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### **CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH TEACHING FRAMEWORK AS A MEANS FOR CONSISTENT LANGUAGE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **ABSTRACT**

*The paper concerns an important issue of language teachers' professional development, namely its consistent, logical and effective organization and implementation which is especially urgent in view of new professional development policy that is being introduced in developing countries, a so-called "accumulative system of professional development hours/credits". Due to it teachers received more freedom in selection of professional development forms, activities, places but frequently they chaotically choose available professional development forms without thorough consideration of their effectiveness and usefulness. It has been defined that teachers need some direction to move on their development. In this respect special attention should be paid to Cambridge University which has elaborated Cambridge English Teaching Framework (CETF) according to which teachers' professional development organization and consistent implementation is fulfilled. It outlines categories of teachers' professional development (Learning and Student; Teaching, Learning and Assessment; Language Abilities, Language Knowledge and its Awareness for Teaching; Professional Development and Values) and stages of their professionalism (Foundation, Developing, Proficient and Expert). It has been substantiated that this framework can be used by developing countries to optimize and rationalize language teachers' professional development.*

*Using this framework, teachers can determine the category and the stage of their current professional development and understand what their next goal in this process is. Besides, Cambridge University team has elaborated professional development activities for each category and stage organized into 4 groups: 1) methodical videos; 2) printed matter; 3) teachers' self-development such as search of new methods of teaching, attendance of conferences, seminars, webinars, downloading resources etc.; 4) enrolling into educational courses elaborated for each stage and level of professionalism.*

**Keywords:** language teacher, professional development, Cambridge University, Cambridge English Training Framework, category of teacher professional development, stage of teacher professionalism, language teaching.

#### **АНОТАЦІЯ**

*У статті розкрито проблему забезпечення послідовності, логічності та ефективності професійного розвитку вчителів-мовників, що є особливо актуальним з огляду на нову політику професійного розвитку вчителів, яка впроваджується у країнах, що розвиваються, так звану «накопичувальну систему годин/кредитів професійного розвитку (підвищення кваліфікації)». Завдяки їй вчителі отримали більшу свободу вибору видів, форм, місць здійснення професійного розвитку, проте часто вони хаотично вибирають наявні «зручні» форми професійного розвитку, не*



думаючи про їх ефективність і доцільність. Таким чином, сучасним вчителям потрібен вектор для здійснення якісного професійного зростання. З'ясовано, що значні напрацювання у цьому напрямі здійснено командою Кембриджського університету. Організація і послідовне впровадження професійного розвитку здійснюється відповідно з Cambridge English Teaching Framework (CETF) – своєрідного алгоритму професійного розвитку для вчителів-мовників, яким окреслено категорії професійного розвитку («Навчання та студенти», «Викладання, навчання, оцінювання», «Мовні здібності», «Знання мови та усвідомлення процесу викладання», «Професійний розвиток і цінності») та етапи цього процесу відповідно до рівня їх компетентності (вчитель-початківець, вчитель, який розвивається, досвідчений вчитель, вчитель-професіонал). З'ясовано, що цей алгоритм може бути використаний країнами, що розвиваються, для оптимізації та раціоналізації професійного розвитку вчителів. Таким чином, учителі можуть визначити власну категорію та етап професійного розвитку і окреслити подальші дії. Обґрунтовано практичні переваги використання алгоритму, які полягають у розроблених Командою Кембриджського університету формах професійного розвитку для кожної категорії та етапу, які можна умовно класифікувати за 4-ма групами: 1) методичні відео; 2) друковані джерела інформації; 3) самонавчання вчителів (ознайомлення з новими методиками викладання, відвідування конференцій, семінарів, вебінарів, завантаження ресурсів тощо); навчання на освітніх курсах Кембриджського університету.

**Ключові слова:** вчителі-мовники, професійний розвиток, Кембриджський університет, категорія професійного розвитку, етап професійного розвитку, викладання мови.

## INTRODUCTION

Modern approaches to organization and implementation of language teachers' professional development (PD) all around the world envision constant improvements and optimization. Accumulative system of teachers' PD that is widely spread in developed countries is becoming more and more common in developing countries. It presupposes teachers' freedom to choose a place, kinds, forms and subjects of in-service training; a unified approach to getting higher qualification and using in-service teachers' professional development programs which may also include participation in seminars, trainings, webinars, workshops in spite of their duration. The only condition is to get a definite number of credits/hours for a definite number of years. Thus, teachers have more freedom in terms of their PD planning and realization, in selection of PD activities according to their interests and needs but there appears a big problem – how to make this process logical, consistent, appropriate, so as not just to be in pursuit of collecting “hours/credits” but to organize this process accordingly and make it effective. It is quite clear that it is teachers' responsibility to plan, control and fulfill this process appropriately. But to do it teachers must have good analytical, critical, organizational and self-control skills but sometimes they really need help in logical and consistent realization of their PD. In this respect we have conducted a substantial research concerning ways of helping teachers in their PD.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

A lot of scientific papers and researches have been dedicated to different aspects of this issue. Problems of PD organization and fulfillment as well as provision of its effectiveness are highlighted in studies of D. Burke (2013), K. Connally (2016), L. Darling-Hammond (2017), L. Desimone (2013), M. Hyler (2017), M. Gardner (2017), M. Tooley (2016). New approaches to this process and policies concerning its realization are



considered in works of D. Burke (2013), L. Darling-Hammond (2011), L. Easton (2008), M. Fullan (2007), T. Ganser (2010), J. Margolis (2008), M. McLaughlin (2011). Substantial theoretical researches in teacher PD are carried out by M. Beisiegel (2013), H. Hill (2013), R. Jacob (2013) and others. Forms of teacher PD, its online (virtual) and face-to-face forms as well as individual and cooperative activities are described in scientific studies of W. Cajkler (2014), M. Cho (2013), J. Eberhardt (2013), M. Koehler (2013), M. Lundeberg (2013), T. McConnell (2013), J. Norton (2014), J. Parker (2013), D. Pedder (2014), G. Rathbun (2013), P. Wood (2014). Dependency between teacher PD and students' achievements is considered in works of S. Buczynski (2010), H. Ellsworth (2013), C. Hansen (2010), K. Meissel (2016), J. Parr (2016), S. Shaha (2013), H. Timperley (2016).

In terms of this issue special attention should be paid to the research of leading educational institutions, teacher professional organizations and state agencies of Europe and the USA. Thus, U.S. National Commission on Teaching and America's Workforce (2016) works out and elaborates policies and recommendations concerning teachers' activities, their improvements and lifelong PD. It has also been defined that Cambridge University is profoundly involved in theoretical research and practical implementation of teacher PD. In this respect it is necessary to mention the studies of Cambridge University team concerning teachers' PD that is carried out in accordance with Cambridge English Teaching Framework (CETF).

For the research we have used a range of general scientific methods (including study and analysis of reference, scientific educational print and on-line sources), as well as systematization and generalization. Our research is qualitative (descriptive) and includes observation, document analysis, and narrative inquiry.

#### **THE AIM OF THE STUDY**

The paper is aimed at studying the experience of Cambridge University in organization and consistent implementation of language teachers' PD in accordance with CETF that outlines categories of teachers' PD and the stages of their professionalism. The results of the research presented in the paper can be used by developing countries to optimize and rationalize language teachers' PD.

#### **RESULTS**

Cambridge University offers a number of resources, materials and qualifications for teachers to help them outline their own PD. CEFT is the core document that defines the categories of teachers' PD, so that they can understand what skills they possess, and stages of their professionalism. On defining their category and stage of PD teachers can understand where they are in their PD and what their next step is. Then they can outline activities and ways of moving to that next step.

According to CEFT there can be four stages of teachers' professionalism (from Foundation to Expert) and five categories of teaching skills necessary for effective teaching at each stage (Cambridge Assessment English, 2020). It is worth describing shortly the content of these categories to get acquainted with requirements to teachers' knowledge and skills in each category.

#### **Category 1. Learning and Students**

This category concerns basic theories of language learning and main languages concepts, understanding of different preferences in learning and ability to use this understanding for planning and promotion of language learning. This category provides conceptual and theoretical basis according to which teachers consciously or unconsciously develop professionally in terms of teaching and learning. It also includes teachers' knowledge of general learning theories (humanism, behaviorism, constructivism etc.), notion of motivation,



experimental learning, language perception and factors that influence it. Teachers finding themselves in this category must demonstrate practical application of language learning and teaching, theories of learning a second foreign language, classroom practice, language teaching approaches and methods (grammar-translation, communicative, task-based, audio-lingual etc.), understanding of students, their differences and educational contexts (beginner/advanced, child/adult, monolingual/multilingual) (Buczynski & Hansen, 2010).

### **Category 2. Teaching, learning and assessment**

This category presupposes improvement of teachers' skills in planning and management of a language learning and effective use of educational resources, understanding of teaching as a process and teaching of language systems, as well as assessment of learning. This category is rather wide, and teachers' skills can be roughly divided into the following groups:

1) planning of language learning, lesson planning and main concepts and principles of this process (defining students' needs, setting goals, outlining difficulties, timing, selecting resources and materials, knowledge of interaction styles, differentiation of students etc.), elaborating, following and adapting samples of separate lessons or a series of lessons; practical demonstration of language learning and teaching in the process of planning in the classroom; understanding the importance of effective teaching for learning; ability to react appropriately to the course of a lesson and learners' feedback; planning courses with consideration of main organizational principles (needs' analysis, setting goals, consistency, evaluation, practical demonstration of language learning and teaching during the lesson and course planning that presupposes creative work even within the limits of a syllabus) (Burke, 2013).

2) using resources and materials, their selection, adaptation, supplementing and use on the basis of core principles for critical analysis in the process of using a course book and supplementary materials; practical demonstration of these principles for a certain course book or educational materials in a certain context to achieve desired learning outcomes; ability to improvise when certain materials, resources or technologies are limited, inaccessible or don't work; using learning tools and basic techniques that presuppose the use of a board, visuals, audio equipment as well as teaching techniques without these tools; using digital tools (interactive whiteboard, PowerPoint etc.); practical demonstration of ability to use all above mentioned effectively in a certain context for engagement and motivation of students; using digital resources; applying core concepts related to digital teaching or learning (blended learning, flipped classroom etc.), principles and techniques of using digital online resources if possible (digital videos, Moodle platform, podcasts, downloading tasks onto mobile devices etc.), practical skills of using computer, typing, Internet search, using social media etc. (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

3) language learning management skills: creating and maintaining constructive learning environment and student-based teaching, providing support, class management, keeping discipline, creating positive learning environment, motivating, engaging, keeping attention on the task, maintaining appropriate tempo, transition between stages of a lesson, feedback to students, using different patterns of cooperation (class, groups, pairs), understanding students' differences, their preferences and difficulties; practical application of this knowledge to achieve desired results of learning; arrangement and management of classroom kinds of activities (formats of work at the beginning and at the end of the lesson, giving instructions and checking, allocation of time for preparation, students' grouping, encouragement to cooperation and interaction, providing feedback to students concerning their oral speech (correction by a teacher, self-correction, peer correction) and written speech (drafts, peer checking, etc.) (Easton, 2008; Shasa & Ellsworth, 2013).



4) language systems teaching skills:

vocabulary teaching – core principles and techniques for introducing and practising vocabulary (creating context, drilling, revision, using visuals, concordances etc.), basic knowledge of corpus linguistics, notions of synonymy, antonyms, collocations etc., practical demonstration of these skills;

grammar teaching (core principles and techniques for introducing and practising grammar);

phonology teaching (core principles and techniques for introducing and practising phonology of oral and written speech, core notions for description of sounds, stress, discourse, intonation etc.);

discourse teaching (core principles and techniques for introducing genres, coherence, cohesion, speech acts, etc. and core terminology such as substitution, ellipsis, conjunction etc.) and practical demonstration of their use;

5) language skills teaching:

listening (pre-, while-, post-listening); understanding different genres, types of texts for listening, their purposes, students' difficulties; ability to select the necessary texts etc.;

speaking (correcting oral speech, understanding of different genres, types of speech, their functions, formality level, difference between oral and written speech, students' difficulties; ability to choose appropriate models and tasks; practical demonstration of these skills);

reading (understanding of different genres, types of texts, their functions, formality level, students' difficulties; ability to choose appropriate models and tasks, practical demonstration of these skills);

writing (knowledge of core principles of genres, types of texts, pre-/while-/post-writing tasks; giving feedback to students concerning their writing; knowledge of stages of writing; peer checking; drafting; levels of formality; understanding students' difficulties; ability to select appropriate models and tasks; practical demonstration of these skills) (Meissel et al., 2016).

**Category 3. Language abilities**

This category estimates teachers' understanding of language points that are studied at different levels of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Development at this category will improve teachers' ability to use language appropriately, precisely, communicating with students and other teachers. It presupposes ability to use English efficiently and appropriately in everyday life. This category concerns classroom language (introduction of a topic, instructions to tasks, class management, explaining in English, helping students, talking about their progress etc.), effective use of language for different situations and practical demonstration of teachers' ability to react accordingly to students' participation in classroom activities (answering their questions, correcting speech in planned and unplanned kinds of activities, spontaneous work) (Desimone, 2009). It also presupposes awareness of language models which demonstrate teachers' practical ability to provide exact language patterns. Teachers finding themselves at this category can recognize students' mistakes and practically demonstrate this recognition in class and in written home assignments, that is to be able to determine whether students' work is precise or it doesn't correspond to the given instructions and requirements. Teachers must be able to cooperate with other professionals in different contexts (in a staffroom, at the meetings, while planning lessons, attending seminars, conferences etc.). They must demonstrate practical application of these skills in terms of giving advice and suggestions to other teachers, talking to them, evaluating their lessons, taking part in face-to-face or online discussions.



#### **Category 4. Language knowledge and its awareness for teaching**

This category requires understanding of core terminology and concepts, which are used for language description, application of strategies for development of language awareness as well as ability to apply this knowledge in practice to promote language learning. This is a linguistic basis on which teachers develop their personal understanding of teaching and learning and play role in promoting classroom learning.

Language awareness is the ability to analyze oral and written speech, its forms, meanings at the level of a word, sentence, discourse; to plan and teach written speech; to analyze classroom language that is used by teachers and students; to demonstrate this ability and awareness of language learning and teaching in the process of planning in the classroom (Buszynski & Hansen, 2010; Ganser, 2010). This category of skills includes terminology for language description (its form, meaning, use, phonology at the level of a word, sentence, discourse) and ability to use reference materials – being aware of a number of available appropriate printed and digital resources for studying the form, meaning, use and pronunciation.

#### **Category 5. Professional development and values**

This category presupposes *theoretical and practical aspects of teachers' training* (observation in the classroom, professional development activities and critical reflection). Skills in this category are aimed at providing connection between existing knowledge and awareness of teachers, their current ability to use knowledge and awareness of classroom teaching as well as future aspirations. They also provide means for improving teachers' activities in classrooms, their professional satisfaction and their students' learning outcomes. These skills include classroom observation of different kinds (peer observation, self-observation, observation by a more experienced colleague, mentor etc.), recognition of the professional development importance, developing a habit of being in a pursuit of new opportunities for constructive feedback; learning and developing on the basis of such a feedback (Cambridge Assessment English, 2020; Fullan, 2007).

Teachers finding themselves in this category *reflect on teaching and learning* (know core notions and concepts related to teachers' learning (critical reflection, experimental practice, meta-cognition); reflect on and critically analyze current views on teaching and learning (especially those which contradict to good teaching practice or one's own experience of teaching); critically reflect on teaching and its free realization; develop a habit of constant reflection (while and after the lessons) and use these reflections as a basis for planning activities of one's own professional development; recognize the importance of students' feedback and evaluation; develop a habit of regular search of feedback and act according to its results to improve learning (Cajkler et al., 2014; Tooley & Connally, 2016; McConnell et al., 2013).

Teachers must be good at *planning one's own development*, be aware of a number of available options and means for professional development; recognize the importance of being aware of one's individual needs; develop a habit of evaluating one's own PD in terms of career aims and choose appropriate forms of PD (formal qualifications such as DELTA, TKT, CELTA, MA, courses, seminars, conferences, webinars, observations, readings etc.), actively participate in them to achieve one's aims.

*Teachers' research* is an essential part of this category and presupposes the knowledge of core notions and concepts related to teachers' researches (action research, experimental teaching, reflective practice, classroom research, formal research); recognition of teachers; research (formal or informal) which can improve teaching; realization of small scale non-formal teachers' researches aimed at learning and improvement of one's own teaching or that of colleagues (Cho & Rathbun, 2013; Darling-Gammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Hill et al., 2013).



**Team work and cooperation** presuppose understanding of the importance of team work and cooperation in teachers' professional life (teachers in different contexts often share classes, have to cooperate to plan lessons, exchange activities, events, materials); communication skills and cooperation with other teachers, students, supporting staff, administration; looking for help and support from others, providing advice and help to those who need it; promotion of effective team work and cooperation in favor of a personality, others, school, educational institution.

**Professional roles and responsibilities** – teachers must be aware of: their professional, social, moral responsibility in modern system of education; issues related to education, school administration (role of a teacher in an educational institution, concept of professionalism, professional behavior etc.); opportunities at a school/institution (being a mentor, senior teacher, head of a department etc.) and within a wider profession (attending conferences or joining a professional association); possibilities to contribute into school/institution effectively and actively search and take responsibility and roles according to one's interests, skills, level of development (National Commission on Teaching and America's Workforce, 2016; Margolis, 2008).

These are the categories which provide teachers' PD according to Cambridge English Teaching Framework. They are elaborated to help teachers to define where they are in their PD and help them and employers to understand what their further direction should be and what to do to achieve it. Each category shows skills of teachers in different stages of their PD from Foundation to Expert (table 1) (Cambridge Assessment English, 2020).

Table 1

**Stages of teachers' professionalism according to categories of PD**

Stages	Foundation	Developing	Proficient	Expert
Learning and students	Teachers have basic understanding of definite concepts related to language, demonstrate this understanding a little in the process of lesson planning and teaching	Teachers have good understanding of a number of concepts related to language, demonstrate some of this understanding in the process of lesson planning and teaching	Teachers have substantial understanding of definite concepts related to language, demonstrate this understanding frequently in the process of lesson planning and teaching	Teachers have profound understanding of concepts related to language, demonstrate this understanding constantly in the process of lesson planning and teaching
Teaching, learning and assessment	Teachers have basic understanding of some core principles of teaching, learning and assessment; can plan and deliver simple lessons with basic understanding of students' needs with the use of main teaching techniques; can use available tests and basic procedures of assessment to support and promote learning	Teachers have reasonable understanding of some core principles of teaching, learning and assessment; can plan and deliver lessons with good understanding of students' needs with the use of a number of teaching techniques; can create simple tests and some procedures of assessment to support and promote learning	Teachers have good understanding of core principles of teaching, learning and assessment; can plan and deliver detailed lessons with substantial understanding of students' needs with the use of a wide range of teaching techniques; can work out effective tests and use a range of assessment procedures to support and promote learning	Teachers have deep understanding of core principles of teaching, learning and assessment; can plan and deliver detailed and complicated lessons with thorough understanding of students' needs with the use of a substantial number of teaching techniques; can work out a wide range of effective tests and use individual procedures of assessment to support and promote learning



Continued

Stages	Foundation	Developing	Proficient	Expert
Language ability	Teachers provide good teaching of language at the levels A1 and A2, using basic language in the classroom, which is generally precise	Teachers provide good teaching of language at the levels A1 and A2 and B1, using language in the classroom, which is generally precise	Teachers provide good teaching of language at the levels A1-B2, using language in the classroom, which is consistently and permanently precise during the whole lesson	Teachers provide good teaching of language at the levels A1-C2, using a wide range of language in the classroom, which is precise during the whole lesson
Language knowledge and awareness	Teachers know some core terms to describe language, can answer students' simple questions with the help of reference materials	Teachers have reasonable knowledge of many core terms to describe language, can answer the majority of students' questions with the help of reference materials	Teachers have good knowledge of terms to describe language, can answer students' questions with the minimal help of reference materials	Teachers have deep knowledge of core terms to describe language, can answer students' questions in detail without reference materials
Professional development and values	Teachers can analyze lessons with the help of colleagues and learn from their feedback. They need help in self-evaluation of their own needs	Teachers can analyze lessons without help of colleagues and positively respond to colleagues' feedback. They can perform self-evaluation of their own needs and determine areas for improvement	Teachers can critically analyze lessons and actively look for colleagues' feedback. They can define their strong and weak teaching points and support other teachers.	Teachers can constantly critically analyze lessons, observe colleagues' work and are dedicated to professional development. They are well aware of their strong and weak points, actively support professional development of other teachers.

Using this framework, teachers can easily define the category of PD they are at and the stage of their professionalism (from foundation to expert), evaluate their accomplishments and see what their next stage presupposes and requires of them. One great advantage of Cambridge university online teacher PD is that using their official website teachers can find a number of activities for each category and stage which are organized into 4 groups: 1) methodical videos, 2) printed matter 3) teachers' self-work like search of new methods of teaching, attendance of conferences, seminars, webinars, downloading resources etc.; 4) enrolling into educational courses elaborated by experts of Cambridge University.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Thus, in the result of the research and thorough study of language teachers' PD offered by Cambridge University we have come to the conclusion that this process is consistent, logically organized and effective. Realization of PD in accordance with Cambridge English Training Framework is especially valuable for developing countries where a new accumulative system of PD has been recently introduced. Using this framework, teachers who have got complete freedom to select PD forms can do it in a logical, consistent, appropriate and effective way. They will be able to estimate their strong and weak points and have a number of suggested activities for moving to the next stage of their professionalism.

Still, to guarantee consistency of this process with CETF it is necessary to carry out further research of practical realization of this process in developing countries to see how suggested forms and activities of PD can promote teachers from one stage of their development to another one.



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