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EFL teacher professional development as transformative change

Problem Statement: Teacher professional development is a milestone of Ukraine's education reform. Present-day EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Ukrainian teachers are limited to consuming innovation from abroad whose universality replaces Ukraine's specific search for raising the nation of English-language users with impersonal adaptation. At issue there is the claim that transformative change in Ukraine's EFL teacher professional development deserves explicit attention.

Barriers to EFL teacher professional development: Innovative ideas with regard to EFL teaching are of global concern. Similar to Ukrainian teachers, teachers worldwide are constrained by top-down decision-making, lack of ownership with regard to the professional development process and its outcomes, lack of access to professional development opportunities, standardized attitudes to professional development, and insufficient acknowledgement of teachers' unique learning characteristics [2]. Investing their own resources in professional development, enthusiastic teachers expect from their training activities utilization of adult learning principles, varied exposures to new methodologies, and supportive attitudes to application of new skills [5], on the one hand, and a new understanding of links between professional development and daily teacher performance [4], on the other. EFL teachers like attending workshops and webinars in search of innovative teaching provided by experts, but they may also gain from regular visits to one another's classrooms for feedback and assistance [3]. Current underdeveloped school-based professional development networks [6] prevent enthusiastic and motivated teachers from acquiring their own voice to meet their needs of fulfillment and job satisfaction.

In the Ukrainian context, time constraints, modest financial resources, top-down standards, poor encouragement, sporadic implementation of the growth-driven approach to teachers' needs as learners, a low prestige of teaching as profession, and ineffective societal support are barriers to encouraging EFL teachers' transformative change.

EFL teacher performance orientated to transformative change: Ukraine's EFL teacher professional development as long-time transformative change has nothing to do with adaptation and borrowing teaching practices from the outside. No breakthrough can be achieved without evaluating the unifying lingua franca context and strategic views of expected outcomes. As an independent state with deeply rooted heterogeneous cultures Ukraine needs to launch a strategic movement towards nurturing English-language users who can be integrated as equals into the rest of the world. Hence, Ukraine's EFL teachers need to be certified not only to work in Ukraine but also abroad. Although such programs are available, their costs are high enough for many teachers. Ukraine's EFL teachers need possibilities to conscientiously develop their potential at home; novice teachers have thoughts of leaving the profession for better rewards. Transformative change is promoted by enthusiastic and motivated EFL teachers who are active agents of change capable of fulfilling such goals: (1) collaborative teacher learning within a school-based professional development network; (2) acknowledgment of the right of EFL teachers to Individual choices that are in harmony with their worldview, teaching interests, personal identity, and professional honesty; (3) support of teachers' unique personalities capable of advancing and maintaining their individual voice of independent thinking.

(1) Collaborative school-based professional development network: The practice of classroom observation can be developed among those EFL teachers who work in parallels. The advantages of interconnectedness are many, including project work and thematic holidays arranged for the entire class, development of collectively elaborated context-oriented programs, and sharing individual experiences, simultaneously establishing effective principles of discussion culture and feedback. Formation of school-based EFL teacher's school-based networks is well supported by individual teachers' blogs that serve as platforms

to implement open-door teaching practices (see, for example, this author's blog on <https://liashenkoinnovation.blogspot.com>). **(2) Discussion culture as reflection on teachers' voices:** EFL teachers due to their profession are used to being involved in diverse cultures, so they are aware of their own voice which they want to maintain. Discussion culture provides EFL teachers with reflection on innovative technologies, which can be strengthened by exchange of experience and self-initiated master classes. **(3) Encouragement of life-long professional development:** EFL teachers need to go public through their talking-shop writing [1] in order not to be afraid of internal critics and to formulate their voice's achievement and fulfillment.

To sum up, a menu of alternatives within the framework of teacher transformative change involves experimenting with best EFL practices by tailoring them to the teacher's needs of self-fulfillment and personal growth. In this, teachers are always active agents.

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