014). The study is based on the situative perspective of 'knowledge in-practice' and 'knowledge for practice' models of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) proposed by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999), who hold that site-based teacher learning communities offer particularly rich environments in which to undertake CPD because of the immediacy of classroom contexts as the focal points for teachers' critical review and reflection. Data was collected through teacher's observation notes during the experiential teaching by the trainers, and group interview conducted at the end of the programme. Inductive analysis of the data was conducted to understand the teachers' experienced learning. It was found that the site-based collaborative CPD for teachers lead to greater teacher confidence, improved self-efficacy with teachers feeling assured that they are able to make a difference to pupils' learning after observing the positive impact on the students during the experiential teaching by the trainers, an openness to new ideas and changing practice (from the conducive debrief sessions), greater enthusiasm for collaborative working, and an increased willingness to be observed.