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## **HOW AND WHY DO ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN SERBIA (NOT) DEVELOP PROFESSIONALLY?<sup>1</sup>**

*ABSTRACT:* The focus of this paper is Serbian EFL teachers' professional development. The aim of this research is to observe both formal and informal ways in which the teachers develop professionally, as well as to examine whether the teachers participate in the development due to personal reasons or external requirements and why the participation is not more frequent. The research conducted through a questionnaire is of qualitative type. The results show that teachers rather apply informal ways of development, such as reading or watching useful content. Furthermore, more teachers participate in professional development in order to be better at their job than due to the requirements of the employer, law or studies. Moreover, lack of time and lack of finances are the primary reasons for the lack of professional development. This research could contribute to encouraging teachers to develop professionally, which could result in numerous benefits for their teaching practice.

*Keywords:* professional development, (in)formal development, reasons for development, English language teacher, teaching practice.

## **KAKO SE I ZAŠTO (NE) NASTAVNICI ENGLESKOG JEZIKA U SRBIJI PROFESIONALNO USAVRŠAVAJU?**

*APSTRAKT:* Fokus ovog rada je na profesionalnom usavršavanju nastavnika engleskog jezika kao stranog. Cilj istraživanja bio je sagledavanje načina na koje se nastavnici usavršavaju, formalno ili neformalno, kao i ispitivanje da li oni učestvuju u profesionalnom razvoju zbog ličnih razloga ili zahteva okoline, te zašto ne učestvuju u njemu više. Istraživanje sprovedeno pomoću upitnika bilo je kvalitativnog tipa. Rezultati su pokazali da se nastavnici radije usavršavaju na neformalne načine, poput čitanja literature ili gledanja korisnog sadržaja. Takođe, više nastavnika se usavršava kako bi bili bolji u svom poslu, nego zbog zahteva poslodavca, zakona ili studija. Zatim, nedostatak vremena zbog poslovnih ili porodičnih obaveza i nedostatak novčanih sredstava glavni su

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was developed based on the master thesis titled "The relationship between EFL teachers' professional development and their use of motivational strategies in an EFL classroom" by Lenka Farkaš (2023) which was conducted under the mentorship of professor Jagoda Topalov, PhD and defended in September 2023.

razlozi za nedostatak usavršavanja. Implikacije istraživanja leže u podsticanju nastavnika na neformalne vidove profesionalnog razvoja, čime se nastavnicima omogućava pristup brojnijim mogućnostima za lični i profesionalni razvoj, što bi posledično vodilo i ka razvoju nastavne prakse.

*Ključne reči:* profesionalno usavršavanje, (ne)formalni vid usavršavanja, razlozi za usavršavanje, nastavnik engleskog jezika, nastava.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Much like any other type of teaching, teaching English as a foreign language includes the willingness for constant changes and adaptations while relying on new methods, technologies and discoveries. Therefore, it is essential that a language teacher is aware of the need for lifelong learning and that he/she is willing to participate in it in order to provide their students with the best possible conditions for learning, work and development. As explained by Alderman (2004), a motivated teacher is one of the key factors in student motivation. For that reason, a teacher's desire for his or her own progress is crucial, as well as the desire for their students' achievements. This paper will focus on the significance of professional development in English teachers' teaching practice in Serbia. The paper will also look at the different manners of professional development (PD) and their efficiency, as well as the nature of professional development and its types which have been effective so far.

For the purpose of this paper, research was conducted with EFL teachers in Serbia as its participants. The aim of the research was to examine the manners in which teachers professionally develop, why they do so, and why they do not do it more often. The research involved 133 participants, 125 of whom were female and 8 were male. The participants filled out a questionnaire designed on the basis of the Teaching and Learning International Survey (OECD 2018) and they marked the ways of professional development in which they had participated during the previous eighteen months. They also explained why they had (not) participated in professional development more frequently. The significance of this research lies in the better understanding of the ways in which the teachers develop professionally, as well as in the understanding of the factors which encourage or discourage them to do so. Understanding their attitudes and goals could encourage more participation in professional development, which may potentially lead to a better teaching practice. Since teachers are one of the crucial factors in any educational system (UNESCO 1990), enabling opportunities and conditions for the

advancement of their knowledge and skills is essential, which makes research like this necessary.

## 2. LITERATURE OVERVIEW

According to UNESCO, teachers are a key factor of any educational system, so their training is of utmost importance to the society (UNESCO 1990). In other words, as Dörnyei (2001) elaborates, a teacher's role not only includes guiding students through the educational process, but also their own continuous learning and professional development. This allows for the most efficient fulfilment of their role, as well as professional and personal development and self-realisation.

Glatthorn (1995) defines professional development as a process of systematic advancement of one's experience and teaching practice. According to the research conducted by Novozhenina and López Pinzón (2018), participation in professional development brings many advantages, such as self-reflection, increased participation in the teaching and learning processes, the opportunity for the exchange of experiences, as well as increased confidence and reduced stress and anxiety. Besides that, Moor and associates (2005) point out the importance of professional development in early career stages. Their research showed that teachers who participate in professional development in the early stages of their careers exhibit higher dedication to the profession, a better approach to teaching materials, better control over different elements of the teaching process, as well as better understanding of what quality instruction is. Not only does early exposure to professional development impact teachers, it also positively impacts their students and schools (Moor et. al. 2005). Although the research conducted for this paper did not focus on the informants' personal benefits gained through professional development, it is clear from previous research studies (Dörnyei 2001; Novozhenina & López Pinzón 2018) that they are substantial and that it is in the teachers' best interest to participate in professional training as much as possible during their career.

In terms of types of professional development, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 2018) distinguishes between formal and informal ways of professional development. Formal development includes organised methods such as courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, training courses, visits to other schools, individual or group research, teacher connections, mentorship, observations, etc. These are mostly organised by different academic or government institutions, so ministries of education or

institutions which employ teachers commonly require mandatory participation in such professional development, as is the case in Republic Serbia (MPNTR 2021). On the other hand, informal ways of development include reading literature, watching useful videos and other similar content, informal discussions with colleagues, etc. Consequently, the questionnaire used in this research also distinguishes between formal and informal professional development.

The characteristics of professional development are crucial for its success. The research of Porter and associates (2000) showed that characteristics such as activity organisation, its duration, opportunity for active learning etc. positively impact teaching practice. It is desirable that teachers are involved in the organisation of professional development as much as possible and that the programme is personalised in accordance with teachers' individual differences. According to Diaz-Maggioli's (2000) research, these factors can lead to a more successful professional development programme. It is significant to mention that the research done by Porter and associates (2000) focused on the fields of mathematics and science, which means that this paper fills the research gap in the domain of foreign language teaching. Furthermore, the differences in the fields of expertise do not alter the fact that professional development of teachers of any subject always shows connections with teaching practice, which makes any result in the domain of professional development relevant.

Besides the characteristics of professional development, it is significant to consider the reasons why teachers participate in it. While some possess an inherent desire to improve their knowledge and skills, advance their career and accomplish an inner sense of achievement, others are incited by legal obligations, monetary gain, career advancement, wider employment opportunity, etc. (Šumonja Nikolić 2020). Reasons for the lack of professional development should not be neglected because they indicate a variety of teachers' attitudes and opinions and their analysis can point to ways in which teachers can be encouraged or motivated to participate in professional development programmes. The Teaching and Learning International Survey (OECD 2018) required that teachers state why they do not develop professionally, or why they do not do so more commonly. Some of the reasons may be family obligations, conflict with work schedule, insufficient funds, lack of prerequisites (experience, seniority, qualifications etc.), lack of employer support, or personal reasons such as disinterest, burnout, apathy, etc. According to the research conducted by Jerrim and Sims (2019) in London, the most common reasons for insufficient participation in professional development are the lack of time due to work schedule, high costs of development and the lack of encouragement. That is also in accordance with the results of the research

conducted by Tomson and Hillman (2019) in Australia. These reasons are a starting point in the search of the better ways of encouraging teachers to develop professionally and improve their knowledge and abilities. Should the negative influences and factors be eliminated, teachers could be motivated to participate in professional development more frequently.

As stated earlier, the existing research focused on types, significance and ways of organisation of professional development programmes, as well as the reasons for teachers' (non-)participation in them. Taking that into consideration, this research examines what types of professional development Serbian teachers of English as a foreign language participate in. It also examines the reasons why teachers partake in professional development, as well as why they do not do so more frequently. The analysis of the most frequently applied types of development may serve as a grounds for more detailed research of those types and their potential improvement. Apart from that, understanding the main reasons for (non-)participation in professional development is a potential step towards encouraging teachers to participate, which could significantly improve the quality of their teaching.

### 3. METHOD

This research was conducted with the aim to examine the types of professional development in which Serbian teachers of English as a foreign language participate. Another goal of this research was to establish the reasons for professional development or the reasons for the lack of participation in it. The research was qualitative and the analysis used was grounded theory. This included the descriptive representation of assumptions and results, as well as drawing conclusions during the analysis process according to the explanations in the manual by Creswell and Creswell (2018). This type of research was selected as the most efficient one in accordance with the nature of data obtained and the research topic. Namely, given that the participants in the research answered the questions regarding the reasons for their (non-)involvement in professional development in their own words in addition to the options offered, any type of quantitative analysis seemed inadequate. Therefore, observation and study of individual responses and their descriptive analysis proved to be the most suitable option. Furthermore, as previous research paid little attention to the reasons for teachers' (non-)involvement in professional development, it was not possible to form hypotheses and examine them through quantitative research. Consequently, observing information and forming assumptions during the analysis was an efficient way of processing the obtained data.

### 3.1. Participants

This research involved 133 teachers of English as a foreign language from Serbia, 8 of whom were male and 125 of whom were female. The disproportion between male and female participants was expected and can somewhat be explained with the data from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia from the academic 2021/22, which showed that the majority of teachers in Serbia were females. In primary and secondary schools 73.54% of teaching staff were females, while that number was 52.27% in institutions of higher education (RZS 2023). Therefore, although the sample is not balanced, it can be said that it is a reliable representation of the population of teachers of English as a foreign language in Serbia. The teachers who participated in the research were employed in both the public and the private sector – in primary and secondary schools, at faculties, as well as in private schools. The category *other* includes the teachers with more than one place of employment. As Table 1 shows, 42.1% of teachers were employed in primary schools, 19.5% in secondary schools, 6% at faculties, while 29.3% worked in private schools or language centres. The category *other* includes merely 3% of the participants in the research.

		Place of employment					Total
		Primary school	Secondary school	Faculty	Private school	Other	
Male	N	1	0	2	4	1	8
	%	0.8%	0.0%	1.5%	3.0%	0.8%	6.0%
Female	N	55	26	6	35	3	125
	%	41.4%	19.5%	4.5%	26.3%	2.3%	94.0%
Total	N	56	26	8	39	4	133
	%	42.1%	19.5%	6.0%	29.3%	3.0%	100.0%

Table 1. Cross-tabulation of the sample according to the gender and place of employment

### 3.2. Instrument

The instrument used in this research was a questionnaire created by adapting the Teaching and Learning International Survey (OECD 2018), whereby relevant questions regarding teachers' professional development were singled out for the questionnaire used in data collection for this paper. The questionnaire

focused on the participants' involvement in formal and informal ways of professional development and they were asked to mark all the ways of professional development they had applied during the previous eighteen months. The first part of the questionnaire also requested demographic data about the informants, including their gender, age, level of education, place of employment and years of experience in teaching. The questionnaire did not require the participants to enter their names or any other information which may identify them, which ensured complete anonymity, in order to encourage utmost honesty in the participants' responses. The participants were also asked to select the reasons why they participated in professional development, as well as the reasons why they did not do so more frequently. It was distributed in English, primarily since that was the language of the original questionnaire and the language which teachers of English as a foreign language understand. A complete version of the questionnaire can be found in the appendix.

### *3.3. Procedure*

As stated before, the data was obtained through the questionnaire which was distributed online through a variety of social networks and through mailing lists. The type of qualitative analysis that was applied was grounded theory, which involved forming theories during the processing and analysis of the data obtained, as elaborated by Creswell and Creswell (2018). The analysis was preceded by sorting and categorisation of the data obtained. The reasons for involvement and non-involvement in professional development were observed separately, then in relation to the place of employment. Different reasons were grouped, then participants' experiences were observed and later presented numerically.

## 4. RESULTS

The first observed factor was the frequency of formal and informal ways of professional development. Seven ways of formal and three ways of informal professional development were examined. As can be seen in Table 2, the informants participated in informal ways of professional development more frequently than in the formal ones. In terms of formal development, courses, workshops, conferences and seminars were prevalent, while informal dialogues with colleagues regarding the improvement of one's own teaching practice were the most common informal ways of development.

		Number of uses	%
Formal development	Courses/workshops	95	71.43
	Conferences/seminars	74	55.64
	Qualification programmes	17	12.78
	Observational visits to other schools	25	18.80
	Participation in teacher groups aimed at development	58	43.61
	Researching relevant topics	61	45.86
	Peer mentorship/instruction among colleagues organised by schools	46	34.59
Informal development	Reading professional literature	95	71.43
	Watching useful content	116	87.22
	Informal dialogue with colleagues	128	96.24

Table 2. The frequency of application of formal and informal professional development

Afterwards, the reasons for participation or the lack of participation in professional development were examined. Prior to the analysis the data was sorted in the following manner: the reasons were arranged according to the frequency of repetition, in order to discover the ones which were most frequently cited. Then, the participants' responses in regards to place of employment were sorted into three groups: public sector, private sector and other. Subsequently, the correlation between place of employment and reasons for participation or non-participation was examined. Lastly, a simple descriptive statistics was applied, in order to reach potential conclusions.

When it comes to the reasons for undergoing professional development, the options were "I wanted to improve myself as an EFL teacher," "I was required to do so by the employer/the law/studies," or other reasons which the participants could list. As shown in Table 3, 81.2% of the participants chose the desire to be better teachers as their reason for professional development, while 12.78% were required to participate in professional development by the law, their employers or studies. The remaining 6.02% cited other reasons, which were: to satisfy their interest in modern approaches, to learn to deal with matters not taught by the curriculum, out of curiosity, etc.



Reasons for participation in professional development	N	%
I was required to do so by my employer/the law/studies.	17	12.78
I wanted to improve myself as an EFL teacher.	108	81.20
Other	8	6.02

Table 3. Reasons for participating in professional development

The reasons for participation in professional development were analysed in relation to place of employment. As Table 4 shows, 81.11% of teachers from the public sector improve their competences in order to be better at their job and it is very similar in the private sector (82.05%). On the other hand, 12.22% of teachers in the public sector and 15.38% of the teachers in the private sector attend professional development due to external demands. Lastly, the final group of participants chose other reasons for participating in professional development. However, given that the number of these participants is small and their reasons varied, a detailed analysis would yield no significant results and the generalisation would not be possible based on the data obtained.

	Desire to be better at their job	External demands
Public sector	81.11%	12.22%
Private sector	82.05%	15.38%
Other	75.0%	0.0%

Table 4. Place of employment and reasons for participating in professional development

Particularly significant results were obtained from the responses to the question why the participants did not participate in professional development more frequently. They included the lack of prerequisites such as qualifications, experience, seniority, etc., inability to afford professional development, lack of employer support, inability to coordinate development with work schedule, lack of time due to family obligations, insufficient options for professional development, burnout and apathy. Since the majority of the participants named more than one reason, the number of occurrences of each reason among the data obtained was calculated, as well as the percentage of frequency (see Table 5). Cumulative percentages are shown in order to enable the comparison of frequency with which all reasons occurred. As Table 5 shows, the conflict between work schedule and professional development is the most commonly named reason for the lack of

professional development, with the frequency of 28.24%. Next, the lack of time due to family responsibilities appeared with the frequency of 22.35% and the lack of finances among 19.61% of informants. Insufficient options for professional development made 19.61% of the reasons, while the lack of employer support appeared with the frequency of 8.24%. The lack of prerequisites such as seniority, experience, etc. made 6.27% of the reasons for the lack of development, while emotional exhaustion and apathy made 0.39%.

Reason for not participating in professional development	Number of times the reason was selected	%
Lack of prerequisites	16	6.27
Lack of money	50	19.61
Lack of employer support	21	8.24
Conflicts with work schedule	72	28.24
Family responsibilities	57	22.35
Lack of suitable offer	38	14.90
Burnout and apathy	1	0.39
Total	255	100.00

Table 5. Reasons for not participating in more professional development

The following section presents the analysis of the results and discussion, in order for the results to be contextualised and their implications in teaching practice clearly presented.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this research was to examine the ways of professional development of Serbian teachers of English as a foreign language, as well as to understand the reasons for their (non-)involvement in professional development. Research of this type highly contributes to a better understanding of the manners in which EFL teachers develop their professional knowledge, competences and skills. It also provides an insight into the reasons why teachers find it important to develop professionally and why they do not do so more frequently. These findings shed light on the most efficient encouragement that educational institutions can provide to their teachers in order to advance their expertise, thus potentially improving their teaching practice.

Investigating the frequency of formal professional development in comparison to the informal one showed that the participants in this research more

frequently applied informal methods of development, such as conversations with colleagues, watching useful content, reading literature, etc. These results were expected for multiple reasons. Firstly, informal ways of development are more spontaneous than organised workshops, seminars, etc., so teachers can participate whenever they wish to do so, thus eliminating the obstacle of the lack of time. Next, this way of development is also typically free, so it does not require additional funds, which is an advantage to many. In the end, in this manner teachers can select the content they wish to read or watch, as well as the topics they discuss, so their professional development is personalised to a great extent. This was shown to be a highly significant factor in the research of Diaz-Maggioli (2004). An example of informal professional development which could be useful to teachers are teacher support groups on social media. Namely, these communities may enable an exchange of experiences, materials and ideas and can, therefore, be a significant aspect of communication among teachers. They could be efficient in expanding the communication with teachers from other countries, which might contribute to the intercultural approach to teaching. Apart from that, a lot of educational institutions and organisations, such as Cambridge (2023), offer free online seminars to teachers of English as a foreign language. They are also available to teachers from multiple countries, which allows for additional cultural exchange opportunities.

When it comes to the reasons for participating in professional development, 81.20% teachers do it to be better at their jobs, while 12.78% do it due to the demands of the law, their employer or studies, and 6.02% develop for other reasons, some of which involve the combination of the previous two. A positive conclusion can be drawn that the majority of teachers approach professional development due to their own desire, not external demands. That is significant given that motivated teachers commonly increase motivation in students, which was confirmed in the research done by Dörnyei & Ushioda (2011). However, it is significant to mention that there is a potential limitation due to which it is impossible to determine whether this is a realistic representation of the situation. Namely, due to the nature of the questionnaire distribution (through social networks and mailing lists), it can be assumed that the teachers who were motivated to complete the questionnaire were the ones who are generally willing to develop professionally. Therefore, the results cannot be generalised and additional research with a larger number of responses is required, potentially obtained through mandatory surveys in order to ensure a more objective representation of the situation. However, observing solely the obtained data, it can

be concluded that the teachers are dominantly motivated to develop professionally in order to be better at their jobs.

Regarding the place of employment, the results showed that all three groups of teachers attend professional development to be better at their jobs. The comparison between the public and private sector showed that there are no significant differences in reasons for professional development. It is important to emphasise that professional development is mandatory for the teachers in the public sector in Serbia. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia distinguished multiple ways of professional development: trial lessons, presentations in meetings, review of professional material, participation in projects, professional development programmes through conducting training, professional gatherings such as congresses, symposia, etc. (MPNTR 2021). Accordingly, it would be advantageous to examine the teachers' attitudes regarding these ways of development, as well as the effectiveness of each of them. Since professional development is an obligation for the teachers in the public sector, assessing its efficacy could contribute to its quality and efficient implementation. Further research is required in order to better examine the reasons for professional development in various types of educational institutions. Such research may shed light on the reasons for professional development and provide a better understanding of teacher motivation.

Apart from the reasons for professional development, a detailed analysis of the reasons for non-involvement was done. The most common reasons were lack of time due to work schedule or family responsibilities. The third most common reason was lack of financial means. These reasons potentially indicate a large need for institutional support for teachers, in terms of better organisation of schedule and higher financial support. Examining these results is extremely significant for motivating teachers for professional development, since eliminating negative impact may serve as a great incentive to teachers' improvement of their knowledge, competences and skills. Furthermore, it is significant to notice that teachers should be motivated to focus more on informal ways of professional development. As stated before, this way of development is free, which could mitigate financial challenges that teachers encounter. Besides, it is also more suitable and flexible in terms of schedules, unlike organised seminars, conferences, observations, etc., so the issue of insufficient time is reduced. Teachers can thus develop professionally when it is convenient for them, without the requirement to fit strict development schedules into their own schedule, as well as without wasting time on the commute, which is sometimes long for some

formal development types. A drawback of informal ways of development is that they cannot be counted in the point system for mandatory development. Regardless, both ways of professional development are significant and they both have their own role in the improvement of teaching practice and, therefore, in future research.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to better examine the ways in which Serbian teachers of English as a foreign language develop professionally as well as to analyse the reasons why they do or do not do so. The research which was conducted for the purpose of this paper led to some possible conclusions.

Namely, EFL teachers who participated in this research mainly develop professionally through informal ways of professional development, such as conversations with colleagues, reading relevant literature or watching useful content. The majority of them participate in development in order to be better at their jobs and fewer of them due to the requirements of the law, their employer or studies. The lack of professional development was explained by the lack of time or money, so a potential solution may be encouraging teachers to informal ways of professional development. These are not only suitable for different schedules and obligations, but are also significantly less financially demanding in comparison to other types of professional development. Encouraging teachers to professional development could lead to them doing their jobs more efficiently, as well as to other positive changes in teaching practice and teachers' personal satisfaction.

The research presented in this paper has certain limitations which primarily concern the imbalance between male and female participants due to which the gender factor was not individually analysed. Therefore, additional research with a more balanced sample of participants would be needed in order to include gender in the analysis. Besides that, the research was conducted by distributing the questionnaire via the internet, which could be another limitation because the teachers involved in support groups and networks are typically those who are highly motivated for personal and professional growth. That leads to the conclusion that the results of the research cannot be generalised without an additional involvement of a variety of participants. Furthermore, future research in this domain could contain different types of data collection such as semi-structured questionnaires, which would provide richer and more detailed results and, consequently, a better insight into the motivation and opinions of teachers. That being said, the author of this paper emphasises the significance of exploring

professional development of teachers of English as a foreign language and encourages the participation in the development in order to increase teacher and student motivation and teaching practice altogether.

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## APPENDIX

*This is a questionnaire about EFL teachers' professional development and their use of motivational teaching strategies in the classroom. The answers you give are completely anonymous and the information gathered will be used for research purposes only. The questionnaire takes around 3 minutes to complete. I kindly thank you for your time and effort!*

### **Basic information**

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Level of education: a) student b) bachelor's degree c) master's degree d) doctorate degree

Place of employment: a) primary school b) secondary school c) faculty d) private school e) other: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you worked as a teacher? \_\_\_\_\_

**During the last 18 months, did you participate in any of the following kinds of professional development activities?**

Courses/workshops (e.g. on subject matter or methods and/or other education-related topics)

Education conferences or seminars (where teachers and/or researchers present their research results and discuss educational problems)

Qualification programme (e.g. a degree programme)

Observation visits to other schools

Participation in a network of teachers formed specifically for the professional development of teachers

Individual or collaborative research on a topic of interest to you professionally

Mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching, as part of a formal school arrangement

Reading professional literature (e.g. journals, evidence-based papers, thesis papers)

Watching useful content (e.g. videos about teacher improvement)

Engaging in informal dialogue with your colleagues on how to improve your teaching

If you had participated in any mentioned means of professional development, please signify the reasons for it: a) I wanted to improve myself as an EFL teacher. b) I was required to do so by the law/the employer/studies.

Which of the following reasons best explain what prevented you from participating in more professional development than you did (check all the reasons that apply)? a) I did not have the pre-requisites (e.g. qualifications, experience, seniority) b) Professional development was too expensive/I could not afford it. c) There was a lack of employer support. d) Professional development conflicted with my work schedule. e) I didn't have time because of family responsibilities. f) There was no suitable professional development offered. g) other: \_\_\_\_\_



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## KAKO SE I ZAŠTO (NE) NASTAVNICI ENGLESKOG JEZIKA USAVRŠAVAJU?

### *Sažetak*

Fokus ovog rada je profesionalni razvoj nastavnika engleskog jezika kao stranog, kao i njihovi razlozi za (ne)učestvovanje u njemu. Cilj istraživanja bio je da se otkrije kako se nastavnici engleskog jezika profesionalno razvijaju i da li to radije rade kroz formalne ili neformalne načine razvoja. Formalan profesionalni razvoj uključuje seminare, radionice, konferencije, opservacije itd., dok neformalan uključuje čitanje i gledanje korisnog sadržaja, razgovor sa kolegama itd. Drugi značajan cilj bio je da se ispita zašto nastavnici učestvuju u profesionalnom razvoju, što bi moglo da pruži uvid u njihove stavove i mišljenja. Razlozi zbog kojih oni ne učestvuju u profesionalnom razvoju takođe su bili ispitivani, kako bi se otkrili potencijalni izazovi sa kojima se nastavnici susreću pri unapređenju svojih karijera. To bi moglo dovesti do odstranjivanja tih izazova i podsticanja nastavnika da unapređuju svoje znanje. S tim ciljem, sprovedeno je kvalitativno istraživanje tipa utemeljena teorija. Rezultati pokazuju da većina nastavnika učestvuje u profesionalnom usavršavanju iz lične želje da budu bolji u svom poslu, a ne zbog zahteva okoline. Rezultati, takođe, pokazuju da nastavnici češće primenjuju neformalne vidove razvoja, koji su pristupačniji i fleksibilniji u pogledu organizacije. Zatim, razlozi zašto nastavnici nisu češće učestvovali u razvoju su nedostatak vremena i novca. Moguće implikacije istraživanje uključuju podsticanje nastavnika da se bave neformalnim načinima profesionalnog razvoja, jer su oni fleksibilniji i pristupačniji. Povećano učešće nastavnika engleskog jezika kao stranog u profesionalnom razvoju moglo bi da dovede do sveukupnog poboljšanja nastavne prakse.

*Ključne reči:* profesionalno usavršavanje, (ne)formalni vid usavršavanja, razlozi za usavršavanje, nastavnik engleskog jezika, nastava.

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