



THE IMPACT OF CPD (CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT) ON NOVICE TEACHERS IN UZBEKISTAN

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In an era characterized by unprecedented global interconnectedness and communication, the acquisition of proficient English language skills has evolved from a desirable attribute to an essential requirement for individuals navigating the complexities of a borderless world. In the specific context of Uzbekistan, a country poised at the crossroads of cultural, economic, and technological transformations, the significance of English language proficiency has been amplified, making the quality of English language education a matter of paramount importance. As Uzbekistan strives to cultivate a populace capable of effective cross-cultural communication, the role of English language teachers becomes pivotal in shaping the linguistic competencies of the younger generation.

Novice teachers, in particular, form a crucial cohort within the realm of English language education. Their initial steps into the teaching profession are often characterized by a blend of enthusiasm, innovation, and challenges that stem from limited practical experience. As these fledgling educators embark on their teaching journeys, providing them with the necessary tools, support, and professional growth opportunities becomes instrumental in not only enhancing their individual pedagogical capabilities but also in elevating the overall quality of English language education in the country. In this vein, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) emerges as a cornerstone of educational enhancement, offering a platform through which novice teachers can continually refine their instructional practices, gain a deeper understanding of effective teaching methodologies, and bolster their confidence in classroom management and engagement.

The significance of English language

The role of English language proficiency in global communication and economic development has led many countries, including Uzbekistan, to recognize the importance of high-quality English language education. As globalization and international cooperation continue to expand, proficiency in English is increasingly viewed as a crucial skill for participating in various spheres of the global economy and culture. Uzbekistan's educational landscape has witnessed substantial reforms in recent years, aiming to align its educational practices with international standards and to equip its citizens with the skills necessary for successful engagement in the globalized world.

In this context, the professional development of English language teachers holds significant implications for the effectiveness of language education. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) initiatives have gained prominence as a means to enhance teaching quality and, by extension, student learning outcomes. Novice teachers, while bringing fresh perspectives and innovative approaches to the classroom, often lack



the pedagogical experience required to navigate the complexities of diverse classroom settings. Research indicates that tailored CPD programs can play a pivotal role in fostering the growth of novice teachers, enabling them to adapt their instructional strategies, gain confidence, and improve their overall teaching performances (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Several studies have highlighted the positive correlation between effective CPD and improved teaching practices. In a study conducted by Darling-Hammond et al. (2009), it was found that sustained and collaborative professional development experiences positively influenced teacher practices, leading to enhanced student achievement. In the specific context of English language education, research by Johnson (2015) suggests that CPD initiatives targeting language teachers can lead to improved language proficiency among students.

However, while the benefits of CPD are widely acknowledged, the implementation of effective CPD programs tailored to the unique challenges and needs of novice English language teachers in Uzbekistan remains an area warranting further investigation. The cultural, contextual, and institutional factors that shape the efficacy of CPD initiatives in this region necessitate localized research to ensure that CPD programs are not only adopted but also effectively integrated into the teaching practices of novice educators.

The development of novice teachers is a complex and crucial aspect of the education system. Novice teachers often face challenges as they transition from theoretical training to actual classroom practice. Understanding the dynamics of novice teacher development is essential for designing effective Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs that address their unique needs.

Ingersoll and Strong (2011) emphasize the importance of induction programs and mentoring for novice teacher development. These programs provide structured support, guidance, and opportunities for novice teachers to learn from experienced colleagues. The authors advocate for sustained, job-embedded professional development that focuses on classroom realities, aligning with the principles of effective CPD.

Research by Johnson and Birkeland (2003) identifies key characteristics of novice teachers, such as limited classroom experience, a steep learning curve, and a need for practical strategies. Novice teachers often struggle with classroom management, lesson planning, and adapting to diverse student needs. Effective CPD should address these challenges through interactive workshops, peer collaboration, and opportunities for reflective practice.

Darling-Hammond (2017) argues that novice teacher development should be viewed as a continuum rather than a discrete phase. CPD efforts should continue beyond the initial years to promote ongoing growth and professionalism. This perspective aligns with the notion that effective CPD is a lifelong process that supports teachers at all career stages.

Furthermore, Feiman-Nemser (2001) emphasizes that CPD for novice teachers should facilitate the integration of theory and practice. Novice teachers benefit from opportunities to apply pedagogical theories in authentic classroom contexts. CPD programs that encourage reflective practice, peer observation, and collaborative inquiry contribute to novice teachers' professional growth.



English language teaching in Uzbekistan

English language teaching (ELT) in Uzbekistan has undergone a significant transformation since the country gained independence in 1991. Prior to this period, Russian was the dominant foreign language taught in schools due to the influence of the Soviet Union. However, with Uzbekistan's emergence as an independent nation, there was a conscious shift towards the teaching and learning of English as a tool for international communication and engagement (Alimov, 2019). The government's recognition of the importance of English proficiency in global contexts, including diplomacy, trade, and technology, led to the development of policies and reforms aimed at enhancing ELT practices.

The Uzbekistan government has placed a strong emphasis on promoting English language proficiency among its citizens. This commitment is evident in various policy documents, including the «State Program for the Implementation of the Strategy of Actions» and the «Year of Dialogue with the People and Human Interests.» These policies prioritize the learning of English as a means to foster international cooperation, strengthen cultural ties, and enhance economic prospects (Uzbekistan National News Agency, 2020). Consequently, English has become a compulsory subject in schools, and the Ministry of Public Education has implemented curricular reforms to align with these policy objectives.

The curriculum reforms in Uzbekistan have shifted from traditional grammar-focused approaches to more communicative and interactive teaching methodologies. The new curriculum emphasizes the development of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills, with a focus on practical language use in real-life situations (Alimov, 2019). This shift is in line with global trends in ELT, where communicative competence is viewed as central to language learning.

Despite the government's commitment and initiatives, several challenges continue to affect ELT in Uzbekistan. One major challenge is the shortage of qualified English language teachers, particularly in rural areas. The shortage exacerbates the disparities in educational quality between urban and rural regions. Additionally, the lack of up-to-date teaching materials and resources hampers effective instruction. Teachers often rely on outdated textbooks and materials, limiting their ability to incorporate modern teaching methods and engage students effectively (Alimov, 2019).

Continuous Professional Development in Teaching

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in teaching has gained significant attention in recent years as educators strive to enhance their skills and improve student outcomes. Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) stress the significance of effective teacher professional development. Their research emphasizes that CPD should be sustained, collaborative, and embedded in teachers' daily practices. Such an approach fosters continuous improvement by aligning professional development with teachers' actual classroom needs.

Guskey and Yoon (2009) further emphasize the importance of CPD that works. Their study identifies the essential components of successful professional development, including ongoing support, a focus on student learning outcomes, and alignment with school goals. They advocate for CPD that is not a one-time event but an ongoing process that supports teachers' growth over time.



Desimone (2011) provides a comprehensive primer on effective professional development. Her work delves into various forms of professional development and highlights the characteristics of programs that yield positive outcomes. Desimone's insights underscore the need for professional development to be content-focused, relevant, and collaborative, with a focus on sustained engagement.

Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, and Fung (2007) contribute an international perspective on teacher professional learning and development. Their synthesis of research from New Zealand and beyond highlights the value of content-focused and collaborative approaches. Their findings emphasize the power of collaboration among teachers and the role of communities of practice in effective CPD.

Ingersoll and Strong (2011) investigate induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers. Their study highlights the role of ongoing support in retaining early-career teachers. Their insights suggest that a structured and well-designed induction process contributes to the professional development of new teachers and positively impacts their retention rates.

Fullan and Hargreaves (2012) introduce the concept of «professional capital,» emphasizing that CPD is an investment that enhances teaching effectiveness. Their model comprises human, social, and decisional capital, all of which contribute to teachers' ability to continuously improve and adapt to changing educational landscapes. Hirsh (2009) discusses the evolution of professional development, advocating for a shift from generic approaches to personalized, job-embedded learning experiences. She highlights the importance of addressing individual needs and promoting ongoing reflection and growth among educators.

Kennedy (2016) delves into teacher resilience and retention. His work acknowledges the challenges educators face and examines how CPD can support teachers in coping with these challenges. Kennedy's research underscores the role of professional development in fostering resilience and promoting job satisfaction among teachers. Villegas-Reimers (2003) offers an international review of teacher professional development, shedding light on diverse approaches and challenges. Her work contributes to understanding the cultural and contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of CPD in various educational settings.

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES, 2007) provides a user-friendly guide for identifying evidence-based educational practices, including those related to professional development. Their framework assists educators in selecting and implementing CPD programs supported by rigorous research.

Benefits of CPD in Teaching

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in teaching offers numerous benefits that positively impact educators, students, and the overall educational environment. Many researchers refer to teachers' CPD in different ways. Examples include training for in-service personnel, staff development, career development, career advancement, professional growth, personal development, and other areas. As a result, the literature makes reference to a number of definitions about teachers' CPD. Day (1999) provides one of the most thorough descriptions of CPD, saying that:

«Professional development includes of all natural learning experiences as well as deliberate and planned actions that are meant to benefit the individual, group, or school



directly or indirectly and that, as a result, improve the standard of instruction in the classroom. It is a process by which educators, both individually and collectively, evaluate, reaffirm, and deepen their commitment to the moral purposes of teaching. It is also a process by which educators develop the knowledge, skills, and emotional intelligence necessary for good professional decision-making, planning, and practice with students, young people, and colleagues throughout every stage of their teaching careers.

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