

**Published Date:- 18-10-2023**

**Professionalism and ELT (English language teaching)**

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**Abstract**

In this article, the concept of professionalism and its significance in language teaching are explained thoroughly. New trends and the ways to achieve professionalism are explained relying on both scholars' notions and contemporary pedagogical sphere.

**Key words:** professionalism, capabilities, competencies, internal, external factors, educational spheres.

**Абстракт**

В этой статье подробно объясняется понятие профессионализма и его значение в преподавании языка. Новые тенденции и пути достижения профессионализма объясняются с опорой как на представления ученых, так и на современную педагогическую сферу.

**Ключевые слова:** профессионализм, способности, компетенции, внутренние, внешние факторы, образовательная сфера.

**Abstrakt**

Ushbu maqolada, professionalizm tushunchasi va uning xorijiy tilni o`qitishdagi ahamiyati to`liqligicha yoritilgan. Professionallikka erishish yo`llari va yangi yo`nalishlari mutaxassislar fikri va zamonaviy pedagogikaga asoslanib tushuntirib berilgan.

**Kalit so`zlar:** professionalizm, qobiliyatlar, kompetensiya, ichki, tashqi faktlar, ta`limiy yo`nalishlar.

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**Introduction.** As far as the status of English is rising, there will be more needs and requirements for teachers in this field as new era of teaching is boosted with new perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and demands. It is, no doubt, contributing to these educators as well. However, at the present time, English Language Teaching (ELT) is highly demanding special knowledge that attained throughout academic study years as well as teaching experience. As long as English is perceived as a global language and lingua franca in most cases, it will be much more difficult to meet learners` needs and expectations by teachers in a global variety.

**Conception of Professionalism in teaching.** The term of professionalism is defined differently in these sources, but they can give us a clear understanding of it. It refers to the teaching profession which combines two notions like profession and professor as stated by Baggini (2005). It is supported by some traditional claims by Hoyle (1975) that professionalism is employed by many strategies oriented to boost status, get a high salary and good working conditions. Regarding this, professionalism indicates gained skills, qualifications, capabilities, and competencies demanded for successful employment. With reference to Hallinger & Liu (2016), professionalism is a continuous learning to enhance teaching occupation. According to these traditional and contemporary perspectives, becoming a professional in education does not include only intellectual knowledge of an individual, but instead, it covers more such as teaching skills, putting theory into practice, experience, professional dedication and to name a few examples.

**New trends in professionalism.** As time passes, new dimensions, tendencies and approaches are emerging in professionalism. Particularly, in this field new professional teaching positions are appearing, namely ESL (English as a Second Language), TESOL (Teaching English Speakers of Other Languages), and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) (Torres-Rocha, 2019). There was uncertainty to the quality, disciplinary basis, and standards of these programs at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, compared to that period, now, the status of these programs regained with the great

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contribution of English language teachers working in these fields. Particularly, the educators who are involved in this progress are perceived as a new model of professionalism as claimed by the president of TESOL, Nunan (1999). Now, EFL teachers are supposed to have expert subject matter knowledge, pedagogical skills, intense sense of professionalism, experiential knowledge in the field, solid understanding of political and social factors of ELT at both external and internal level (Nguyen, 2022, Coombe, 2018). I passionately believe that requirements and the span of professionalism can be broader than past years since human needs and expectations are reaching their peak.

**The role of professionalism in ELT.** The concept of professional teacher in language classes in line with contemporary education is connected to ELT practices and abilities, especially in three broad concepts such as moral, artistic, and accountable professionalism which give growth to both individuals and ELT field (Farmer, 2011). They refer to ethical expectations, being successful at even a difficult occupation, and experience, expertise and depth of knowledge, respectively. In addition, «ELT is by its nature is a global phenomenon» (Copley, 2022) and therefore, professionalism must consider some external pressures, namely neoliberal policies and globalization as argued by Phillipson (1992). Even though there are some hegemonic views on its connection and contribution to ELT or vice versa, Coombe (2018) suggests another transformative professionalism which is indicated as *Managerial professionalism* that includes goal-oriented, competency-based, and supportive pedagogy at the same time, attitudes, skills, and knowledge.

**Strategies to improve professionalism.** There are 6 major actions suggested by Coombe (2018), for instance, awareness of institutional and learners' community, time-management skills, learning from fellow experienced instructors, self-awareness of own weaknesses and strengths, communicative competence, body language, and being an active listener. ELT. There are following several ways that English language teachers can receive a guidance to reach their career

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advancement. Trying to experience different educational spheres like EGP, ESP, EOP, EAP and etc., observing both experienced and novice teachers' lessons, conducting evaluations on the course and even textbooks, raising passion about educating in new methods, supporting students and working collaboratively, and the last no least, self-criticism to conducting lessons in terms of meeting learners' needs, using different teaching aids, fairness in assessment, and facilitating learning atmosphere are all crucial strategies to follow (Copley, 2022, Coombe, 2018, Torres-Rocha, 2019).

**Core values in professional development.** Achieving career advancement and being accepted as professional is not so straightforward as it sounds. ELT teachers admit teaching as a long-term learning simultaneously demonstrates their dedication to core values of professional development. Whereas Nguyen (2022) explores by conducting surveys and analyzing findings. According to this, 5 core values are Responsibility, Integrity, Aspiration, Flexibility and Excellence all of which are accepted by teachers in progression. To put it another way, *excellence* comes together with growth and effort, *flexibility* relates to engagement to different research, *aspiration* is in connection with adherence to certain set of beliefs, *integrity* concerns about conformity for reciprocal learning and collaboration, and the last one is *responsibility* demonstrates social responsibility to educate young generation that are holders of future.

**Conclusion.** Professionalism is an ongoing process, and it develops, becomes more complicated and remains as a pressing topic as attitudes and demands toward teaching change over time. I have analyzed innovative approaches for professional development with versus of outdated one to illustrate how the meaning and focus of professionalism are changing. I can conclude professional improvement is needed in all areas, but in ELT, it must be updated accordingly with certain strategies and features. To be globally accepted and valuable, teachers are supposed to work on themselves and consider the significance of professionalism to build a successful career.

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