

**Giorgio Ostinelli**

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# **Teacher professional learning and development (PLD) in Europe**

# Three approaches to teacher professional learning

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1. In service training (INSET)= Top-down, in extreme cases «teacher proof», aimed at reproduction of «better ways» to teach
2. Continuous professional development (CPD) = Update of teacher knowledge during the time, same limitations as school improvement
3. Professional learning and development (PLD) = development of teacher expertise, change of paradigm, Lifelong, lifewide e lifedeeep learning.

# School systems' paradigms

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1. Institutional = Typical of the school of the 19th century: main task general instruction
2. Performance oriented= based on the first studies on school effectiveness. In this view the school is considered as a close and standardizable system. Typical example: best practices
3. Socio-ecological = paradigm of reference of the more advanced school systems. The school is conceived as a system both ecological and cultural, undergoing a constant evolution

# Why to use a framework and not a model for PLD analysis

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- A model is usually conceived as a reproduction of reality
- Therefore, when we use a model, we tend to comply with a realist view
- However, due in particular to the complexity of education, the use of a socio-ecological, systemic/constructivist paradigm appears to be more appropriate
- For this reason, we resolved to use a similar approach

# Advantages in using a framework

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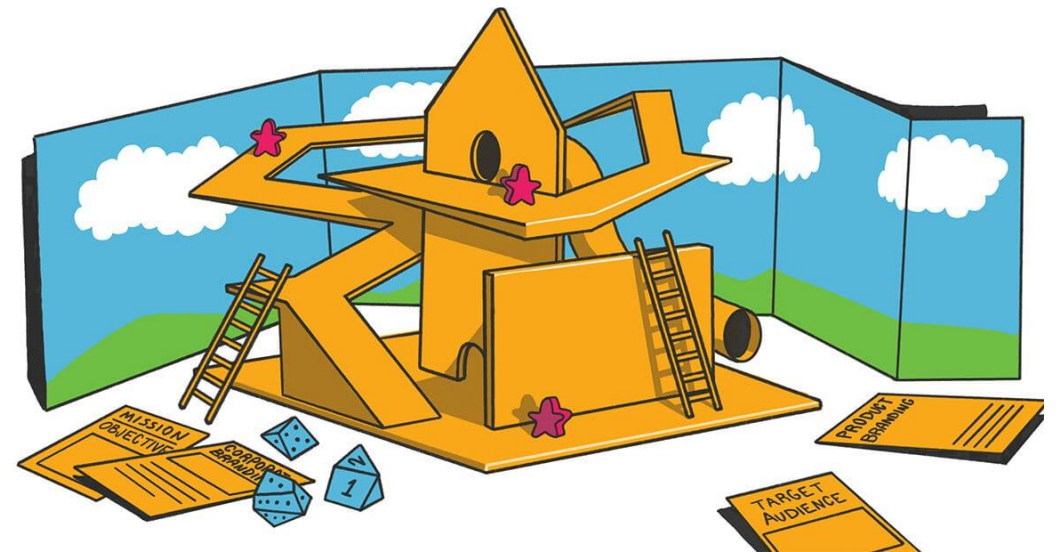
Less rigid, more flexible

Orientation towards interaction, rather than description

Two possible levels of analysis: paradigmatic and operational

Six paradigmatic categories

Nine operational indicators



# Six paradigmatic categories(Ostinelli e Crescentini, 2021)

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- **1-Needs satisfaction:** Needs satisfaction: PLD is built starting from teachers', schools' and states' needs in a balanced form, conducive to pupils' optimal learning (Datnow and Stringfield 2000, Deci 2009).
- **2-Meaning:** PLD is developed around an attribution of shared meaning in the context of group dynamics (Kelchtermans 2004, Hauge et al. 2014, Nguyen and Hunter 2018).
- **3-Self-regulation:** PLD is part of intentional and innovative ecologic processes of self-organisation and self-regulation (Bronfenbrenner 1994, White and Levin 2016).

# Six paradigmatic categories (Ostinelli e Crescentini, 2021)

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- **4-Situated professional growth:** PLD takes place in a system including several differentiated professional roles conducive to the management of change. The presence of teacher leaders may enhance the provision of PLD in school contexts (Harrison and Killion 2007, Sekulović and Grujić 2016, Ippolito et al. 2019).
- **5-Adaptive re-organisation:** The development of innovative teaching practices is characterised by processes of deconstruction and reconstruction and of learning and unlearning from the perspective of lifelong and life-wide learning (Cochran-Smith 2003, Fraise and Brooks 2015, Kim and Wilkinson 2019).
- **6-Fitness with the global process:** There is effective process management, and the resources for and format of CPD or PLD organisation fit the task. In addition, the process is managed, and there is evidence of its outcomes (Pedder et al. 2008, Terhart 2019).

# From six paradigmatic categories to nine operational indicators

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<b>Needs</b>	1–( <i>Needs satisfaction</i> )
<b>Meaning</b>	2–( <i>Validity</i> )
<b>Self–regulation</b>	3–( <i>Organic structure</i> )
	4–( <i>Sustainability</i> )
<b>Situated professional growth</b>	5–( <i>Support</i> )
<b>Adaptive re–organisation</b>	6–( <i>Professional learning</i> )
<b>Fitness with the process</b>	7–( <i>Structure</i> )
	8–( <i>Form</i> )
	9–( <i>Effectiveness</i> )



# The nine operational indicators more in detail

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- 1-(Needs satisfaction)** Match between teacher PLD and needs
- 2-(Validity)** relationship with educational research and meaningful evidences
- 3-(Organic structure):** systemic vision of school improvement and change, organic combination of top-down, bottom-up and lateral fluxes
- 4-(Sustainability):** realistic and environmental respectful targets, medium-long term planning

# The nine operational indicators more in detail

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**5-***(Support)*: coaching and mentoring, new support roles in school

**6-***(Professional learning)*: development of expertise and skills, lifelong, lifewide and lifedeeep learning

**7-***(Structure)*: organisation, requirements, resources, in particular time for PLD

**8-***(Form)*: workshops, lessons, assisted practice, communities of practice,

**9-***(Effectiveness)*: assessment of results and of meaningful information, quality management

# Finland Paradigm: socio-ecological; Type of teacher PL: PLD

## Strong points

- *Full needs satisfaction*
- *Teacher motivation*
- *PL based on educational research and evidence*
- *PL fits the task*
- *Medium-long term planning*
- *Realistic goals*
- *Coaching, emerging roles*
- *Balanced influence on PL from the various actors*
- *Co-construction*
- *Integration of top-down, bottom-up and lateral*
- *Lifelong and lifewide learning*
- *Economic and time resources*
- *Innovative forms of PL*
- *PL assessment*

# Finland

## Could be improved

- *Less influence of schools on PL*
- *PL ability to develop expertise in teachers*
- *Presence of mentors in schools*
- *Increasing lack of economic resources*
- *Quality management*

# Estonia

Paradigm: socio-ecological; Type of teacher PL: PLD

## Strong points

- *Full needs satisfaction*
- *Teacher motivation*
- *PL based on educational research and evidence*
- *PL fits the task*
- *Medium-long term planning*
- *Realistic goals*
- *Mentoring, emerging roles*
- *Balanced influence on PL from the various actors*
- *Co-construction*
- *Integration of top-down, bottom-up and lateral*
- *Lifelong and lifewide learning*
- *PL ability to develop expertise in teachers*

## Could be improved

- *Coaching*
- *Need for economic resources*

# Denmark

**Paradigm: performance-oriented; Type of teacher PL: in transition from CPD to PLD**

## **Strong points**

- *Medium-long term planning*
- *PL based on educational research*
- *Realistic goals*
- *Coaching, emerging roles*
- *Only school influence on PL is deemed as adequate*
- *Lifelong and lifewide learning*
- *Innovative forms of PL*
- *PL assessment*
- *Quality management*

# Denmark

## Could be improved

- *Teacher motivation*
- *Partial needs satisfaction*
- *PL foundation on evidence*
- *PL effectiveness in fitting the task*
- *Too much influence from the state, too less from teachers and unions*
- *Co-construction*
- *Integration of top-down, bottom-up and lateral*
- *Extension of mentoring*
- *PL ability to develop expertise in teachers to be investigated*
- *Need for more resources*
- *PL assessment*

# Germany

Paradigm: institutional; Type of teacher PL: in transition from INSET to CPD

## Strong points

- *State's needs satisfaction*
- *Teacher motivation*
- *PL based on educational research and evidence*
- *Mentoring*
- *Schools' and union's influence on PL*
- *PL ability to develop expertise in teachers*

## Could be improved

- *Schools' and teachers' needs*
- *PL effectiveness in fitting the task*
- *Co-construction*
- *Integration of top-down, bottom-up and lateral*
- *Coaching*

## Weak points

- *State's and teachers' influence on PL*
- *Medium-long term planning*
- *Realistic goals*
- *Emerging roles*
- *Lifelong and lifewide learning*
- *Innovative forms of PL*
- *Need for more resources*



# England

Paradigm: from institutional to performance-oriented; Type of teacher PL: CPD

## Strong points

- *Schools' needs satisfaction*
- *Medium-long term planning*
- *Coaching, mentoring, emerging roles*
- *State's and schools' influence on PL*
- *Innovative forms of PL*
- *PL assessment*
- *Quality management*

# England

## Could be improved

- *State's and teachers' need satisfaction*
- *Teacher motivation*
- *PL foundation on educational research and evidence*
- *PL effectiveness in fitting the task*
- *Co-construction*

- *Integration of top-down, bottom-up and lateral*
- *PL ability to develop expertise in teachers*
- *Time resources*

## Weak points

- *Low teachers' and union's influence on PL*
- *Lifelong and lifewide learning*
- *Realistic goals*

# France

Paradigm: institutional; Type of teacher PL: in transition from INSET to CPD

## Strong points

- *State's needs satisfaction*
- *Emerging roles*

## Could be improved

- *Schools' and teachers' needs satisfaction*
- *Teacher motivation*
- *PL based on educational research and evidence*
- *Co-construction*
- *Integration of top-down, bottom-up and lateral*
- *Coaching, mentoring*
- *PL ability to develop expertise in teachers*

# France

## Weak points

- *Unbalanced influence on PL from the various actors: too much state, too less schools and teachers*
- *Lifelong and lifewide learning*
- *Innovative forms of PL*
- *Medium-long term planning*
- *Realistic goals*
- *PL effectiveness in fitting the task*
- *PL assessment*
- *Quality management*
- *Resources*

# Coaching, mentoring, communities of practice and professional learning communities

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- Objective: individual schools should become true professional learning communities
- One possible way is to ask teachers to collaborate inside communities of practice, negotiating what performed in these experiences inside a broader framework compliant with school vision and mission
- Mentoring can be a valuable approach, both for induction and teacher professional development, individually and inside communities of practice
- Coaching can be a key element in combining educational research with teaching practice, evolving towards true PLD
- Frame-objects (Ostinelli, to be published) can be very helpful in interfacing educational research with teaching practice

# References

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- Giorgio Ostinelli "Co-constructing innovative experiences with teachers 'at the last mile', between university and school" *International Journal of Coaching and Mentoring*

Giorgio.Ostinelli@edu.ti.ch