

# CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF NOVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS IN UZBEKISTAN: TOWARDS A CONTEXTUALISED MODEL

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## **Abstract**

Novice teachers often struggle to translate theoretical training into effective classroom practices, resulting in high stress, attrition, and stagnation in pedagogical growth. In transitional educational systems such as Uzbekistan, the need for well-designed CPD pathways is especially urgent. Drawing on local reform initiatives (e.g. DUET, PRESETT) and international research on teacher development, this paper proposes a contextualised model of CPD tailored to novice English teachers in Uzbekistan. After reviewing the literature on novice teacher development, mentoring, induction, and CPD transfer, the paper outlines key design principles and a phased CPD model. It discusses implementation challenges in Uzbekistan's institutional landscape and suggests a research agenda to evaluate long-term impact. The proposed model emphasises scaffolded mentoring, workplace learning, peer inquiry, emotional support, and adaptive evaluation.

**Keywords:** novice teachers; continuing professional development (CPD); induction; mentoring; language teaching; Uzbekistan.

## **Introduction**

Quality of instruction is widely acknowledged as a primary determinant of student learning outcomes. Yet the earliest years of teaching remain a vulnerable period: new teachers transition from theoretical preparation to real classroom demands, often without adequate support, and many leave within the first five years. In Uzbekistan, this challenge interacts with the legacy of Soviet-era teacher preparation, limited exposure to communicative language teaching, and structural constraints in school systems. The reforms in English teacher education—especially through DUET (in-service CPD) and PRESETT (pre-service curriculum renewal)—have sought to bridge the gap between theory and practice. However, there remains a pressing need to conceptualise CPD models that specifically address the developmental needs of novice English teachers in Uzbek schools.

This paper seeks to contribute to that gap by synthesising international theory and local reform contexts, articulating a model of CPD tailored for early-career English teachers in Uzbekistan. The goals are (1) to review the theory and research on novice teacher development and CPD transfer; (2) to situate challenges and affordances in the Uzbek context; (3) to propose a phased, contextualised CPD model; and (4) to discuss implications for policy, practice, and research.

## **Literature Review**

### **Novice Teacher Development**

Novice teachers face a steep learning curve as they attempt to translate their theoretical preparation into effective classroom enactment. Johnson and Birkeland (2003) describe novices as confronting uncertain terrains: classroom management, differentiation, pacing, assessment, and curricular pressure demand rapid adaptation. The first year (and first three years) often functions as a “teaching crucible,” shaping default practices and professional

identity (Almarza, 1996; Gatbonton, 2008). In the domain of language teaching, Gatbonton (2008) compared the pedagogical content knowledge of novice vs. experienced ESL teachers, finding that novices struggled particularly with managing student reactions, handling linguistic output, and procedural flexibility. Kang and Cheng (2013) studied the evolving cognition of a novice EFL teacher and showed that reflective sense-making, scaffolding, and gradual planning autonomy helped bridge cognition and practice.

Feiman-Nemser (2001) argues that effective development must enable novices to integrate theory and practice through authentic classroom enactment, reflection and peer support. The transition is not simply additive but transformational: the novice must reframe mental models of teaching, rather than only adopt techniques. Darling-Hammond (2017) further reframes development as a continuum: CPD should not end after induction but continue to nurture long-term growth and leadership pathways.

More recent research extends these insights. Stewart (2022), in a longitudinal study of novice teachers, described how novices experience “professional struggle” as a normal developmental phase; participation in dialogue-based PD and mentoring helps them reframe challenges as growth opportunities. A systematic review of CPD transfer (Nimante et al., 2025) emphasises how critical context, follow-up support, coaching, and feedback loops are to bridging the gap between learning and practice. It finds that even well-designed PD often fails to translate into classroom change without institutional and peer support structures. In the more specific realm of teacher professional development, a recent meta-synthesis highlights that small effect sizes on student outcomes are common but larger gains in teacher self-efficacy and instructional change depend on duration, coherence, and active learning (Sage meta-analysis, 2023).

### **Effective CPD, Mentoring and Transfer to Practice**

The question of how CPD leads to classroom change has stimulated much research. A 2025 scoping review of how PD transfers into practice (Nimante et al., 2025) identifies recurring features of effective PD: alignment with teachers’ work, follow-up coaching, sustained duration, and integrated evaluation of transfer. In particular, the authors caution that many CPD evaluations rely on satisfaction or self-report measures without assessing actual instructional change.

Loy (2024) in a study of CPD in further education settings argues for a redefinition of CPD as “professional learning ecosystems,” not discrete interventions: in this view, mentoring, peer networks, leadership engagement and institutional routines all coalesce to sustain teacher change. The same logic applies in K-12 and language teaching contexts: workplace learning, coaching cycles, peer observation and communities of practice are seen as essential supports to transfer.

A broader systematic review of teacher professional development between 2020 and 2024 (Amemasor et al., 2025) emphasises that digital integration, active learning, coaching, and institutional support are critical levers of success. That is, effective CPD is rarely a stand-alone training event; it is a scaffolded journey embedded in teachers’ daily work, mediated by communities and leadership.

Finally, research on ‘mentoring software’ and digital mentoring platforms has emerged as a promising frontier. Pesina (2025) reviews how digital tools can structure mentoring goals, automate progress tracking, and facilitate asynchronous reflection, thereby easing mentor

workload and scaling support. However, he cautions about equity issues, privacy and the need for alignment with institutional objectives.

In sum, the literature suggests that novice teacher development is best supported by CPD systems that combine scaffolded mentoring, workplace learning opportunities, sustained dosage, alignment with school priorities, and adaptive evaluation mechanisms.

### **Proposed Model: Contextualising CPD for Novice English Teachers in Uzbekistan**

Given the reviewed theory and the particular reforms already underway in Uzbekistan (DUET, PRESETT), the following model is proposed. It is designed to respect local constraints (time, resources, hierarchy) while maximising supports that research suggests matter.

#### **Model Phases**

The model divides CPD support into three overlapping phases:

1. **Pre-induction & Transition Bridge.** Before or in the very first weeks of classroom appointment, novice teachers participate in a structured orientation and coaching-in scaffold. Activities include alignment workshops (communicative methodology, curriculum orientation), goal-setting, mentor pairing, and co-planned micro-lesson trials.
2. **Intensive Induction & Coaching Cycle.** During the first year, novices receive frequent mentor coaching, peer observation cycles, co-planning, classroom visits and debriefs, and group inquiry meetings. Mentor training is a priority, and mentors follow a structured protocol (observation → feedback → co-teaching → reflection → revision). Emotional check-ins and peer support groups are integrated.
3. **Gradual Release & Sustainable Professional Growth.** In years two and beyond, support tapers but continues via periodic coaching check-ins, action research groups, peer reciprocation of observation, leadership opportunities, and access to advanced CPD modules (e.g. assessment, differentiation, materials development). Novices may begin serving as mentors themselves.

#### **Design Elements**

- **Scaffolded Mentoring & Coaching:** Mentors must be trained in adult learning, feedback techniques, and domain-specific instruction.
- **Workplace Learning & Peer Inquiry:** Scheduled peer observations, collaborative lesson design, video analysis, and learning communities help make tacit classroom practice explicit.
- **Emotional & Resilience Support:** Recognising novice stress, the model integrates wellbeing sessions, reflective journals, mentoring check-ins for non-technical issues, and peer communities.
- **Adaptive CPD Modules:** Based on formative diagnostics (surveys, observations), mini-modules (blended, online) respond to novices' emerging needs (e.g. inclusive practices, scaffolding, assessment).
- **Integration with Pre-service and Institutional Policy:** The CPD model should be aligned with PRESETT curriculum, national standards, and university programmes to ensure continuity.
- **Evaluation, Feedback Loops & Sustainability:** Mixed-methods evaluation (surveys, classroom observation, retention data, teacher interviews) feed back into iterative programme refinement.

### **Implementation Challenges and Contextual Constraints**

Implementing a robust CPD model in Uzbekistan faces multiple challenges. Mentor capacity is limited, especially in remote or rural schools. Many mentors are overburdened with their own teaching loads and lack structured training. Institutional inertia and hierarchical culture may resist peer observation or collaborative inquiry, especially when senior faculty were trained under older paradigms. Time constraints in overloaded school schedules often deprioritise CPD. Sustaining funding and political commitment beyond pilot phases is a perennial risk.

To mitigate these challenges, the model suggests phased scaling (begin with clusters of pilot schools), leveraging digital mentoring platforms to reduce mentor travel burdens, dedicating protected time in school timetables, and building alliances between universities, ministries and school networks. The emerging literature on cascade and adapted models of PD in digital education (El-Hamamsy et al., 2023) suggests that carefully structured trainer-of-trainers models, combined with ongoing expert support, can help scale CPD while preserving quality.

### **Conclusion**

Novice English teachers in Uzbekistan stand at the intersection between ambitious reform and entrenched structural constraints. To support their professional growth, CPD must move beyond episodic workshops to a scaffolded, contextually sensitive system of induction, mentoring, peer learning, and adaptive evaluation. The model proposed here offers a phased blueprint grounded in international research and mindful of local realities. It emphasises mentor training, workplace learning, emotional support, adaptive modules, and feedback loops. Next steps include piloting the model in diverse Uzbek school settings, collecting longitudinal data on teacher practice and retention, and refining the design based on empirical feedback. Ultimately, bridging theory and practice for novices is not only a matter of pedagogy, but one of policy, institutional culture and sustainable capacity building.

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