Professional Development

Fourth Grade Students

2022-2023

Professional Development: An overview

- The use of this term was noted by University of Management and Technology from 1857

- In the training of school staff in the United States, "[t]he need for professional development ... came to the forefront in the 1960s".

Professional Development: An overview

Professional development is learning to earn or maintain professional credentials such as academic degrees to formal coursework, attending conferences, in addition to the informal learning opportunities situated in practice. It has been described as intensive and collaborative, ideally incorporating an evaluative stage.

Professional Development: An overview

Simply, Professional Development (PD) is a means of supporting people in the workplace to understand

- more about the environment in which they work,

- the job they do and

- how to do it better.

Therefore, PD is an ongoing process throughout one's working lives.

Professional Development: An overview

Professional development opportunities provide a means whereby someone can:

- keep in touch with the changes,

- broaden his/her skills, and

- be more effective in his/her work.

Professional Development: An overview

Accordingly, PD can be a part of individual's personal ambition to be a better practitioner, enhance his/her career prospects or to simply feel more confident about their work and make it more personally fulfilling.

It can be a step, on the ladder, to higher qualifications or enhanced job prospects or be required by professional bodies to maintain professional status.

- It can be part of meeting targets set by workforce performance management schemes or an opportunity for individuals to change their career paths.

Professional Development: An overview

There is a variety of approaches to professional development, including consultation, coaching, communities of practice, lesson study, mentoring, reflective supervision and technical assistance.

Professional development programs can give you the chance to expand your professional skills while giving you exposure to other aspects of your chosen field.

Professional Development: An overview

Professional development refers to the continued training and education of an individual in regards to his/ her career. The goal of professional development is to keep you up-to-date on current trends as well as help you develop new skills for the purpose of advancement in the field.

Professional Development: An overview

Some professions actually require professional development in order to renew certification or licensure and ensure employees are up to standard. However, you can typically pursue professional development on your own through programs offered by educational institutions, professional organizations, or even your own employer.

Professional Development: An overview

Each program is unique and can vary depending on the subject matter and type of training. Generally, professional development is delivered in a classroom setting. However, your program can incorporate different learning methods depending on the needs of your job. Some professional development programs require you to participate in applied work experiences as part of the curriculum. Others may have you attending workshops or seminars. Some programs actually pair you with a mentor to give you one-on-one instruction during their duration.

Professional Development: An overview

Computer skills, customer service, budgeting, and project management are just a handful of subjects available. Professional development topics can also be specialized depending on one' profession, whether it is in law, education, the healthcare field, or the service industry. For example, as a teacher, you may be focusing on new ways to utilize technology in your teaching methods.

Professional Development: An overview

Program length can also vary widely but, is typically designed around attaining a certain number of instructional hours. For example, more extensive programs may have you commit to several training sessions a week for up to 48 weeks. Other types of professional development, such as workshops and seminars, might be completed in a matter of days.

Usually, these training periods are completed after work-hours, but sometimes they may be factored into the workday itself.

Professional Development: An overview

Professional development opportunities can range from a single workshop to a semester-long academic course, to services offered by a medley of different professional development providers and varying widely with respect to the philosophy, content, and format of the learning experiences. Some examples of approaches to professional development include:

Professional Development: An overview

- Many colleges and institutions offer professional development courses totally online or in blended formats that combine online instruction with classroom settings. Online courses offer increased convenience, as you may be able to complete your coursework whenever you want and take your time going through the material.

- However, even if the material is presented entirely online, there may still be synchronous course requirements, such as video conferences or assignments, depending on the program.

Professional Development: An overview

A wide variety of people, such as teachers, military officers, health care professionals, lawyers, accountants and engineers engage in professional development. Individuals may participate in professional development because of an interest in lifelong learning, a sense of moral obligation, to maintain and improve professional competence, to enhance career progression, to keep abreast of new technology and practices, or to comply with professional regulatory requirements.

Professional Development: An overview

Professional development credits are named differently. For example:

Continuing Renewal Units (CRUs),

 Professional Development Points (PDPs);

 Professional Learning Units (PLUs).

For example: American and Canadian nurses, as well as those in the United Kingdom, have to participate in formal and informal professional development (earning credit based on attendance of education that has been accredited by a regulatory agency) in order to maintain professional registration.

Professional Development: An overview

In a broad sense, professional development may include *formal* types of vocational education, typically post-secondary or poly-technical training leading to qualification or credential required to obtain or retain employment.

Professional development may also come in the form of pre-service or in-service professional development programs. These programs may be formal, or informal, group or individualized.

Professional Development: An overview

Individuals may pursue professional development independently, or programs may be offered by human resource departments. Professional development on the job may develop or enhance process skills, sometimes referred to as leadership skills, as well as task skills. Some examples for process skills are 'effectiveness skills', 'team functioning skills', and 'systems thinking skills'

Professional Development: An overview

Leadership Skills

They are the strengths and abilities individuals demonstrate that help to oversee processes, guide initiatives and leads their employees toward the achievement of goals.

Leadership skills are an essential component in positioning executives to make thoughtful decisions about their organization's mission and goals, and properly allocate resources to achieve those directives. Valuable leadership skills include the ability to delegate, inspire and communicate effectively, honesty, confidence, commitment and creativity.

Professional Development: An overview

Process skills

The process skills are ways of thinking about and interacting with materials and phenomena that can lead to an understanding of new scientific ideas and concepts. By using these skills, students can gather information, test their ideas, and construct scientific explanations of the world.

For example:

communicating, classifying, measuring, inferring, and predicting …

Professional Development: An overview

Task skills

are a range of general skills that are important in order to be able to successfully complete many common tasks found in most work environments.

- Practical skills: Uses equipment, tools or technology…

- Computer skills: Confidently uses a computer to related devices.

Professional Development: An overview

'effectiveness skills

Effectiveness is the ability to demonstrate respect, dignity and integrity in interpersonal relationships and to demonstrate positive personal coping and wellness strategies.

Professional Development: An overview

Team Functioning skills:

Valued skills for most jobs for it requires self to work with others in the form of a team or group.

The better you work with others, the more successful your team will be in achieving their goals. Employees often need to collaborate or work with others to complete tasks and projects. Having teamwork skills and experience will make it a much better experience for everyone in the team.

Professional Development: An overview

System Thinking Skills:

1. Exploring boundaries – understanding the inclusion, exclusion and marginalization of stakeholders and the issues that concern them.

2. Appreciating multiple perspectives – how and why stakeholders frame issues in different ways.

3. Understanding relationships – networks of interconnections within and across systems.

4. Thinking in terms of systems themselves – organised wholes with properties that cannot be anticipated by analysing any one part of the system in isolation.

Professional Development: An overview

Examples of approaches to professional development

- **Case Study Method**: The case method is a teaching approach that consists in presenting the students with a case, putting them in the role of a decision maker facing a problem.

- **Consultation**: to assist an individual or group of individuals to clarify and address immediate concerns by following a systematic problem-solving process.

- **Coaching**: to enhance a person's competencies in a specific skill area by providing a process of observation, reflection, and action.

- **Communities of Practice**: to improve professional practice by engaging in shared inquiry and learning with people who have a common goal.

Professional Development: An overview

- **Lesson Study** – to solve practical dilemmas related to intervention or instruction through participation with other professionals in systematically examining practice

- **Mentoring** – to promote an individual's awareness and refinement of his or her own professional development by providing and recommending structured opportunities for reflection and observation

- **Reflective Supervision** – to support, develop, and ultimately evaluate the performance of employees through a process of inquiry that encourages their understanding and articulation of the rationale for their own practices

- **Technical Assistance** – to assist individuals and their organization to improve by offering resources and information, supporting networking and change efforts.

Professionalism in Teaching

In the working world, one's professionalism involves the way an individual carries him/herself, his/her attitude and the ways he/she communicate with others.

Professionalism is *skill* or *behavior* that goes beyond what an ordinary person would have or behaving in a more formal way.

For example: a teacher who shows the different skills to present his lesson.

What is *professionalism* in *teaching*?

Teacher professionalism is defined as the *knowledge*, *skills*, and *practices* that teachers must have in order to be effective educators.

The Concept of '*Professionalism*'

The term 'profession' and 'professor' have their etymological roots in Latin for 'profess'. To be a professional or a professor needs to be an expert in some field or skill of knowledge.

Professionalism is related to improvement in the quality of service.

Some others view professionalism as a concept to mean a multi-dimensional structure consisting of one's attitudes and behaviour towards his/her job and it refers to the achievement of high level standards.

If we synthesize the definitions up to now, it is possible to interpret professionalism as a multidimensional structure of one's work behaviour and attitudes to perform the highest standards and improve the service quality.

'Professionalism' vs. 'Professionalization'

These two concepts accompany each other in scholarly discourses, therefore, it would be useful to mention the distinction between them:

'*professionalism*' focuses on the question of what qualifications and acquired capacities, what competences is required for a successful exercise of an occupation.

'*Professionalization*' is concerned with promoting the material and ideal interests of an occupational group. So it includes the 'attempt to gain professional associated with professions'.

Professionalism in Teaching

The Importance of Professional Development in Teaching/ Learning Process

The school is a place of learning for both the student and adults. Professional development increases the knowledge and practices of the adults and results in skills transfer between adults and students. Students come to the classroom with a range of ability and skill levels. Some students may be high, low, or average achievers when it comes to learning, but there is still a need to address these multiple learning levels. Access to high-quality and continuous professional development gives teachers the tools to enhance their teaching and impact students at all achievement levels.

When educators are able to learn, their students learn more. Continuous professional development adds new knowledge to the teacher's skill set and deepens the competency of the areas where the teacher is already productive. In order to enhance professional development and the betterment of teachers and their skills, it is important to analyse the keys to improving teacher professional development. Realizing how to improve teacher professional development will not only improve the teacher but the student as well.

Keys to Improving Teacher Professional Development

Self improvement is continuous for teachers and their professional development needs. The result of professional learning benefits the teacher and students in multiple areas including curriculum and instruction, differentiation, and self-reflection. Effective professional development enhances the teacher's skills and adds value to the school as a whole. When it comes to the growth and development of teachers there needs to be a system of feedback, team collaboration, and personal and professional growth goals. Teacher professional development supports active learning, collaboration with peers, and models best practices in the field. Knowing this highlights the importance of professional development, but also the keys to improving teacher professional development.

Different Perspectives on Professionalism in Teaching

On educational context, it is possible to say that definitions of professionalism in teaching focuses on teachers professional qualifications such as 'being good at his/her job', 'fulfil the highest standard', and 'achieving excellence'. For example for today's teachers, professionalism is interpreted in terms of:

- what extent the teacher overcomes difficulties and

- to what extent they are able to use their skills and experiences related to the profession.

On the most basic level, professional teacher refers to the status of a person who represents the best in the profession and set the highest standards.

professionalism in teaching is enhanced when teacher use excellence as a critical criterion for judging their actions and attitudes. In other words professionalism in teaching is measured by the best and the highest standards.

New understanding of teacher professionalism provides professional space and conditions for the teachers to take responsibility in their practice. This transition from old to new understanding is called as 'transformative professionalism'.

This approach, to professionalism in teaching, can be interpreted as an attempt to revitalize the concept in a rapidly changing work environment.

professionalism in teaching issue is considered as a social and political strategy to promote the status of teaching profession. This approach is alternative and contemporary one when compared to traditional approach. The development of professionalism in teaching, as passing through four historical phases in many countries, is analysed and summarized as follows:

(1)The Pre-Professional Age: In this age, teaching was managerially demanding but technically simple so the teachers were only expected to carryout the directives of their knowledgeable superiors.

(2) The Autonomous Professional Age: This phase was remarked by a challenge to the singularity of teaching and the unquestioned traditions on which it is based. "Autonomy" was considered as an important component of teaching profession. The principle that teachers had the right to choose the methods they thought best for their students was questioned, also here teacher gained a considerable pedagogical freedom.

(3) The Collegial Professional Age: This phase draw attention with the increasing efforts to create strong professional cultures of collaboration to develop common purpose, to cope with uncertainty and complexity and to response the rapid changes and reforms effectively.

(4) The Post-Professional Age: This phase is marked by a struggle between forces and groups intent to de-professionalizing the work of teaching, and other forces and groups who are seeking to re-define teacher professionalism and professional learning in more positive and principled post-modern ways that are flexible, wide-ranging and inclusive in nature.

Q/ State on the following statements, with reference to professional development, stated by teachers teaching in school or educational institutions.

1. 'I am a good English language teacher and the demand for top-quality teaching is high – but nothing stands still, the bar keeps going up, and my skills have to keep improving.'
2. 'I am a qualified English teacher, and I just started a job at a secondary school in my country, but my English isn't good enough. I need to be able to improve both my English and my teaching skills in English.'
3. 'I graduated from the Faculty of Economics at my university, and now I am employed to teach English because I speak excellent English, but I need to get some professional training specific to teaching English to help me with doing my job.

Critical Element of Professionalism in Teaching

It is advocated that to develop a strong sense of professionalism in teaching a teacher must teach and focus on the critical element of *attitude*, *behaviour* and *communication* as these area can help any teacher to develop a stronger sense of professionalism.

Attitude

 A positive attitude is essential component of professionalism. Teachers should not let their personal life interfere with their professional attitude even when beginning with the simplest level. Therefore, when having a bad day, a teacher still needs to maintain a positive attitude and not to take a bad experience further to indulge with professional handlings.

It is important for teachers to push away outside concerns or distractors and focus on the task in hand. For example in profession of teaching a teacher should not let negative experience spill over to the teaching environment.

Behaviour

This is associated with professionalism and clarified as:

The way the teacher performs his/her role in the process of teaching. A teacher needs to be prepared to teach the content of their lessons, as well as be prepared with the proper materials and resources. Therefore, teachers need to be prepared every time they enter the classroom.

Communication

Numerous aspects of communication impact professionalism in teaching-learning. Among these are collaboration, cooperation, support and encouragement and participation in teaching-learning communities, as well as basic modelling of proper language usage.

"Building good and strong relationships is a part of being professional and hence advocate professionalism in teaching."

Core Attributes of Professionalism in Teachings

Professionalism in teaching has a soul composed of many component skills. This combination as a whole is known as core attributes of professionalism in teaching. These attributes are as follows:

(a)   Competence;

 (b) Compassion;

 (c) Insightful and self-aware;

 (d) Commitment;

(e) Confidentiality;

 (f) Altruism;

 (g) Morality and ethics;

(h) Teamwork;   (i) Responsibility to profession; and

(j) Responsibility to society.

Barriers in Professionalism Promotion in Teaching

Professionalism in teaching can be stopped anytime in presence of some obstacle to its path such as:

(1) Absence of personal virtues such as patience, determination, courage in a professional.

(2) Lack of subject and pedagogical knowledge.

(3) Bound to classroom limit.

 (4) Non-commitment to change and continuous improvement.

Professionalism in Teacher Education Programs

In teacher education literature, most of the definitions agree that a professional demonstrates behaviour which portray the knowledge and skills of the profession. Thus, professionalism is defined as "an ideal to which individuals and occupational groups aspire, in order to distinguish themselves from other workers" a professional also "exercises discretion in making decisions within the scope of their expertise, and they assume some authority for their own professional development".

Professionalism in Teacher Education Programs

What is consistent in the relevant literature is that professionals are expected to have specific knowledge which they utilize to make sound judgments, specialized training, characteristics that are unique to their field, and standards to which they are accountable.

professionalism is divided into the three categories;

1) professional parameters,

2) professional behaviours, and

3) professional responsibilities.

1- **Professional parameters** focus on the legal and ethical issues to which a professional must adhere such as the local, state laws related to educational and instructional issues

2- **Professional behaviours** are observable actions that demonstrate the individual's appropriate behaviours such as: maintaining appropriate relationships with students, parents, and colleagues; acceptable appearance and attitudes such as a belief that all students can learn.

3- **Professional responsibilities** for a teacher would include demonstrating responsibility to the profession, students, the school district, the community. Examples of professional responsibility would include becoming an active member of one's professional association, volunteering for school or community functions and attending school events.

Particular focus should be given for the defining of professionalism in teacher education programs to Professional Responsibilities which involves certain subsets like:

a.   Reflecting on Teaching;

b. maintaining Accurate Records;

 c. Communicating with Families;

d. Participating in the Professional Community;

 e. Growing and Developing Professionally; and

 f. Showing Professionalism.

These components are further broken down into "indicators" of the fulfilment of professional responsibilities.

Reflecting on Teaching:

- articulates an understanding of lessons' goals and objectives,

- states the strengths and weaknesses of lessons based on data,

- analyzes students' participation in terms of content comprehension,

- encourages participation from diverse students' populations,

- writes reflections about lessons and refines subsequent instruction,

- accepts feedback and implements recommendations,

- develops written plans for improvement.

Maintaining Accurate Records:

- records and updates the results of students' assignments,

- collects information about students' progress in a systematic manner,

- analyzes performance of students with diverse learning styles,

- maintains records of non-instructional activities.

Communicating with Families :

- maintains confidentiality in all situations/settings

- communicates positive information and concerns to parents,

- engages family members/caregivers in the instructional program

Working in and Contributing to the School and District

- establishes rapport with members of diverse populations,

- seeks assistance from other professionals concerning teaching and learning,

- participates in school-related activities.

Growing and Developing Professionally :

- participates in student teaching seminars and other required university events,

 - attends all required school and district professional development programs,

-shows evidence of participation in at least one professional organization,

- integrates information from professional publications into daily instruction,

 - articulates a philosophy of education that includes critical self-reflection,

 - assesses personal cultural perspective and its influence on interactions with others.

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Showing Professionalism
 - attends promptly and regularly,
 - dresses professionally in the school setting
- completes schedules, assignments, and other paperwork on time,
- completes work in the manner prescribed by the university and/or the school district,
- complies with school and class rules,
- uses relevant codes of ethics for the teaching profession,
- follows proper procedures for reporting students' welfare and safety,
- acts responsibly regarding school and personal property,
- challenges stereotypical attitudes,
- ensures that all students receive an equitable opportunity to succeed.

- ***The Quality of a professional Teacher***

Being a professional teacher is extremely important, and a good teacher is someone when a student will remember him/her in the rest of their lives. Teaching profession is considered the noblest profession ever. But what really makes a professional teacher?

- Dedication and passion,
- Wide knowledge on the subject,
- Patience and a calm behavior,
- Skill to interact with students,
- Creative in teaching,
- Be punctual,
- Be positive…etc.

- Understanding,
- Good communication skill,
- Being a model for the students,
- Leadership and encouragement,
- Involved in extra,
- well dressed,

Being professional can ensure:

• a positive first impression,

• successful interpersonal relationships and,

• a lasting reputation within your institution or organization.

Effective Teacher Professional Development

Teacher professional learning is of increasing interest as a critical way to support the increasingly complex skills students need to learn in order to succeed in the 21st century. Sophisticated forms of teaching are needed to develop student competencies such as deep mastery of challenging content, critical thinking, complex problem solving, effective communication and collaboration, and self-direction. In turn, effective professional development is needed to help teachers learn and refine the instructional strategies required to teach these skills.

However, research has noted that many professional development initiatives appear ineffective in supporting changes in teachers' practices and student learning. Accordingly, the features of effective professional development are set out and effective professional development is defined as structured professional learning that results in changes to teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes.

Elements of Effective Professional Development

There are seven widely shared features of effective professional development:

1. Is content focused,

2. Incorporates active learning utilizing adult learning theory,

3. Supports collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts,

4. Uses models and modeling of effective practice,

 5. Provides coaching and expert support,

 6. Offers opportunities for feedback and reflection,

7. Is of sustained duration

Content Focus

Professional development that focuses on teaching strategies associated with specific curriculum content supports teacher learning within their classroom contexts.

Active Learning

This provides teachers with opportunities to get hands-on experience designing and practicing new teaching strategies. In professional development models featuring active learning, teachers often participate in the same style of learning they are designing for their students, using real examples of curriculum, student work, and instruction.

Collaboration

High-quality professional development creates space for teachers to share ideas and collaborate in their learning, often in job-embedded contexts that relate new instructional strategies to teachers' students and classrooms. By working collaboratively, teachers can create communities that positively change the culture and instruction of their entire grade level, department, and or school. "Collaboration" can span a host of configurations—from one-on-one or small group collaboration to schoolwide collaboration to collaboration with other professionals beyond the school.

Use of Models and Modeling

Curricular models and modeling of instruction provide teachers with a clear vision of what best practices look like. Teachers may view models that include lesson plans, unit plans, sample student work, observations of peer teachers, and video or written cases of accomplished teaching.

Coaching and Expert Support

Coaching and expert support involve the sharing of expertise about content and practice focused directly on teachers' individual needs. Experts may share their specialized knowledge as one-on-one coaches in the classroom, as facilitators of group workshops, or as remote mentors using technology to communicate with educators. They may include master teachers or coaches based in universities or professional development organizations.

Feedback and Reflection

High-quality professional learning frequently provides built-in time for teachers to think about, receive input on, and make changes to their practice by facilitating reflection and requesting feedback. Feedback may be offered as teachers analyze lesson plans, demonstration lessons, or videos of teacher instruction, which also provide opportunities for reflection about what might be refined or retained and reinforced. These activities are frequently undertaken in the context of a coaching session or workshop but may also occur among peers.

Sustained Duration

Effective professional development provides teachers with adequate time to learn, practice, implement, and reflect upon new strategies that facilitate changes in their practice. As a result, strong professional development initiatives typically engage teachers in learning over weeks, months, or even academic years, rather than in short, one-off workshops.

Putting It All Together

Previous researches on effective professional learning incorporates most or all of these elements. Well-designed professional learning communities can integrate these elements to support teacher learning resulting in student learning gains. This collaborative professional development can enable widespread improvement within and beyond the school level.

Creating Conditions for Effective Professional Development

The quality of a professional development initiative's implementation has implications for its overall effectiveness in enhancing teacher practice and improving student learning. Researchers have found that willing teachers are sometimes unable to implement professional development practices due to obstacles that are beyond their control. Even the best-designed professional development may fail to produce desired outcomes if it is poorly implemented due to barriers such as:

1- inadequate resources, including necessary curriculum materials;

2- lack of a shared vision about what high-quality instruction entails;

3- lack of time for implementing new instructional approaches during the school day or year;

4- failure to align state and local policies toward a coherent set of instructional practices;

5- dysfunctional school cultures; and

6- inability to track and assess the quality of professional development.

Implementing professional development well also requires responsiveness to the specific needs of teachers and learners, and to the school and contexts in which teaching, and learning will take place. These types of common obstacles to professional development should be anticipated and planned for during both the design and implementation phases of professional development.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Policy can help and support the kind of professional development described. For example:

1. Policymakers could adopt standards for professional development to guide the design, evaluation, and funding of professional learning provided to educators. These standards might reflect the features of effective professional learning, as well as standards for implementation.

2. Policymakers and administrators could evaluate and redesign the use of time and school schedules to increase opportunities for professional learning and collaboration, including participation in professional learning communities, peer coaching and observations across classrooms, and collaborative planning.

3. States, governorates, and schools could regularly conduct needs assessments using data from staff surveys to identify areas of professional learning most needed and desired by educators. Data from these sources can help ensure that professional learning is not disconnected from practice and supports the areas of knowledge and skills educators want to develop.

4. State and governorates administrators could identify and develop expert teachers as mentors and coaches to support learning in their particular area(s) of expertise for other educators.

5. States and governorates can integrate professional learning into their school improvement initiatives, such as efforts to implement new learning standards, use student data to inform instruction, improve student literacy, increase student access to advanced coursework, and create a positive and inclusive learning environment.

6. States and districts can provide technology-facilitated opportunities for professional learning and coaching, using funding available to address the needs of rural communities and provide opportunities for intra district and intraschool collaboration.

7. Policymakers can provide flexible funding and continuing education units for learning opportunities that include sustained engagement in collaboration, mentoring, and coaching, as well as institutes, workshops, and seminars.

Well-designed and implemented professional development should be considered an essential component of a comprehensive system of teaching and learning that supports students to develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies they need to thrive in the 21st century. To ensure a coherent system that supports teachers across the entire professional continuum, professional learning should link to their experiences in preparation and induction, as well as to teaching standards and evaluation. It should also bridge to leadership opportunities to ensure a comprehensive system focused on the growth and development of teachers.

Professional Development for English Language Teachers

Ensuring that teachers have the right skills is the most important element in any programme aimed at raising standards of English. It is also the most difficult to get right, and education systems all over the world struggle to deliver effective teacher professional development programmes that lead to real improvements in students' learning. Successful professional development needs to place teachers' and students' needs at the heart of the process and to address a range of factors, at both the individual and context levels.

The Importance of English Language

Proficiency in English is a critical component of a successful modern society for English is the third most spoken and most widely taught language all over the world. It is commonly used in more than 100 countries by more than 300 million people as a first language and by over 600 million as a second language.

English language and its skills are necessary for any country to fully take benefit from global commerce; access the latest science, technology, and innovation; and utilize influence in the world.

Main drivers for the global role of English

The main drivers for learning English are education, employment and social mobility – factors which are inter-connected. The internationalization of universities has been a key driver behind the increased role of English in a globalized world. This trend is reflected in universities attracting foreign students and faculty and in the creation of global universities with campuses located around the world. It has been fuelled by the need to prepare students for an international context, to provide students and faculty with better access to research and development opportunities, and to attract foreign students and faculty. Improving English language skills has been a key consideration in this trend of the globalization of universities.

Globalisation of the workplace is a further driving force behind the growing role of English as a global language of communication. In the workplace, English is often seen as allowing access to global markets and the international business world and is viewed as critical to the financial success of companies with aspirations of international reach.

The Reality of English language learners

Despite the priority given to developing English language skills in education reform projects, the reality is that learning outcomes in English are often surprisingly poor.

This is particularly concerning, as it limits opportunities for progression and future employment in the global workplace, and for building communication and innovation globally. English language learners need to be supported, therefore, to achieve an adequate level of English through long-term, effective education policies which focus on high-quality teaching as the prerequisite of effective learning.

The Reality of English language Teachers

Quality of teaching is the single most important factor which contributes to changes in student learning. In many contexts there is a major need for initial teacher training to increase the available teacher resource, as well as in-service professional development for teachers in ever-demanding teaching roles. However, there are key realities which undermine English language teaching in many national contexts.

Limited subject-specific training

the supply of trained English language teachers fails to meet demand, teachers who have some command of English are often given responsibility for English language teaching. They may also be asked to teach their own subject in English. In both cases, they understandably lack the key skills needed to support the developing language learner. Experienced English language teachers who have only taught at secondary/high school may also have new professional development needs, such as experience with the methodology to teach young learners English. Support is needed, therefore, to equip teachers with these new professional demands.

Teachers' low level of English

Many countries worldwide are experiencing a massive shortage of trained English language teachers who speak English at least at an operational level, partly due to shortcomings of teacher training and partly due to the fact that those who are proficient in English are less likely to work in education, as more lucrative jobs from the private sector are often more attractive.

There is increasing awareness of the gap between the language level that Ministries of Education want their teachers to have and the existing reality; there is also increasing awareness of the need to upskill teachers in English, as well as in language teaching methodology. Despite efforts, however, many English language teachers, especially in developing countries and in schools in rural areas, do not speak English at an operational level. Their poor language skills and lack of access to appropriate professional development make it difficult to create an effective learning environment for their students.

Ineffective learning environment

Teachers' low level of English often leads to a tendency to use the learners' mother tongue in classes, thus limiting the amount and quality of English input, which is essential for developing learners' English skills. As a result, they tend to create teacher-dominated classroom environments, as this approach allows teachers with limited English proficiency to avoid being pushed out of their linguistic comfort zone25.

Teachers' limited English proficiency also limits opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful communication, since the activities chosen by teachers are often drilling of grammar rules, memorising vocabulary in isolation, and reading aloud, which do not give learners opportunities to use English communicatively. Such an approach positions English as a subject to be taught about, rather than a language to function in.