

**Online Language Teacher Education for Ongoing Development: Prospect in
Bangladesh among the English Teachers**

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Inspiring Excellence

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Bangladesh among the English Teachers**

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents and all my teachers, who have helped me to reach this far with all their support and guidance.

Declaration

This thesis is a presentation of my original research work, and has not been submitted for any other degree to this or any other university. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to acknowledge with due reference to the literature.

Signature: Nazida

Date: 6.12.2015

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the prospect of Online Language Teacher Education (OLTE) among the secondary level's English teachers in Bangladesh for their ongoing development. Therefore, this study explores the drawbacks of traditional face-to-face training system, as well as the efficacy of OLTE for minimizing those drawbacks. At the same time, this study examines the English teachers' perspectives, along with the requirements for OLTE and their availability to identify the opportunities of OLTE in Bangladesh. This study adopted the approach of social constructivism for recognizing the efficacy of OLTE for ongoing development. Mixed-methods were used for identifying the English teachers' and the teacher educators' perspectives regarding traditional training system and OLTE. Essentially, the findings suggest that the English teachers face problems in traditional training system due to location, schedule, time limitation and lack of ongoing support; integration of OLTE can help them to attend trainings beyond location and time constraints. Thus, OLTE will allow them to be updated concerning the changes of English language teaching. This study also reflects the current supportive situation for OLTE in Bangladesh and the teachers' enthusiasm to participate in such programme.

Keywords: teacher education, face-to-face, online, ongoing development

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Technology has become an integral part of our life in this 21st century. Like every other phase, education system has also been modified with technological advancements including teacher education. Online teacher education is the latest development in the domain of teacher education, which is an updated version of distance education. Accordingly, this research is based on Online Language Teacher Education (OLTE) with a vision of ongoing development for the English teachers in Bangladesh. There are three types of teacher training programmes in Bangladesh, such as: pre-service, in-service and ongoing teacher training programme (Khan, 2014). Pre-service training programmes are generally longer than in-service and ongoing training programmes, and offered at the beginning of teaching profession (Khan, 2014). Hence, the focus of this research is on the short training systems meant for the teachers' continuous development.

The traditional face-to-face teacher education is not always promising due to some constraints like location and time shortage (Murray, 2013), which can be enhanced by integrating online education with existing system. Therefore, this research explored the prospect of OLTE among the English teachers in Bangladesh, which has potential to ensure ongoing development unlike traditional face-to-face education. The study was also narrowed down by focusing on the English teachers of secondary level from Dhaka city.

The researcher aimed at few specific research questions to measure the possibilities of OLTE among the English teachers in Bangladesh. Throughout the research, the researcher explored the answers of these questions in relation to the secondary level's English teachers in Bangladesh. The research questions are:

1. What are the drawbacks of traditional face-to-face training system?
2. What is the efficacy of OLTE for ongoing development?

3. What is the level of OLTE's acceptance among English teachers in Bangladesh?

Based on the reviewed literature in this area of study, the researcher hypothesized that the teachers will accept OLTE integration into the traditional training system, if they are provided with supportive tools and environment. Moreover, teachers face problems due to location, time constraint, and lack of monitoring policy in traditional training system which can be lessened by OLTE. Hence, the purpose of this study was to find out how OLTE can minimize the limitations of traditional training system that is faced by the secondary level's English teachers in Bangladesh. Besides this, the research was also aimed at measuring OLTE's level of acceptance among them.

In the context of Bangladesh, 'teacher education' and 'teacher training' are used equivalently till now; majority of the institutions that provide teacher education are categorized as 'training institute' or 'training college'. For example: Primary Training Institute (PTI), Teacher Training College (TTC), Technical Teacher Training College (TTTC), Vocational Teacher Training Institute (VTTI), Higher Secondary Teacher Training Institute (HSTTI), Madrasah Teacher Training Institute (MTTI) etc. (Ministry of Education, 2012). Therefore, throughout the research, 'teacher education' and 'teacher training' have been used interchangeably.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

Computer-based technology as well as distance learning has been used for a long time for teacher education purposes in many developed countries. In recent years, OLTE has been in practice widely all over the world. Bangladesh has also progressed significantly in combining Information and Communications Technology (ICT) with education system to keep abreast with the world. Multimedia based teaching and learning is the major step by the Bangladesh government both for the students and the teachers, which is followed by an aim of online teacher education. As a result, Bangladesh government has taken initiatives to create an online collaborative platform for the teachers, but that is not specifically meant for language teacher education. Therefore, this study investigated the needs of OLTE for the English teachers, where English would be considered as a language rather than a subject. However, there was not enough research conducted on this area of study in Bangladesh; hence, the researcher assembled information based on the researches from other countries and the state of language teacher education in Bangladesh. Those research findings and conditions were accumulated in this study to find out—how online delivery can make the traditional language teacher education system more effective, how this process can be implemented in Bangladesh.

2.1 Notion of OLTE

Online education is the kind of knowledge creation system, where most of the teaching-learning process is online and only the essential aspects are covered face-to-face. As a part of distance education, in recent years, the evolution of online education has broken down some major global hindrances of education. The needs for education beyond the political boundaries of the countries have also influenced language teacher education, for

which it is delivered online in some universities and organizations. Language teachers from anywhere of the world can enroll in this education by online, and therefore, it is called OLTE. According to Murray, “OLTE is any professional development opportunity in education for teachers of English to speakers of other languages where at least 80% is delivered online” (2013, p. 19). However, the application of OLTE is not limited to English language as Murray mentioned, nor does it have to have face-to-face interaction. Depending on the needs and situations, there can be some amount of face-to-face interaction, or it can be entirely online. Besides, The International Research Foundation for English Language Education (TIRF) prioritized OLTE as the current issue for which Murray conducted research on OLTE concentrating on English language (2013).

OLTE is a form of distance education, which is responsive towards the technological evolution of recent years. However, distance education exertions started from early 20th century to educate people who were somehow deprived from the traditional education; for instance: during 1920, Australian state government’s Education Department started ‘correspondence schools’ to educate children from distant areas. Later, around 1951, those schools were turned into the ‘School of the Air’ from traditional ones by using radio, and now they are using internet technology as well (Murray, 2013). This example reveals the transition from distance education to online education with the progression of technology. Though distance education was once paper-based, now various institutions are shifting towards partly or absolutely online delivery (2013). There is prevalent literature regarding distance education and its maturity, which covers wide-range areas including teacher education. Hence, there are literatures concerning online education as a part of distance education, but again there is not enough research till now solely on OLTE. Nevertheless, online education has already become a considerable phenomenon, as in many contexts, traditional teaching-learning process is shifting towards virtual world (online and web-based).

Massive Open Online Course (MOOCs) brought a significant change in the popularity and acceptance of online education since 2008, and now there are increasing numbers of online education platforms (Murray, 2013). There are also examples of virtual schooling in elementary to high-school level both in US and Pennsylvania (2013). Therefore, researchers are being interested in online education recently, and it is practiced also for language purpose. In particular, the purpose of OLTE is to enable the teachers from different areas and countries to be synchronized with the continuous changes of language and pedagogy.

In the realm of OLTE, English language teacher education gets the priority because of its growth as a global language. Thus, a number of agencies and institutions have focused on TESOL and some other similar programmes for incorporating online education (Murray, 2013). Teachers from different countries can join various online TESOL courses for grooming their teaching quality and for their professional development, which have similar contents like the traditional face-to-face programmes. Recently, around 40 universities are providing master's degree online and about 400 private institutions are providing online certificate programmes in TESOL (England, 2012). The attitude of these online TESOL programmes can be assumed by Paloff and Pratt's view of online education that it is an "approach to teaching and learning that utilizes Internet technologies to communicate and collaborate in an educational context" (2001 as cited in England, 2012, p. 2). TESOL online courses are similarly emphasised on communication and collaborative works, which can be partially or entirely online. Besides, most of the online courses are similar to the traditional face-to-face and distant courses in terms of the interactive content input from the teachers and queries from learners (Murray, 2013; Nunan, 1999). However, the kind of OLTE is until practiced in TESOL and other programmes is somewhat different from the aim of this research. These online programmes are steered for providing master's degree and certificates for professional development, whereas this research explored the possibilities of integrating

OLTE in the traditional teacher training system. The aim of this study was not particularly course-focused, but a continuous process of overall development of the English teachers. Therefore, the operational definition of OLTE for this particular research was adapted as follow: OLTE refers to any development opportunity in education for language teachers where at least 80% is delivered online, and only the required aspects are covered face-to-face; the development process can have limited time-period, or it can be over the lifetime. This study investigated the scope for OLTE in Bangladesh, as it would enable ongoing development of the teachers unlike traditional teacher training programmes.

2.2 OLTE Worldwide

OLTE is being applied in many parts of the world; though it has grown immensely in recent years, its practice started long ago. The preceding versions of today's online collaborative environment were Multi-User Dungeons (MUDs) and MUD Object-Orientated (MOOs), which involved people in the virtual world (Silva, 2012). MOOs were the developed version of MUDs, but both of them were originated for online gaming with artificial characters or avatars (Levy & Stockwell, 2006). Back then the communication was only text-based, but now-a-days communication in virtual world involves both text and audio-chat among the avatars (Silva, 2012). However, *SchMOOze University* was one of the MOOs, along with *LeMOOFrançais*, *Dreistadt MOO*, *Mundo Hispano* that was particularly designed for language learning purpose, where learners could enter and interact in a virtual university like the real ones (Levy & Stockwell, 2006). In MOOs, learners can interact with other participants as virtual characters (avatars) according to their choice of environments. Both learners and teachers can set a specific environment for communication or group work. Moreover, there are various software applications that support collaborative works for different purposes; though these are not meant for language learning, learners can use them for collaborative works. For example: Basic Support for Cooperative Work (BSCW) is a web

based application that provides a shared workspace to the learners for their collaboration. It allows file sharing, document revision and rating, asynchronous communication, personal and group agenda (Martí, 2007).

In 2005, implementation of Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (Moodle) headed a new dimension in online education, which comprised internet-based courses (Martí, 2007). It is an open learning management system, which provides both the educators and learners organized facilities regarding lesson, assignment, quiz, workshop, feedback, survey, discussion etc. (Moodle, 2015). Thus, teachers and the teacher educators can teach various courses in Moodle, along with record-keeping and monitoring each activity of the learners (Martí, 2007). Besides, Moodle is an “all-in-one” platform with extensive resources and tools; it can be used from any device and it can also be customized according to the needs of the users (Moodle, 2015). However, Moodle is grounded on the theory of constructivism (Moodle, 2015), which makes the teaching-learning process communicative, collective and up-to-date. Above all, it is such a platform that enables the teachers and learners from all over the world to enter a collaborative zone for continuous development. The researcher of the present study also looked for the same theoretical ground in order to determine the efficacy of OLTE in terms of ongoing development of the English teachers in Bangladesh.

MOOCs also expanded significantly in the former decade in combination with few providers, such as: Udacity, Coursera, edX etc. (Murray, 2013), and many other renowned universities added online courses for facilitating distant learners. Murray’s research findings enlisted 106 university/college-based and 80 professional/private association-based OLTE programmes around the world. Among them, many OLTE programmes were solely providing English language teacher training (2013). The reason behind it is the progression of English as a common language among people from different parts of the world. Murray’s study

obtained that there were number of OLTE programmes that offered Diploma in TESOL from Trinity College London, University of Cambridge's CELTA and DELTA, certificate from TESL Canada etc. Many other universities and organizations also offered OLTE; such as: MA in TESOL, Diploma in TESOL, MA in Education, Master of Applied Linguistics, PhD, seminar on language teacher education, certificate courses, and so on. However, the main purpose of those online programmes was found to be similar, and it was for engaging learners from anyplace of the world by abolishing time and location constraints. Her research findings suggested that online education was one of the best means for teachers, as they remained busy for their profession and it was not always possible to attend on-campus classes. Furthermore, online education enabled the teachers to receive professional development opportunities from various countries without leaving the residences and jobs. Murray recognized another similarity among all those OLTE programmes; all of those were very interactive by the learners' collaboration and instructors' active monitoring policies (2013). Yet, all of those programs were course-based, and many courses did not have any further monitoring policy for checking the learners' continuous development after the end of the courses. However, some universities and organizations' stakeholders evaluated learners' achievements after the education programmes to find out their quality of OLTE (2013). Murray also found that many qualified courses were not free of cost, and the shortest OLTE courses were 20 hours long while the longest were 450 hours (2013). It can be a problem for the learners from disadvantaged background to enroll in the qualified courses with high tuition fees.

2.3 Application of ICT in OLTE

ICT has become an integral part of the daily life and all development activities in recent years; successively, online education is one of the outcomes of ICT emergence. The entire world has already adapted or in the process of adapting ICT in the education sector,

and the result is ICT-based face-to-face education as well as online education. Accordingly, language teacher education is also influenced by ICT and now there are various OLTE programmes all over the world.

Various software applications and internet tools are used in the OLTE programmes. These online programmes involve both asynchronous and synchronous communication among the teacher educators and learners across the world. These tools are used for interaction among teachers and learners; uploading text materials, audio and video records; group work; peer work; individual assignment etc. (Murray, 2013; Nunan, 1999). Researches on OLTE suggested that bulletin board, discussion forum, email, text message, blog etc. were used as asynchronous communication tools. On the other hand, text chat, audio chat, video chat etc. were used as synchronous communication tools (Martí, 2007; Murray, 2013). However, many participants preferred asynchronous communication tools as those could be accessed via low internet connection unlike synchronous tools (Murray, 2013), even though asynchronous communication was time consuming due to typing speed and lacked direct conversation (Nunan, 1999). Synchronous communication like audio/video conversation serves as face-to-face communication, which increase collaboration among participants more interactively. It also increases the interaction between teacher educators and learners as well as makes the lessons easier to understand. In spite of the advantages of synchronous communication, many OLTE programmes were based on solely asynchronous communication (Elliot, 2008) which could lessen up the active interaction sometime. Nevertheless, almost all the OLTE programmes used Moodle or Blackboard as their learning management system and for enhancing community practice, whereas other had their own management systems (Elliot, 2008; Murray, 2013). These systems were meant for bringing all the participants in one platform and managing the learning process beyond time and physical constraints. These programmes included online resource centers for learners or

granted for accessing other resource services (Murray, 2013). Furthermore, many teachers and teacher educators used virtual environment like *Second Life* as a language learning tool (Elliot, 2008), which involved participants as virtual characters in 3D environment like MOOs (Silva, 2012). Here, participants can communicate and collaborate with each other as the virtual characters that give them a real life environment to learn. However, virtual environment cannot be used generally for OLTE still now, as most of the users are young students and the teacher educators also need training on learning management in this area (Elliot, 2008).

The foremost requirement for a learner in an OLTE programme is an internet enabled device, especially a computer, as teachers and learners have to stay connected online and learners have to do assigned studies. However, even if there is no computer, learners can use one from any convenient place, such as: computer labs at school/work place, for necessary lessons. Apart from that learners can stay tuned with their studies with the help of smartphones, tabs etc. These are mobile devices that can be easily used anywhere because of their portability, and thus, these can help in learning process (Baran, 2014). With the revolutionary technological advancement, smartphones and tabs can work like mini-computer now; therefore learners can attend online sessions, both synchronous and asynchronous, using their internet enabled devices. It involves learners in mobile learning beyond any physical or time constraint (Sharples et al., 2009 as cited in Baran, 2014) as learners can learn anytime, anywhere using internet in their phones. Therefore, mobile devices help as complementary tools in OLTE programmes, which allow learners to be updated continuously and collaborate with others (Baran, 2014). Rest of the study that requires computer, such as: project work, accessing online resource etc. can be done from work places when needed. Khan's findings also recommended that respective institutions' cooperation could enhance the performance of teachers during teacher training (2014).

Another requirement for OLTE is the ability of both the teacher educators and teachers to use various software applications and internet tools effectively. Yet, there are some issues regarding ICT competencies of the teacher educators and teachers. Many teacher educators and teachers could not exploit the full advantages of OLTE due to lack of efficiency (Martí, 2007; Murray, 2013). Besides, most of the OLTE programmes had their own ICT support teams who used to help the teachers and students if required, but even then it was difficult to support distant students who lacked basic ICT competencies (Murray, 2013). Therefore, the teachers related to OLTE seek ICT training so that they can pursue the opportunity effectively. In contrast, some teachers lack interest in receiving ICT training, which can also be overcome by providing them with formal certification and recognition in their professional life (Khan, 2014).

2.4 Constructivism for Language Teachers' Development

Constructivist approaches are generally used to define language learning in childhood, but it can be also used to describe the nature of teacher education. In terms of OLTE, social constructivism has been a widely used term, whereas some researchers also emphasis on the cognitive aspect of it.

The underlying concept of OLTE is to educate learners in one platform beyond any physical or time restraint. Almost all the OLTE programmes accentuated the interaction and collaboration among learners, and between learners and the teachers (Murray, 2013). In OLTE, one of the most common practices is creating online communities, and the broadly used tool is discussion forum (Arnold & Ducate, 2006; Murray, 2013) which involves participations from all the learners regarding a topic. All the learners have to share their views concerning the topic and then they construct knowledge by criticizing and evolving each other's perspective (Murray, 2013). In this way, learners construct knowledge by interacting with each other and collaboratively, which address the theory of social

constructivism. Other synchronous tools and group projects involve interaction among learners also. Vygotsky highlighted the importance of social interaction for cognitive development of individuals and speculated that people cannot learn in isolation; learning occurs when individual interacts with other people from society (1978, as cited in Martha & Hashimoto, 1997). OLTE promotes a similar ideology too by creating social communities of learning involving the learners.

Yet, there is a contradiction regarding the social learning process of the learners in online environment. According to Hurd, Schwienhorst and Toyoda, learning process in online is autonomous (as cited in Murray, 2013), which means that learners develop their knowledge individually. This process addresses the theory of cognitive constructivism, where a learner constructs knowledge by his/her own separated from the society as said by Piaget (Russell, 1993 as cited in Martha & Hashimoto, 1997). In this scheme, learners gain knowledge individually according to their developmental stage and later they accommodate or assimilate knowledge by interacting with society (Martha & Hashimoto, 1997). In terms of OLTE, learners sometimes have to work individually, but that does not indicate autonomous learning. They have to learn individually for cooperating and enhancing their community learning, as they are distant learners (Robb, 2006 as cited in Murray, 2013). Moreover, in asynchronous communication, learners get time to reflect on their own, which helps to collaborate effectively with others (Arnold & Ducate, 2006). However, sometimes learners work individually in knowledge construction, but the outcome is prolonged when social aspect is involved; social interaction can inspire and guide to evolving ideas (Arnold & Ducate, 2006; Martha & Hashimoto, 1997).

2.5 English Language Teacher Education in Bangladesh

In recent years, teacher education in Bangladesh is shifting towards a new paradigm by integrating ICT in all possible facets. However, the term 'teacher education' will be used

interchangeably with 'teacher training'. In addition to that the study is delaminated into the teacher education for secondary level's English teachers.

There are several government, non-government and foreign-aided institutions in Bangladesh that provide teacher education for the English teachers. Yet, the number of secondary teacher education programmes is less than primary teacher education programmes. Besides, there are only three major programmes steered for secondary teacher education. Government's project, the Teacher Quality Improvement (TQI) is targeting English teachers of all secondary schools of Bangladesh from 2006 (English in Action [EIA], 2009), which steer regular training programmes. Apart from that there are other government and non-government organizations that provide degrees like B.Ed, M.Ed etc. as a qualification for secondary level teachers, but they are onetime programmes for certification. Secondary English teachers need frequent trainings or a mode that can keep them updated with regular changes concerning English language. Secondary teacher training programme PACE, initiated by BRAC is providing in-service training to English teachers since 2002 (Jamil, 2012), which sets refresher programmes for participant teachers. On the other hand, English in Action (EIA) is a nine-year project implemented by the UK government that is providing training to English teachers since 2008 (EIA, 2009). However, TQI and BRAC PACE is providing national curriculum oriented teacher training, which comprises all other subjects along with English, whereas EIA aims only at communicative use of English. These training programmes prepare teachers for teaching according to the curriculum of English, which do not always involve several dimensions of English as a language. Moreover, all of these trainings are mostly depended on traditional face-to-face systems that have some drawbacks. These trainings take place for a very short period of time and the contents are not covered in detail due to resource constraint (Access to Information Programme [a2i], 2015). Besides, the number of teacher trainers is really smaller in comparison with teachers; the ratio of total

teachers and teacher trainers in Bangladesh is 357:1 that sometimes lessen the quality of training (a2i, 2015). In addition to that there is lack of monitoring policy which sometimes hazes the actual training, and stops the teachers from being concurrent with latest development (a2i, 2015). Apart from these, location is also a major problem for attending training sessions, especially for female teachers from rural areas (a2i, 2015) as physical presence is required for teacher training.

To minimize the drawbacks of traditional face-to-face teacher training, some measures have been taken already. One of the major initiatives is the use of Computer Assisted Learning (CAL) in the teaching and learning process; it is being used in teacher training from few years ago. Teacher training programmes of government, BRAC PACE and EIA are using multimedia or computer assisted learning for training the secondary school teachers (a2i, 2014; EIA, 2015; Jamil, 2012). Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project (TQI-SEP) funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has started teacher training using multimedia tools, smartphones etc. for endorsing convenience, ongoing development, collaboration among teachers, and interaction between teachers and school administrators (Pouzevara & Khan, 2008). Government is involving school administrations with respective teachers, which gives opportunity to the teachers to receive training without any problem in schools and also for using ICT tools from schools. Likewise, EIA has started using mobile phones for training and monitoring purpose; they provide audio-visual materials to the teachers hosted on low-cost mobile phones (EIA, 2015). Above all, government has created “an online open learning platform for teachers of general, madrassa and vocational education system in Bangladesh” (a2i, 2015, p. 2), which is named as *Teachers Portal* (শিক্ষক বাতায়ন). It will bring the teachers into one shared stand, where they can communicate and collaborate with each other. Till now it is used for sharing multimedia contents among teachers and only a fraction have joined *Teachers Portal*, but government’s policy indicate

that all the teachers of Bangladesh have to join it in few years (a2i, 2015). Therefore, it can also be developed as an online teacher training platform in future (a2i, 2015). Additionally, the most important mode for online collaboration and training is an internet enabled device, which is becoming available at low cost recently. Due to low cost smartphones and decreasing price of internet, people are more enthusiastic about various online applications. In last two years (2013-2015), the total number of mobile phone subscriptions in Bangladesh has increased by 19% (Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission [BTRC], 2015b) and in contrast, the total number of internet subscribers has increased by 48% (BTRC, 2015a). It indicates that people who did not use internet before are now more likely to use it; it is because of the rapid growth of technology. In present days, almost everyone needs to use internet for some reason; hence, it will not be a stern problem for the government to initiate online teacher training.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This paper explored the possibilities of OLTE in Bangladesh and its effectiveness for ongoing development of English teachers. Hence, the researcher tried to identify how OLTE could strengthen the traditional training system and measured the possibility of its success. This chapter illustrates the methods applied for conducting the study; such as: the research design, participants, rationales behind the instruments etc. In addition to these, data collection and analysis procedures are described here for better understanding of the research findings. In the long run, all the information stated in this chapter will be worthwhile, if OLTE is implemented in a similar situation like this research.

3.1 Research Design

The research is focused on English language teacher education and the integration of ICT with it. Therefore, the researcher assembled English language teachers' and teacher educators' perspectives regarding OLTE during the study. The researcher emphasised on these two groups as they were the most important and associated stakeholders of this research. Mixed-methods had been used in this research—a survey was conducted with 30 English teachers from secondary level and five teacher educators were interviewed. All the questions were intended for recognizing the drawbacks of the traditional training system and the efficacy of OLTE. At the same time, opportunities of OLTE among English teachers in Bangladesh were also revealed by the responses. There were some questions for examining the requirements for OLTE and their accessibility in Bangladesh to measure its probability of success. However, the main focus of this research was on the English teachers and their needs, whereas the teacher educators' perspective was collected for getting a general idea about teacher training in Bangladesh.

3.2 Participants

The research was conducted in Dhaka, and there were two groups of participants— First group was composed of the English teachers and second group consisted teacher educators. Participants' identities had been kept anonymous for ensuring genuine information, and to keep the participants at ease. Identifying information (associated schools/organizations, detail qualifications etc.) were also omitted from the records for participants' satisfaction.

In the first group, there were 30 English teachers from five schools in Dhaka. All of the participants in this group were English teachers of secondary level and the medium of instruction of those schools was Bangla. Most of the participants were randomly selected, after the researcher had contacted with the school authorities. General profiles of the English teachers are presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

General Profile of the English Teachers

Participants	Age	Gender	Academic Background
1	35	Male	M.A. in English (Literature)
2	40	Male	M.A. in English (Linguistics)
3	37	Female	M.A. in English (Literature)
4	45	Female	M.A. in English, Masters in International Relations
5	32	Female	M.A. in English (ELT)
6	36	Female	M.A. in English (ELT)
7	36	Male	M.A. in English (Literature)
8	50	Female	M.A. in English (Literature)
9	35	Female	M.A. in English (Linguistics)
10	32	Male	B.A. in English, B.Ed
11	42	Female	M.A. in English
12	49	Male	M.A. in English (Literature), MSc in Physics
13	50	Male	M.A. in English
14	38	Male	M.A. in English (Linguistics)
15	34	Female	B.Ed
16	40	Female	M.A. in English
17	37	Male	B.A. in English, B.Ed
18	41	Female	M.A. in English, B.Ed

19	46	Female	M.A. in English
20	35	Male	M.A. in English
21	48	Female	M.A. in English (Literature)
22	40	Male	M.A. in English, B.Ed.
23	43	Female	B.A. in English, B.Ed
24	38	Male	M.A. in English
25	45	Male	M.A. in English (Linguistics)
26	36	Male	M.A. in English (ELT)
27	38	Female	M.A. in English
28	37	Female	M.A. in English (Literature)
29	36	Female	B.Ed
30	41	Female	M.A. in English (Literature)

In the second group, there were five teacher educators and trainers from different organizations. As the research was conducted on teachers of secondary level, the researcher intended to take interviews of the teacher educators/trainers who were associated with the teachers of secondary level. The researcher contacted with the teacher educators, and interviewed five teacher educators over telephone. General profiles of the teacher educators are presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

General Profile of the Teacher Educators

Participants	Age	Gender	Academic Background
1	40	Male	M.A. in English (Linguistics), Professional development trainings
2	35	Female	M.A. in English (ELT)
3	44	Male	M.A. in English (Literature)
4	37	Female	M.A. in English (ELT), Professional development trainings
5	45	Female	M.A. in English (Literature), Professional development trainings

3.3 Instrumentation

The researcher used a questionnaire and a set of interview questions as the instruments for conducting the research. Both of these instruments were used rationally to amass maximum information from teachers and teacher educators.

Questionnaire (Appendix A) was used to get information from the English teachers, as they were 30 in numbers; it was not possible to interview all of them. Therefore, survey questionnaire was suitable to extract maximum information in short time. The questionnaire contained 18 questions composed of both close ended and open ended questions. Some of the close ended questions were MCQ and some were based on 5-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932); these two types of questions were not separated in questionnaire as they followed a chronology of the concept. However, with some particular close ended questions researcher added additional open ended questions asking to give reasons for the answer. It was done on purpose so that the teachers would answer at least halves of the questions, even if they would avoid the written part due to time constraint. In addition to that the researcher mentioned both the terms— ‘teacher educator’ and ‘teacher trainer’ in the questionnaire because these are used interchangeably in Bangladesh.

Interview facilitates to find out profound information regarding the subject matter, and that is why the researcher interviewed the teacher educators. They were five in number, which made it easier for the researcher to interview them. There were six questions in the interview (Appendix B), which required detail answers from the respondents.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

To conduct the teacher survey, the researcher selected four Bangla medium schools. After that the researcher contacted with the school authorities and got permission to do the survey with the English teachers. Recommendation letter was also shown to the school

authorities. Later, the researcher conducted the survey with the teachers in appointed time. As the survey was done in school premises, the setting was formal.

During the teacher educators' interview, the researcher contacted the teacher educators who were associated with English teachers of secondary level. Five teacher educators agreed to give interview, but the researcher had to interview them over telephone because of their busy schedule. Though the interviews were taken over telephone, the information was in detail and the setting was formal. They contributed valuable information regarding the teacher education/training policies, obstacles, and possible solutions.

3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

There were both quantitative and qualitative responses from the two groups of participants; thus, the findings were discussed according to the responses. Even so, some quantitative responses were analysed in descriptive manner, and some qualitative responses were shown in charts for recognizing the actual results.

In the teachers' survey, there were both close and open ended questions. For both types of questions, most of the responses were converted into percentages. The researcher used tables for visual representations of those responses. On the other hand, some responses were described analytically instead of visual representations, where reasoning and explanation were important. However, the teacher educators' interviews were described analytically.

Findings from these two groups are discussed conjointly in a separate section, where some of the analyses are illustrated in graphs. Nevertheless, both of them encompass and reinforce the responses to the research questions. The discussion is expanded based on the insight of reviewed literature in relation to the exploration of this study.

Chapter 4

Research Findings

4.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to state the data accumulated from the English teachers' survey and the teacher educators' interview. It will help to explore how OLTE can minimize the drawbacks of traditional training system, along with measuring its success. Here, the researcher has used tables for presenting most of the data to facilitate the readers; all the tables help readers to visualize respondents' perspective as well as extent of their support for OLTE.

4.1 Findings from the Teachers' Questionnaire

Response to question 1.

Table 4.1

Participation in Teacher Education Programmes

Responses	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Yes	24	80
No	6	20

This data from Table 4.1 revealed that various teacher education/training programmes were approaching to the teachers. However, 20% of the teachers who did not participate were relatively younger than other teachers, and it could be one reason for not participating till then. They were still experiencing teaching profession; they might participate in teacher education programmes later. Some of the teachers also mentioned that teacher training programmes are not held frequently in the same institution. For this reason, sometimes the teachers can miss training opportunity.

Response to question 2.

Table 4.2

Time Span for Teacher Education Programmes

Responses (days)	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
1-5	8	26.7
6-10	16	53.3
11-15	4	13.3
20-25	2	6.7

According to Table 4.2, most of the teachers participated in 6-10 days programmes. On the contrary, only few teachers participated in moderately longer education programmes. It revealed that most of the training programmes were about one-week long, which was not sufficient for detail discussions regarding the contents. This time limit could affect the quality of teacher training also.

Response to question 3.

Table 4.3

Problems Regarding Training Sessions

Responses (Likert items)	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	0	0
Agree	4	13.3
Not sure	2	6.7
Disagree	6	20
Stronglydisagree	18	60

According to Table 4.3, 80% of the teachers disagreed with this statement. It indicated that most of the teachers faced problems regarding the locations and timing of the teacher trainings. However, it was one of the major problems of traditional teacher training as physical presence was mandatory. Although 13.3% of the teachers had no problem with the locations and timing, majority of the teachers faced problem because of the locations and timing of the teacher trainings.

Response to question 4.

Table 4.4

Meetings after the Training Sessions

Responses (Likert items)	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	0	0
Agree	0	0
Not sure	8	26.7
Disagree	18	60
Strongly disagree	4	13.3

As shown in Table 4.4, according to 73.3% of teachers, there was no communication among teacher educators and trainee teachers apart from the training sessions. It showed the lacking of guidance from teacher educators for the teachers' ongoing development. In addition, 26.7% of the teachers were not sure about the communication gap, but they also did not mention anything about regular interaction. It indicated that the teachers hardly met with the teacher educators after the training period.

Response to question 5.

Table 4.5

Willingness to Know about Teaching Update

Responses (Likert items)	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	22	73.3
Agree	8	26.7
Not sure	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0

According to Table 4.5, none of the teachers disagreed with the statement that they would like to know about the new updates regularly in terms of English language teaching. It revealed the teachers' enthusiasm in terms of staying up-to-date with the changes of English language teaching. It also indicated that if they were given the opportunity of continuous development, they would cooperate.

Response to question 6.

Table 4.6

Use of Technology in Teacher Education

	Responses	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Yes	Easy to understand	10	33.3
	Make lessons interesting	8	26.7
No	Difficult to understand	8	26.7
	Challenging to use in short time	4	13.3

In Table 4.6, 60% of the teachers thought that technology could reinforce teacher education/training programmes. According to 33.3% of the teachers, technology made the lessons easier to understand, and 26.7% thought that technology could make the lessons interesting and attractive. On the other hand, 26.7% of the teachers would like to learn without using technology, as it seemed more difficult to them. Remaining 13.3% of the teachers also responded negatively; it was because of the limited training period. From their perspective, teacher educators should utilize the limited time only for important discussion.

Response to question 7.

Table 4.7

Use of Computer

	Responses	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
	Own computer	19	63.3
	Computer labs in school	9	30
	Cyber café	2	6.7
	Friends' house	0	0

According to Table 4.7, majority of the teachers had their own computer. Though 30% of the teachers did not own computers, they had access to computer labs in schools. Thus, they

could also manage to use computers if needed. It showed the necessity of computer labs in the schools not only for the students, but also for the teachers.

Response to question 8.

Table 4.8

Access to Internet

	Responses	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Yes	Broadband internet	13	43.3
	Mobile internet	8	26.7
No	No computer	4	13.3
	Slow internet connection	3	10
	Not interested	2	6.7

Access to internet is the foremost requirement for online teacher education. Teachers need to be able to access internet regularly for staying up to date and for communicating with others. According to Table 4.8, many of the teachers had regular access to internet through broadband connections, and some used internet in their mobile phones. However, 13.3% of the teachers did not have access to internet regularly as they had no computer, whereas some of them could not stay connected due to slow internet even if they had computers. The rest 6.7% of the teachers were not comfortable in using gadgets.

Response to question 9.

Table 4.9

Use of Mobile-Based Internet

Responses	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Yes	24	80
No	6	20

As shown in Table 4.9, according to most of the teachers, mobile based internet helped to stay connected with others. But, some of the teachers had negative remarks regarding mobile

based internet, and it was because of slow internet connection and their lack of interest concerning gadgets.

Response to question 10.

Table 4.10

Purposes of Using Internet

Responses	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Browsing websites	28	93.3
Searching online materials	28	93.3
Using social networking sites	20	66.7
Preparing teaching materials	9	30
Watching videos/movies	16	53.3
Reading e-books	19	63.3

According to Table 4.10, more or less all the participants of this research use internet for almost same purposes; all of them use internet for browsing various kinds of websites and for searching online materials according to their needs. Apart from these purposes, many of the teachers use different social networking sites, and watch videos or movies in online.

Comparing with the total number of participants, many of the teachers read e-books from internet and some of them prepare teaching materials using internet.

Response to question 11.

Table 4.11

Frequency of Using Social Networking Accounts

Responses	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Gmail	24	80
Yahoo Mail	14	46.7
Skype	8	26.7
Facebook	20	66.7
Blog	0	0
Moodle	2	6.7
LinkedIn	11	36.7

According to the research findings, all of the teachers used social networking sites to some extent. The ratios of using various social networking sites were calculated discretely in comparison with the total number of participants. From Table 4.11, it can be seen that most of the teachers used Gmail and Facebook to communicate with others. In contrast, only 6.7% of the teachers use Moodle, and none of them use blogs.

Response to question 12.

Table 4.12

Use of Social Networking Sites for Teaching Purpose

Responses (Likert items)	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	0	0
Agree	12	40
Not sure	6	20
Disagree	10	33.3
Strongly disagree	0	0

As shown in Table 4.12, some of the teachers agreed that they sometimes used social networking sites to share their ideas, problems and updates with other teachers regarding English language teaching, whereas some disagreed with the statement.

Response to question 13.

Table 4.13

Efficacy of Social Networking Sites for Communicating with the Teacher Educators and Colleagues

Responses (Likert items)	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	10	33.3
Agree	9	30
Not sure	6	20
Disagree	5	16.7
Strongly disagree	0	0

According to 63.3% of the teachers, it would be helpful to stay in touch with the teacher educators and other English teachers using social networking sites (Table 4.13). It would

benefit them to work and develop collaboratively as most of them used social networking sites in a regular basis. On the contrary, 16.7% of the teachers disagreed because they thought social networking sites were not appropriate for professional activities.

Response to question 14.

Table 4.14

Participation in Online Training Session

Responses (Likert items)	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	8	26.7
Agree	16	53.3
Not sure	6	20
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0

According to Table 4.14, most of the teachers agreed that they would join teachers' portal as a part of teacher education programme; they would participate in online training. On the other hand, 20% were not sure about online training, but they did not disagree either. Many of the teachers wrote that they needed training regarding online education, whereas some of the teachers mentioned about keeping helpline for technical supports.

Response to question 15.

Table 4.15

Popularity of Internet Tools for Communication

Responses	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Audio chat	22	73.3
Video chat	13	43.3
Texting	25	83.3
Blog	14	46.7
Posts	26	86.7

In table 4.15, the proportion of acceptance of the communication modes were calculated discretely comparing with total number of participants. Here, maximum teachers would like

to use posts for collaborative development, and texting was the second most popular mode for communication. It showed that the majority of the teachers were comfortable with asynchronous communication. On the contrary, synchronous communication (e.g. video chat) was less popular.

Response to question 16.

Table 4.16

Efficacy of Online Teacher Education in terms of Communicative Skill

	Responses	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Yes	Interaction with lot of people	21	70
	Improvement in fluency		
No	Face to face communication is required	9	30

According to 70% of the teachers, online-based collaborative language teacher education would increase their communicative skill. It would involve them in interaction with other teachers, as well as improve their fluency (Table 4.16). On the other hand, 30% of the teachers thought that it would not be much effective for enhancing communication skill; face to face interaction is obligatory for improving communication skill.

Response to question 17.

Table 4.17

Rate of Joining Online Training Recommended by School Authorities

Responses	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Yes	30	100
No	0	0

All the teachers agreed to join online training, if their school authorities would recommend it as a part of their professional development (Table 4.17). It revealed that if a particular OLTE

programme was regarded compulsory by the schools or required for career development, then teachers would participate.

Response to question 18.

Table 4.18

Use of Teachers Portal Implemented by the Government

	Responses	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Yes	Active members (Sharing teaching materials)	6	20
	Neutral members	8	26.7
No	Did not know	4	13.3
	Will join later	11	36.7
	Not interested	1	3.3

According to Table 4.18, only 46.7% of the participant teachers had joined the *Teachers Portal* that is implemented by the Education ministry of Bangladesh, and among them only 20% shared teaching materials in the *Teachers Portal*. 26.7% of the teachers were neutral in *Teachers Portal*; neither had they shared anything, nor had any activities. According to them, they could not find anything else other than sharing multimedia contents in the *Teachers Portal*; they joined because they were instructed to be a member of it. Besides, government is trying to include all the teachers from all over Bangladesh in the *Teachers Portal*. Apart from these 46.7% of the teachers, the rest 53.3% did not join *Teachers Portal* till then as some of them were unaware about it, and some were not interested. Among them 36.7% of the teachers would join *Teachers Portal* later, as they had also been instructed to do so. Therefore, in near future, all the teachers in Bangladesh will be connected through *Teachers Portal* because it is a *requirement* from the government.

4.2 Findings from the Teacher Educators' Interview

Response to question 1. According to the teacher educators, there are different levels of training programmes, and depending on the requirements and training objectives, time span can vary. Generally the training programmes are held for 1 to 3 days, 7 to 10 days, or in some cases it can be 14 to 15 days. For most of the training sessions the time period is 9 am to 5 pm, and sometimes the timing is different according to the situation and needs. After that all of the teacher educators admired the scheme of some major teacher education programmes. Most of these teacher education/training programmes are trying to approach to each of the districts of Bangladesh, and in addition to that they attempt to bring all the educational institutions of a district to their training coverage. Their plan is to comprise the teachers from rural and distant areas, along with the teachers from developed institutions, into the same platform. Therefore, teacher education programmes are held more frequently in the rural and under developed areas. However, the teacher educators said that there are some problems regarding the participation of trainee teachers. It is difficult to hold training for each of the schools separately, and that is why they operate training sessions combining few schools together. In this process, some of the teachers cannot attend training sessions due to locations, transportation problems or timing.

Response to question 2. Some of the teacher educators claimed that they provided ongoing support to their trainees until they achieve their goals, whereas some of them claimed that they provide ongoing support for a particular period of time. For instance, one teacher educator informed that, in long term training period, they ask trainee teachers to report about their improvements regarding the covered sessions in a monthly basis. In contrast, another said that they cover continual sessions of 1 day, 3 days, and 7 days respectively for one month's training programme; during the intervals of these sessions, teachers practice whatever they learn and get supports from their trainers in the subsequent

sessions. According to them, ongoing support and monitoring by the trainers help teachers to improve their teaching skills continuously. However, they mentioned some drawbacks of these monitoring processes; many teachers follow the guidelines during the training period, but once it is over sometimes teachers do not follow those anymore. There is no definite way to monitor them regularly after the training period. Moreover, problems occur with the current methods of teaching as well; many teachers want to stick to the traditional methods, whereas teacher educators try to introduce concurrent methods.

Response to question 3. According to the teacher educators, ICT is integrated into both governmental and non-governmental teacher education programmes to advance teaching quality. Now, they use ICT for the training sessions; they use computers, multimedia, internet, mobile phones etc. for providing subject-wise lessons. Some materials are uploaded in the relevant websites so that the teachers can download whenever they need those.

Response to question 4. All of the participants agreed to the fact that online-based language teacher education programme would strengthen the traditional training system. According to them there are some limitations in traditional teacher training policies. First of all, the monitoring process and ongoing support are limited to the training period. After the training period is over, teachers do not always follow the methods accordingly in some cases. Besides, until the next training programme, there is a chance that the development process of those teachers will be paused. Another problem is that some of the teachers cannot attend training workshops at times due to locations or timing, and it is not possible either to take account of everyone's convenience. In both of the cases, OLTE can serve well. It will help to monitor teachers' even after the training period, and to provide them ongoing supports. Moreover, if someone misses the workshops due to any problem, he/she can do that online. Online materials of the teacher education programmes can also help the teachers for self-study at home.

Response to question 5. According to the teacher educators, the *Teachers Portal* is an initial stage of online teacher education. Recently, all the teachers are being instructed to join the *Teachers Portal*, which will bring them in one platform. Besides, it is a place where teachers are sharing their teaching expertise including teaching materials, teaching experiences, ideas, problems, solutions etc. It will help them to work collaboratively for their continuous development. This shared platform is an important aspect for online teacher education, but in that case the collaborative development should be under the guidance of teacher educators as said by the participants. Moreover, it is a programme based on the national curriculum; hence, the contents and discussions are based on different subjects. Therefore, English teachers are participating here depending on the English syllabus (*English For Today*) of the national curriculum.

Response to question 6. Many of the teacher educators pointed out that the main barrier of providing language teacher education through online is to train the teachers and the teacher educators concerning the usage of ICT. A lot of teachers in distant areas have been introduced to CMC, CAL and other technologies recently. Therefore, they need training in these areas; besides teacher educators needs training as well for conducting online language teacher education. Some of the teacher educators added that there are already some measures taken regarding this issue, and to integrate ICT in teacher education both teachers and teacher educators are receiving training from government and some non-governmental organizations.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The study intended to find out the drawbacks of traditional teacher training, along with the efficacy of OLTE for lessening those drawbacks. At the time the study anticipated the possibilities of OLTE among the secondary level English teachers of Bangladesh.

Findings from the teachers' questionnaire and the teacher educators' interview suggested that duration of traditional teacher training programmes was short for overall development of teachers. In such a short period only some aspects could be covered. Besides, refresher training programmes were not held frequently, which contradicted ongoing development of the teachers. In addition, there was a communication gap among the teacher educators and the teachers, and lack of monitoring policy; which also restricted ongoing development. The situation of monitoring policy for traditional teacher training in Bangladesh is illustrated in Figure 5.1. If the training period is long, then in most cases there are monthly monitoring sessions. On the other hand, if it is one-month training, then there are subsequent sessions in one month where the teachers reflect on previously learned lessons. Yet, for most of the teacher trainings, there is no monitoring after the training period which can impact the previously learned lessons during training and the teachers' continuous development. Another problem was raised by the teachers and the teacher educators that during the training sessions, physical presence of the teachers was vital. In contrast, the location and timing were always not favorable for the trainee teachers. In these circumstances, sometimes teachers could not attend the training sessions, and they had to let go the opportunities. These findings were similar to the insights of Murray's study (2013). A2i found the same problems regarding the traditional teacher training during a study on the *Teachers Portal* (a2i, 2015). However, the research findings (see Table 4.5) indicated that

teachers were willing to stay updated regarding their profession, and they would cooperate if the circumstances are favorable to them.

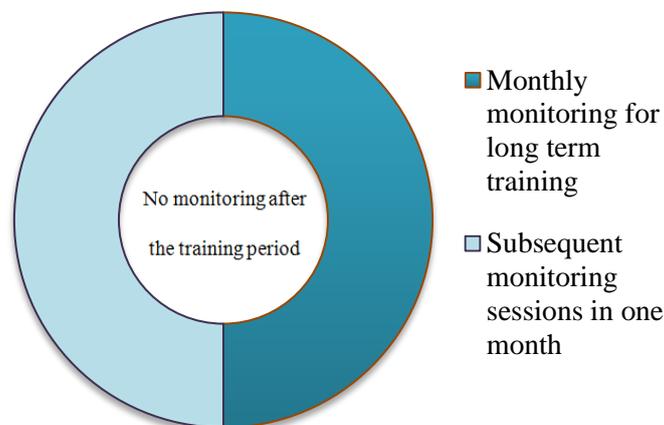


Figure 5.1. Situation of traditional monitoring policy.

According to most of the teachers and the teacher educators, use of technology would enhance the quality of teacher education. Besides, the study showed (see Table 4.7) that majority of the teachers had their own computers. So, it would not be a problem for them to use computer for online teacher education. They would be able to follow up online sessions from their homes. Moreover, teachers who did not own computers, they also had access to computer labs in schools. It suggested that they could attend online teacher education also, whenever they were in schools. Besides, computer is not always obligatory for online teacher education; internet is the major requirement. Therefore, teachers can use their internet enabled mobile phones to follow up online sessions, or to stay connected. Yet, computer is required for some of the activities, but those can be managed from computer labs in corresponding schools. In short, the minimum requirements for online teacher education are: (a) an internet enabled device (Mobile phone/ Tablet PC) and (b) Computer labs in school. If the respective schools can provide the facility of computer labs, then teachers from everywhere in Bangladesh can join in online teacher education programme. It is more important for the teachers of rural area, where computers and internet connection are not available. In this case, school is an important stakeholder of online teacher education, as it

reduces the cost of cyber café as well. The research findings also suggested the same view (see Table 4.8). From the teachers' responses, it was clear that people were more accustomed to internet than before; even though there was no computer, they could access internet through mobile phones or tabs. Beside, internet service is getting cheaper because of the increasing number of mobile network operators and broadband service providers in Bangladesh (BTRC, 2015a, 2015b). The decreasing price of internet service, along with low cost smartphones will allow the teachers to stay up to date. Therefore, mobile based internet can be used as a major resource for evolving online teacher education all over Bangladesh. There are already some steps regarding mobile based learning in Bangladesh, which is engaging the teachers from rural area in continuous development (Pouezevara & Khan, 2008). EIA is also applying mobile-based audio-visual learning among teachers (EIA, 2015). Baran also drew the importance of mobile devices in terms of collaborative and continuous learning (2014). Thus, mobile learning can be included in OLTE programme for maximum participations of the English teachers.

The study revealed that most of the teachers were already engaged in the activities those were same as OLTE. All the activities, such as: browsing various kinds of websites, searching online materials, using social networking sites, watching videos or movies in online, reading e-books from internet etc. were similar to the OLTE, but the purpose and policy were different. The participants of this research were doing these activities individually, while OLTE aims to bring all the language teachers together. In short, its goal is to enable language teachers to share their knowledge, ideas, problems, solutions, materials etc. with others, and to develop their teaching abilities constantly through communication. The research findings showed that all of the teachers used social networking sites to some extent (see Figure 5.2). It revealed that the participant teachers recognized the need for being simultaneous with others.

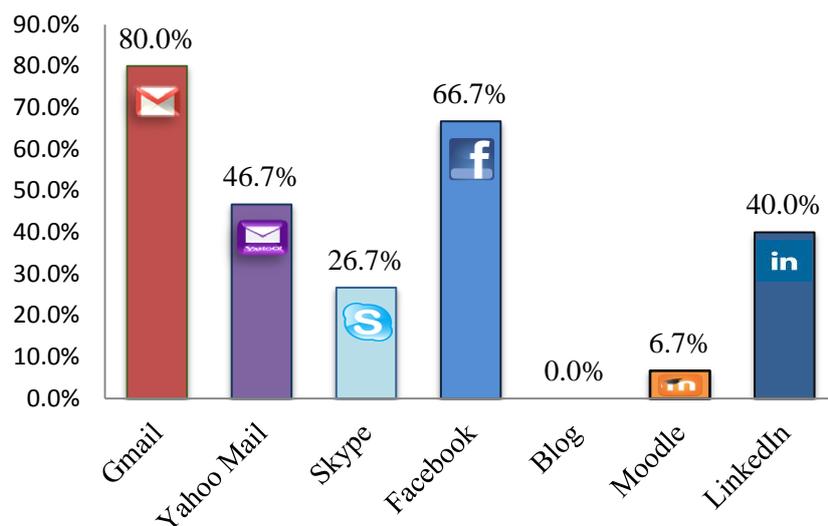


Figure 5.2. Extents of using different social networking sites.

OLTE looks forward to engage language teachers in concurrent development, where teachers can share their teaching expertise to advance each other under the guidance of the teacher educators. One of its similar projects is Moodle, but the number of Moodle users among the participants was very low (see Figure 5.2). However, they sometimes used social networking sites to share their ideas, problems and updates with other teachers regarding English language teaching. It reflected that many teachers were already collaborating with each other by themselves for facilitating their teaching. It also indicated their upbeat efforts for developing themselves and the possibility of cooperating with OLTE. Some of the participant teachers stated about lack of professionalism in social networking sites, for which they would not like to use social networking sites for teacher training. Nevertheless, social networking or communication is one of the key factors for being updated constantly, and professionalism can be maintained to some extent as well for teacher education programmes.

The research findings showed that the teachers appreciated both synchronous and asynchronous communication, but the emphasis was on asynchronous communication (see Table 4.15). Murray's research findings also suggested that asynchronous communication was better for slow internet connection as the participants were from many distant areas

(2013). However, Nunan recommended synchronous communication for active and real life interaction among the teacher educators and learners (1999). In particular, both types of communication mode can be used in OLTE programmes depending on the requirements of the teachers and the lessons. Besides, there can be asynchronous versions for important lessons, along with synchronous communication so that the teachers, who have slow internet connection, can also access to the online training smoothly.

During the research, majority of the teachers agreed about participating in OLTE. However, some teachers mentioned about timing of online sessions that they would be able to participate if the time was convenient. To resolve this issue, there can be several repetitions of the same online session so that all the teachers can participate affording their convenient time. Besides, asynchronous communication is one of the major advantages of OLTE over traditional teacher training. According to the case studies of Murray's research, teachers can be facilitated by the asynchronous communication system affording their convenient time; teachers can participate in discussion board, or watch various recordings whenever they get time (2013). It is the most important advantage of OLTE that the teachers can attend online sessions from anywhere, anytime beyond location and time constraints. Many of the teachers and the teacher educators also suggested to keep training facilities regarding online sessions/ICT training, whereas some of them mentioned about keeping helpline facility. Murray's research on various OLTE programmes all over the world suggested the same thing; all the OLTE programs had ICT facilities to some extent for supporting the teacher educators and the teachers (2013). Bangladesh government is also emphasising on the need for ICT integration, for which ICT training is provided to almost all the sectors of the country. As a part of it, teachers including the rural areas and the teacher educators are receiving ICT training from the government. The TQI-SEP project funded by ADB (Pouzevara & Khan, 2008) is providing "multi-media supported computer laboratory with

internet connection and local area network to all government teachers' training colleges (TTC)" (Chowdhury, 2012, p. 69). This project is also providing multimedia equipped vehicles to TTC so that the teacher educators can give training to the teachers from distant areas regarding the use of ICT (Chowdhury, 2012). Besides, the government is promoting multimedia-based learning in almost all the schools of Bangladesh (a2i, 2014), which requires computer laboratory in schools. Therefore, ICT training might not be a hindrance for implementing OLTE programmes in Bangladesh. Moreover, because of the emphasis on ICT integration, it will be an opportunity for the teachers to use computer labs from respective schools for online training.

Another advantage of OLTE, reflected from the study, is that it will enable the teachers to interact with a lot of people, along with other English teachers and the teacher educators. It will enhance their communicative skill of English language. Further, it will help to improve their fluency as English is their second language unlike native speaker. However, there was different opinion among the participants regarding this matter; according to some of the participants, face-to-face communication was required for enhancing communicative skill. It is true that face to face interaction is very important, but that is not possible all the time. It is a drawback of traditional teacher training, where physical presence is mandatory for teachers' development. As a result, OLTE can serve as the adjacent possible solution, where teachers can interact and receive education without being physically present. Teachers can communicate with each other beyond their locations and time whenever they want, and their communication skill will at least improve to some extent if they communicate in the target language. Therefore, teachers' improvements do not halt for their subsequent face-to-face interaction; the development cycle will still go on through online interaction.

There are some teacher education programmes in Bangladesh those are already in the initial stage of online teacher education. For example: BRAC is trying to involve the teachers

and the students in using CAL materials for self-study; these materials are also available in online (BRAC, n.d.). It can be combined with teacher education programme to start online teacher education. EIA has already taken some measures by implementing self-learning for English language teachers; right now they are using mobile phones (audio-visual materials) for the teachers' continuous professional development (EIA, 2015). Government has taken a major step in this regard; Teachers Portal is the first stage of online teacher education. The government of Bangladesh has taken an approach to bring all the teachers in one shared place, but all the teachers are not active users of this *Teachers Portal* (শিক্ষক বাতায়ন) till now (a2i, 2015). To fulfill the purpose, government is making some policies to involve all the teachers in *Teachers Portal*. According to this study, some of the teachers have already joined it, as they were instructed to do so from the government. However, it is limited to sharing of teaching materials and interaction among teachers till now (see Figure 5.3); it is not upgraded yet as a full-fledged online teacher education programme. For being online teacher education, the collaborative development needs to be under the guidance of teacher educators for active monitoring (Murray, 2013; Nunan, 1999). Besides, it is focused on all the subjects according to the national curriculum of Bangladesh, but this step serves as a guideline for implementing OLTE in Bangladesh, as there is no such online education till now that is concentrated for language teachers.

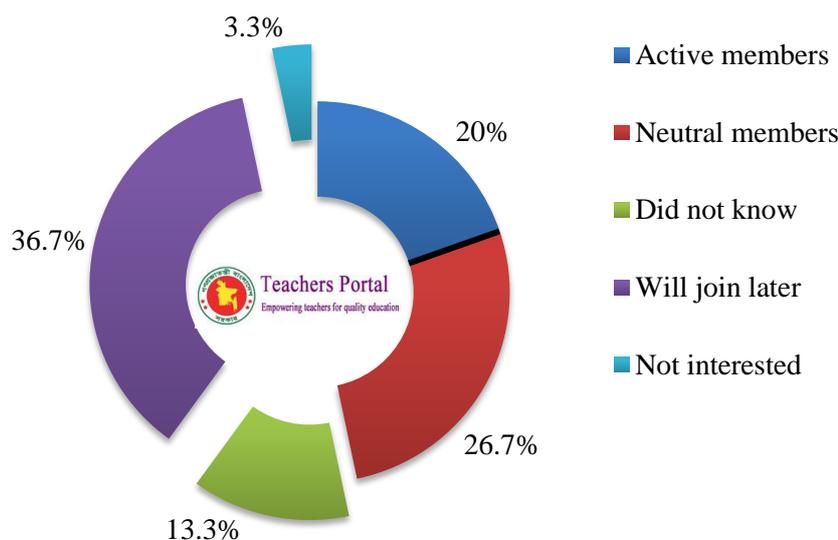


Figure 5.3. Teachers' participation rates in the *Teachers Portal*.

However, all the participants agreed to join OLTE programme, if their school authorities would recommend it as a part of their professional development (see Table 4.17). It revealed that if a particular OLTE programme was regarded compulsory by the schools or required for career development, then teachers would participate. Similarly, Khan recommended formal certification and recognition in professional life as the motivational factors for the teachers' development (2014). Teacher education programmes can use this policy combining with the educational institutions to draw the teachers toward online education, along with traditional training system. Moreover, these research findings will be supportive if any organization designs an OLTE programme for this group of teachers or for a similar setting; it will also help to include desired online applications of the teachers in the programme.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The aim of this research was to find out the shortcomings of traditional teacher training system experienced by the secondary level's English teachers of Bangladesh, and the efficacy of OLTE in terms of ongoing development of the teachers. At the same time this study explored the level of its acceptance among the teachers. The findings suggested that the English teachers face problems in the teacher training because of location, schedule, time limitation of training, lack of ongoing support etc. Incorporation of OLTE with the traditional training system can help teachers to attend trainings beyond location and time constraint, and to remain up-to-date regarding the changes of English language teaching. This study showed that the teachers will participate in the OLTE programmes if they are facilitated by supportive utensils and environment. Besides, the requirements for incorporating OLTE and their availability in Bangladesh were also reflected during the research for measuring its opportunities.

This study can be a source of suggestions, if there is any initiative of OLTE concerning the participated group of teachers or in a similar setting. This study will help to determine teachers' expectations from OLTE and how to engage them in the programmes. It can also help in designing the internet tools according to the teachers' choice.

There are some limitations of this study. The study focused only on the secondary level's English teachers of Dhaka city, and that is why it did not include views from the teachers outside Dhaka. Besides, the survey was conducted during the JSC and SSC Test examination, and the researcher also had to attend classes of other courses for which it was very difficult to set appointments. In this circumstance, only a small set of schools were selected for the teachers' survey. In addition to that the research was mainly teacher focused, and it did not include an in-depth study concerning the teacher educators' needs and

perspectives regarding OLTE. All these factors restricted the research findings to this participant group and to similar settings only. Moreover, a pilot OLTE programme could identify the teachers' needs and perspectives more accurately, but it was not possible for the researcher due to resource and time restraints.

Further studies can be done for the teachers of different levels of education. Besides, teachers from outside Dhaka need to be taken into consideration for further studies. On the other hand, this study was concentrated only on the teachers' perceptions. Therefore, further studies need to be done concerning the teacher educators' and administrations' perspectives, as they are also the major stakeholders of OLTE programmes.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire for the English Language Teachers

Note to the teachers: I would like to ask you some information to find out the scopes of ICT in terms of Language Teacher Education. I hope that this information will help to meet the teachers' needs, if ICT is incorporated with Teacher Education in future. Please feel free to write exactly how you feel; your identity will be kept anonymous. Thank you.

General Information

Your age:

Gender:

Academic background:

Years of experience:

Directions: Think about recent experiences of teacher education/training. Place a check mark (✓) on the option that best describes you. You can select more than one option where necessary. You are also welcome to write your comment/opinion if required.

1. Have you ever participated in any teacher education/training programme?

a) Yes

b) No

2. What was the time span for most of the teacher education/training programmes you have participated?

a) 1-5 days

b) 6-10 days

c) 11-15 days

d) Others (Specify)

3. You are satisfied with the locations of training facilities; you do not face any problem regarding schedule and transportations. Give reasons for your answer.

a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Not sure

d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

4. Teacher educators/trainers and the trainee teachers keep in touch regularly after the programmes end.

a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Not sure

d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

5. You would like to know about the new updates regularly in terms of English language teaching.

a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Not sure

d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

6. Do you think technology can strengthen the teacher education/training programmes? Why or why not?

a) Yes

b) No

7. From where do you use computer?

a) Own computer

b) Computer labs in school

c) Cyber café

d) Friends' house

e) Others (Specify)

8. Do you have access to internet regularly? Explain.

a) Yes

b) No

9. Does mobile based internet help you to stay connected?

a) Yes

b) No

10. What are your purposes for using internet?

a) Browsing websites

b) Searching online materials

c) Using social networking sites

d) Preparing assignments/presentations

e) Preparing teaching materials

f) Watching videos/movies

g) Others (Specify)

11. Which of the following social networking accounts you use frequently?

- a) Gmail
- b) Yahoo Mail
- c) Skype
- d) Facebook
- e) Blog
- f) Moodle
- g) LinkedIn
- h) Others (Specify)

12. You use social networking sites to share your ideas, problems, and updates with other teachers regarding English language teaching.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Not sure
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

13. It will be helpful to keep in touch with the teacher educators/trainers and other English teachers using social networking sites.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Not sure
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

14. If the teacher education/training programmes open teachers' portal for online training, you will participate. Write about the possible problems and additional supports you may need for online training.

- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Not sure
 - d) Disagree
 - e) Strongly disagree
-

15. Which of the following you would like to use during online training for sharing ideas, problems, updates and materials?

- a) Audio chat
- b) Video chat
- c) Texting
- d) Blog
- e) Posts (e.g. discussion board)
- f) Others (Specify)

16. Do you think this online-based collaborative teacher education will increase your communicative skill of the target language? Give reasons for your answer.

- a) Yes
 - b) No
-

17. If your school recommends joining teachers' portal (online training) as a part of your professional development, will you participate? If not, why?

- a) Yes
 - b) No
-

18. Are you already a member of the *Teachers Portal* (শিক্ষক বাতায়ন) that is implemented by the Education Ministry of Bangladesh? If yes, then for what purpose you use it? If not, why?

a) Yes

b) No

Thank You

Appendix B

Interview Questions for the Teacher Educators/Trainers

1. What is the time period for the training facilities and where are they held? Do the teachers attend them regularly?
2. Do you provide ongoing support for your trainees? Why or why not? Explain your monitoring process briefly.
3. How do you use ICT for training and education purposes?
4. If online-based language teacher education program is incorporated with traditional system, will it be useful for teachers?
5. What do you think about the *Teachers Portal* (শিক্ষক বাতায়ন) implemented by the Education Ministry of Bangladesh?
6. What are the major barriers of providing language teacher education through online? What can be done to overcome those barriers?