

# CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EFL TEACHERS

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***Abstract:** The article discusses the strategic role of continuous professional development of EFL teachers in the education system and the need for professional development of teachers of foreign languages.*

***Key words:** professional competence, continuous professional development, EFL teacher*

## **Introduction**

Continuous professional development plays a strategic role in the education system. The goal of foreign language teachers is to help their students understand the world around them, to communicate across linguistic and cultural boundaries, and play an active role in the world. This is a challenging task that requires the teacher to have a wide range of methods and approaches in order to keep abreast of effective methods developed in other countries and to share their ideas and experiences with other countries.

The main reason for continuous professional development is the desire of the teacher for career growth, which contributes to the expansion of their professional competence, language practice, knowledge in the field of pedagogy, teaching methods, didactics, psychology, and the ability to use computer technology.

## **Main part**

The profession of teaching foreign languages today faces a shortage of qualified teachers. At the same time, the number of students is rapidly growing at higher education; there are new reforms in education, the development of national standards for teaching a foreign language, new requirements for teachers of a foreign language. There has been a great interest recently in the discussion of teachers and professional development by several researchers, educational practitioners, and teachers. The theory, research, policy and practice in continuous

professional development of EFL teachers in education generally have been studied by many scholars such as Broad, Timperley, Wilson, Barrar & Fung, Richards & Farrell, Lee who have investigated that continuous professional development has greater potential in teaching and learning. There are a number of factors that emphasize the need for continuous professional development of foreign language teachers (EFL):

- the use of exclusively the studied language in the classroom requires that teachers have good language training, a high level of proficiency in the foreign language being studied - speaking, listening, reading and writing;
- self-directed learning requires teachers to become intermediaries, consultants in learning;
- lack of qualified teachers of foreign languages;
- teachers should always be aware of new methods and technologies in the field of teaching methods of foreign languages;
- the ability to understand modern media in a foreign language, both oral and written;
- study and understanding of the cultural, social, political, historical and economic realities of the regions of the target language.

According to Lee, teacher's professional development along with the needs for ongoing renewal of professional skills and knowledge is seen as the cornerstone of teachers' professionalism and quality. (Lee, 2011) Having this in mind, Johnson and Golombek (2011) conclude that teacher professional development is a key to improve the quality of student learning and the ultimate goal of any educational enterprise.

In English Language Teaching (ELT) context, some scholars (Chan, 2011; Karimi, 2011; Kasi, 2011; Lee, 2011, Wati, 2011; Meng and Tajaroensuk, 2013) investigated various programs concerning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher professional development. They examined several effective approaches to teachers' involvement in professional development programs such as seminars, pre-service teachers programs, teachers training programs, workshops and other

similar activities. Their findings suggest that it is necessary for the teachers, as professionals, to keep updated and at least to maintain their professionalism in responding to new educational paradigms and trends.

### **Conclusion**

To sum up, educational reforms, continuous professional development are the phenomena that teachers of foreign languages have to train/update themselves in professional development programs such as seminars, pre-service teachers programs, teachers training programs, workshops and other similar activities. If the profession of a teacher of foreign languages is to provide high-quality teaching to students, it is necessary to keep up with the times, with the growing needs of modern society, it is necessary to maintain a high quality of training for teachers of foreign languages.

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