Good IDEARS for teacher development:

A sustainable cycle for contextually-informed CPD events

Tom Garside

Language Point
Sustainable teacher education

A thought experiment…

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It's your first day on a TMSOL training course…

A thought experiment…

At the end of week 1 you have a terminology test (100 words)

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方法	课程	评定
发音	教学大纲	总结
语法	黑板	文章
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(Fail the test and you risk failing the course)

A thought experiment…

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During input, there are some rules…

1) Trainees must face front at all times

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3) No questions until the end of the day – the trainers will tell you how to teach correctly

4) Always follow what the trainer does – her example is correct

A thought experiment…

How would you react?

A thought experiment…

How would you react?
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A thought experiment…

How would you react?

How would your students react?

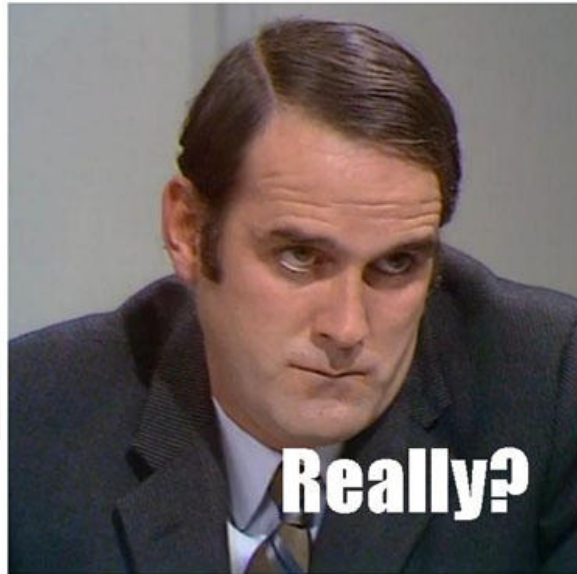**How would your head of department react?**

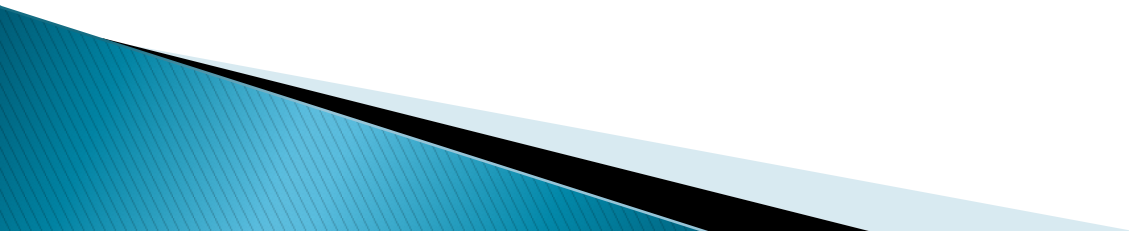# A thought experiment…

How would you react?
How would your students react?
How would your head of department react?

WHY?

The effect of JIJOE training

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Top-down, Jet-in-jet-out (JIJOE) training typically…

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- **… makes biased assumptions about the nature of ESOL settings**
- **… implies 'deficit'**
- **… leaves teachers in the same position as when trainers arrived**
- **… leaves teachers unempowered**
- **… fosters resentment**
- **… preaches communicative methodology**

The effect of JIJOE training

'Tissue rejection':

a transplanted organ (or in educational terms, innovation) does not become an effectively functioning part of the system to which it is implanted, due to a failure to mesh the respective characteristics of 'donor' and 'receiver'

(Holliday 1994)

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The CLT 'mission'

CLT is widely used in English language teaching despite, or possibly due to, there being no universally accepted authoritative CLT model as the principles involved can be interpreted and applied in a variety of ways.

(Richards and Rogers, 2014)

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Further Reading / watching

Jim Scrivener debate with New Oriental representative:
https://iatefl.britishcouncil.org/2017/session/new-oriental-signature-event

Contextually-informed teacher development articles from Language Point Teacher Education

https://www.languagepointtraining.com/post/helping-teachers-develop-in-their-local-contexts-a-summary-from-iatefl-2019

https://www.languagepointtraining.com/post/tesol-needs-context-considering-local-education-settings-in-teacher-training-and-development

Regional assumptions: China

CLT doesn't teach grammar, it is just speaking and listening practice

(Thompson, 1996; Wu, 2008)

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Learners 'tend to regard communicative activities as games for entertainment rather than a learning tool'
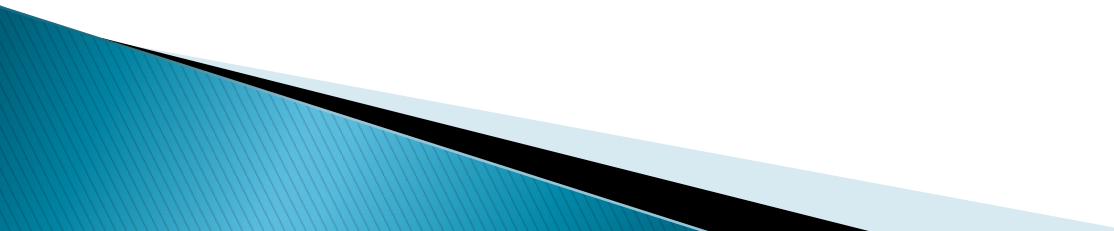
(Zhang et al 2013)

Regional assumptions: Korea

CLT contradicted teachers' beliefs about language learning and did not allow them to prepare students for the various exams that are critical to their future careers. For that reason, the teachers refused to accept CLT

(Li, 1998)

Building sustainability through context

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1) Consider key aspects of local teaching settings:

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PPPP

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- Students' purpose/s for studying English

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- **Practical considerations (resources / physical setting)**

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The best way to gauge these?

Building sustainability through context

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The best way to gauge these?

Listen to the teachers!

Building sustainability through context

2) Be realistic about the regional status quo

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- Teachers' language proficiency: B1-B2
- Class profiles: Mixed ability, large classes
- Time and energy available: very little
- Teachers' level of autonomy / empowerment in their roles

Building sustainability through context

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The best way to gauge these?

Listen to the challenges reported by the teachers themselves!

Solutions

A contextually-informed development cycle
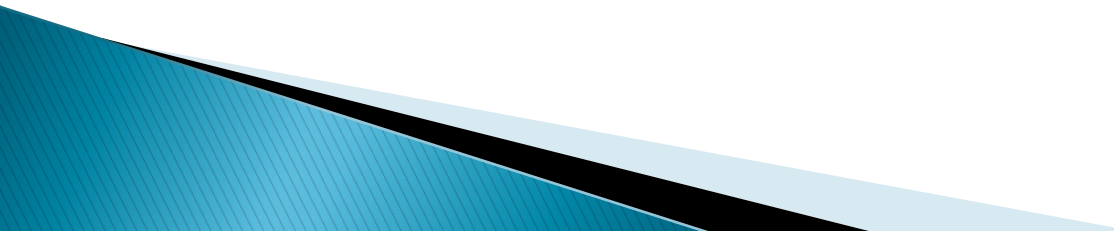
Solutions

A contextually-informed development cycle

1) Make pre-event contact with the teachers themselves, and hear their stories
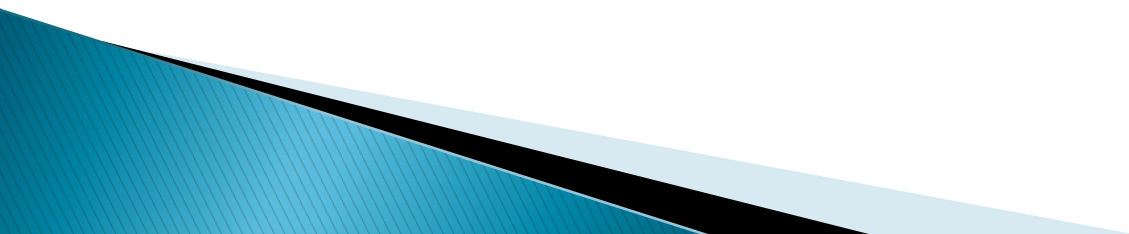
Solutions

A contextually-informed development cycle

1) **Make pre-event contact with the teachers themselves, and hear their stories**

2) **Lay groundwork through online training and flipped content, negotiating and agreeing upon principles of teaching and learning which apply to the local setting**

Solutions

A contextually-informed development cycle

1) Make pre-event contact with the teachers themselves, and hear their stories

2) Lay groundwork through online training and flipped content, negotiating and agreeing upon principles of teaching and learning which apply to the local setting

3) Accept that the teachers, not the trainer, are the experts in their teaching setting, so they have the power to manage their own training

Solution 3) Participant-driven training

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A contextually-informed development cycle

I

D

E

A

R

S

Solution 3) Participant-driven training

A contextually-informed development cycle

Inform

D

E

A

R

S

Solution 3) Participant-driven training

A contextually-informed development cycle

Inform:

Participant teachers inform the trainer and their peers about relevant contextual issues and approaches / methods / materials they have found effective

Solution 3) Participant–driven training

A contextually-informed development cycle

Inform

Demonstrate

E

A

R

S

Solution 3) Participant-driven training

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A contextually-informed development cycle

Demonstrate:

Participant teachers rationalise and demonstrate an effective technique, material or resource to the group, through short demonstration classes

Solution 3) Participant-driven training

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Inform

Demonstrate

Evaluate

A

R

S

Solution 3) Participant-driven training

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Evaluate:

The group and the trainer evaluate the demonstrated routine according to principles of effective teaching and learning, as agreed during pre-event training / prior input

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The group and the trainer evaluate the demonstrated routine according to principles of effective teaching and learning, as agreed during pre-event training / prior input

Solution 3) Participant-driven training

A contextually-informed development cycle

Inform

Demonstrate

Evaluate

Adapt

R

S

Solution 3) Participant-driven training

A contextually-informed development cycle

Adapt:

Teachers adapt the technique to fit a specific group of learners who share similar issues, or for a different learning outcome, in the context where they work

Solution 3) Participant-driven training

A contextually-informed development cycle

Inform

Demonstrate

Evaluate

Adapt

Reflect

S

Solution 3) Participant-driven training

A contextually-informed development cycle

Reflect:

Teachers reflect on the wider application of the techniques they have evolved, and how they relate to the local educational paradigm

Solution 3) Participant–driven training

A contextually-informed development cycle

Reflect:

Teachers reflect on the wider application of the techniques they have evolved, and how they relate to the local educational paradigm

Teachers also reflect on the value of this technique to other teachers that they know / work with

Solution 3) Participant-driven training

A contextually-informed development cycle

Inform

Demonstrate

Evaluate

Adapt

Reflect

Share

# Solution 3) Participant-driven training

A contextually-informed development cycle

Share:

Ambassador teachers form development groups to share the resulting methods with other teachers in the region

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Teachers also take the IDEARS cycle to other groups of teachers and repeat the process, to collaborate, train and spread good practice

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Ambassador teachers form development groups to share the resulting methods with other teachers in the region

Teachers also take the IDEARS cycle to other groups of teachers and repeat the process, to collaborate, train and spread good practice

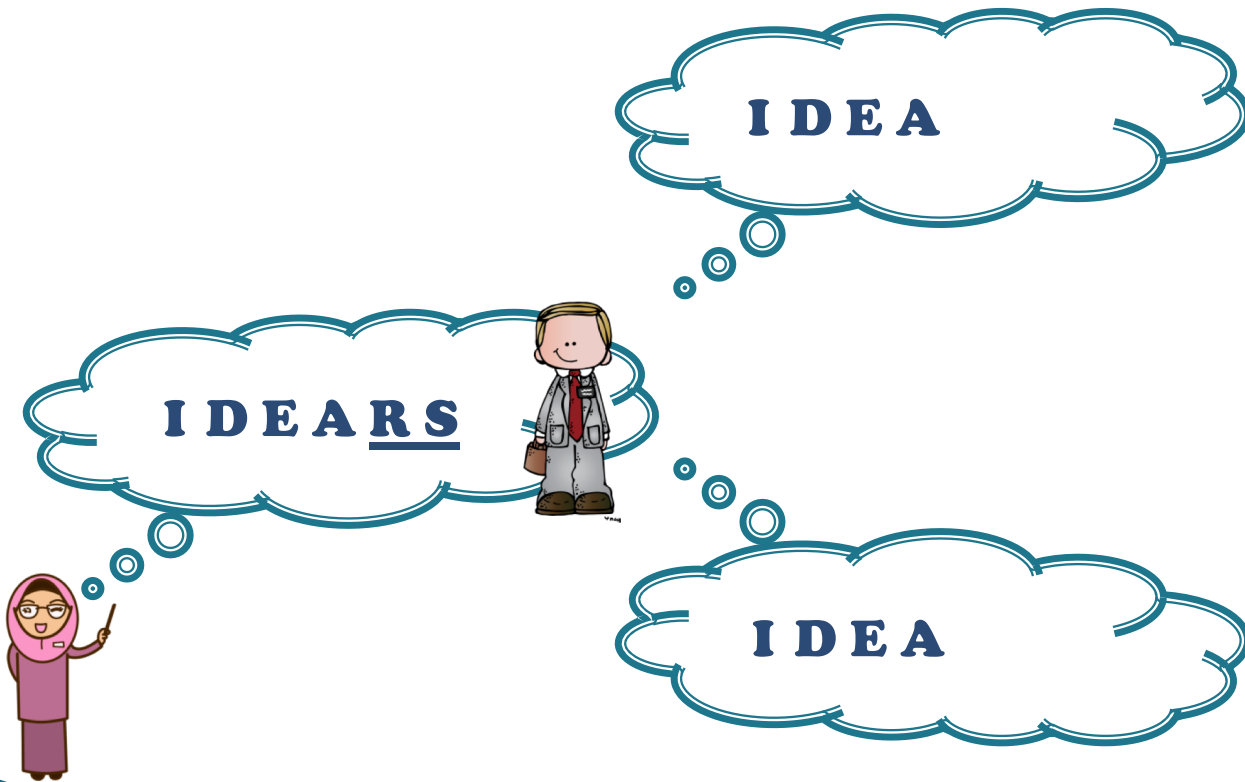If necessary, trainers keep contact with ambassadors to follow up and provide trainer support
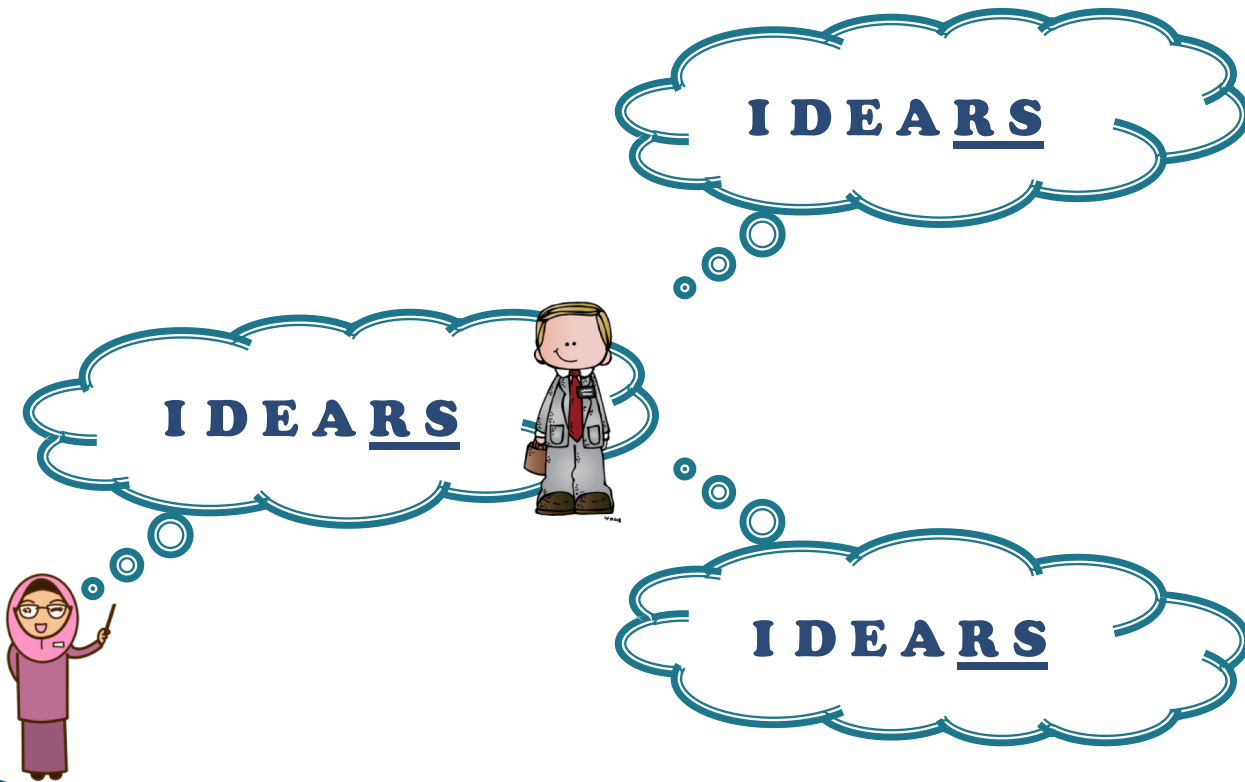
IDEARS: A self-powering, sustainable development cycle
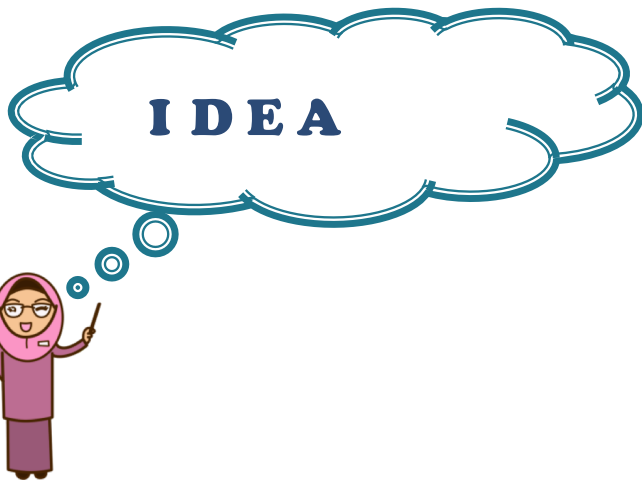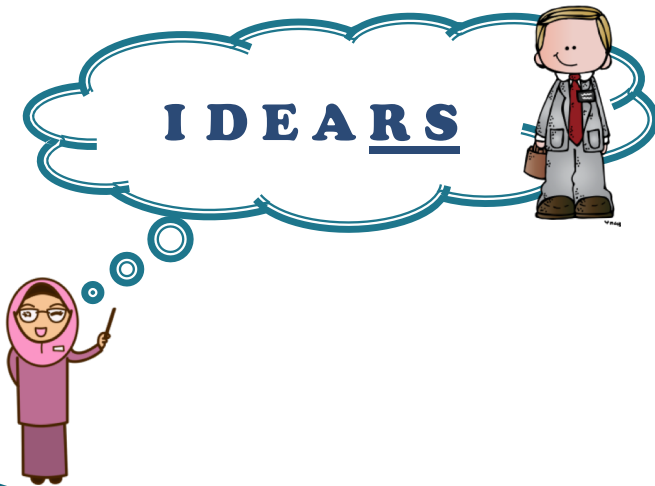
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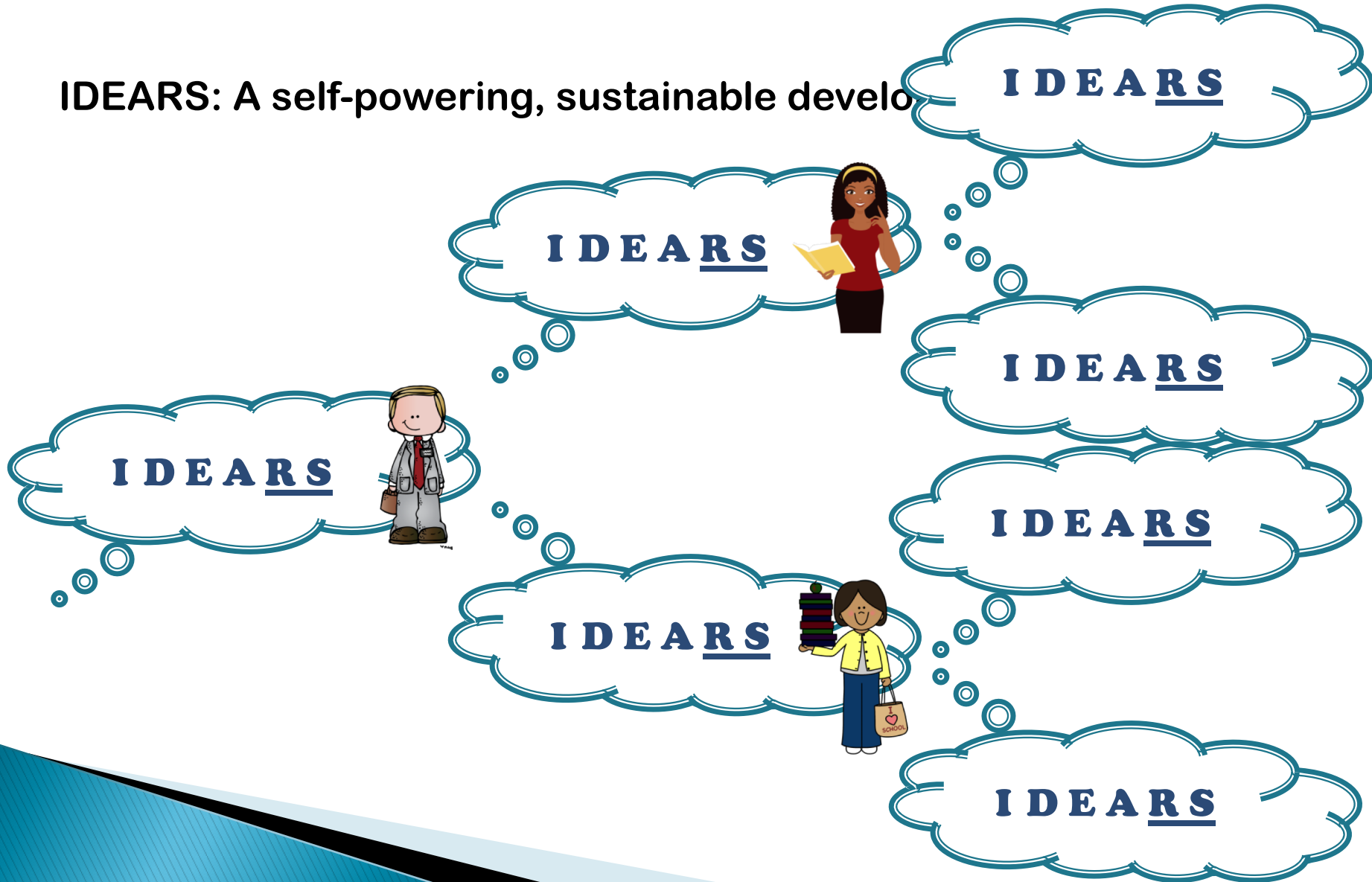
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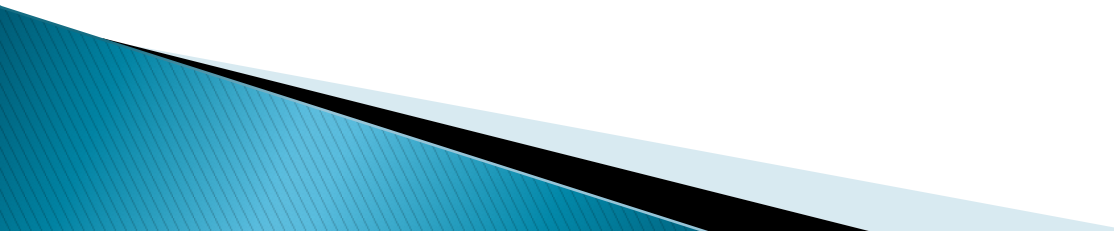
IDEARS: A self-powering, sustainable development cycle

The future of teacher development is…

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Accepting of the local status quo

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Based on teachers' stated needs

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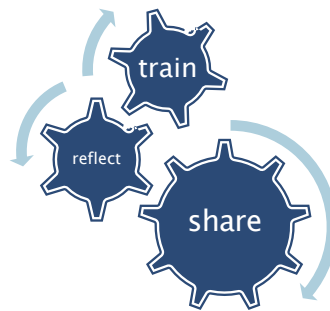
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Thank you

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