Teachers Helping Teachers Teach for a Better World

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Abstract

"No man is an island" it was written. Ignoring the dated language, the sentiment was for community-building. While many in the ELT world pursue improvement in their own classroom, "it takes a village to raise a child." Here I will argue for the teaching village, supporting each other, to raise standards and support teachers. There will forever be novice teachers, and in Korea, that can mean those with minimal or no training/education in the field (I was one). As a "Community of Practice" -- Teachers Helping Teachers -- we can educate and support teachers to meet professional standards. This paper will explore cases of teacher organizations around the globe, particularly in EFL settings (emerging circles of English), and how a teachers' organization can support teachers, and how teachers can support organizations that support teachers. Conferences/Seminars are only the beginning! Combining our scholarly literature, contacts with other TESOL-type teacher associations, and surveys of members and stakeholders in ELT around the world provides invaluable insights often missed in narrower perspectives. The ultimate outcome in contemporary ELT is not simply students learning English, but improving society through English teaching. More than grammar, vocabulary, and pedagogy. Teachers and organizations of teachers can make that happen.

KEYWORDS: teacher, community, standards, support

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