LANGUAGE POLICY PROPOSAL

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Abstract. This article discusses the efficiency of modern technologies and electronic devices in learning. This article emphasizes then need for organizing courses that accelerate practicing English teachers' knowledge and provide with essential resources. The article concludes that creating such courses can greatly enhance the teaching experience for teachers and improve their language skills.
Key words: *macro-language, professional development, assisted language learning, ministry of public education, british council, inset program, mobile assisted language learning, mall , call, nationwide language policy.*

Introduction

In Samarkand, there are **75 secondary schools** which are coordinated by local educational department which directly obeys to Ministry of Public education. The schools have approximately more than **1000** currently working English teachers of Uzbek, Russian and Tajik nationality. The teachers are all involved in **weekly teacher development courses** led by teacher trainers to enhance their language proficiency level and inform them about latest innovative methodology in SLA. These courses are organized by Ministry of Public Education with collaboration with British Council in Uzbekistan. This Inset program was organized according to Presidential decree-18/75 (2014) that is about measures to improve language learning system in Uzbekistan which can be considered as a macro language planning (Kaplan, 2011).

Current educational reforms including macro-language planning and policies contribute not only to educate its future generation, but also result in immense advantage in Language Teachers' Professional development. Indeed, Teacher Development Programs are always entangled with related educational policies. The project, "Weekly courses for Enhancing Professional Development of Foreign Language Teachers in the system of Public Education at the base of support schools under the districts/cities", was developed by "the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan" and 'Central in-service and retraining Institute A. Avloniy" in collaboration with "Republic Innovation Center in teaching foreign languages under Uz SWLU". This Inset program was organized according to Presidential decree-18/75 (2014) which is about measures to improve language learning system.On the frame of the Program, Teacher trainers have been conducting weekly sessions since 2014 first three Fridays of every month. The course has three modules: first module is focuses on writing &reading, second module focuses on listening & speaking, and third module focuses on teaching language methodology. The course arms to accelerate practicing English teachers' knowledge and provides with essential resources.

Indeed, in this era of high-stakes testing and increased accountability, Teacher development courses bring intended results when correctly implemented; however, it is essential to set these courses so that the burden of responsibility lays equally among actors such as administrators, teachers and students who collaborate to enhance teaching and learning in community (Maggioli, 2004). Although, Professional Development courses are commonest way of enhancing Language teachers' expertise, involvement in individual as well as collective research, participation in professional networks and peer observation followed by peer evaluation implement active teaching which includes use of technology and projects that encourage group-work and collaboration (OECD, 2014).Teachers' collaboration with their equals plays the most significant role in students' achievements (Moolenaar, Sleegers, & Daly, 2012; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007), since exchanging experience, techniques, knowledge, and convictions as well as materials important to the professional development (Akerson, Cullen,&Hanson, 2009).

However, in secondary schools of Uzbekistan, there isa scarcity of teaching and preparatory materials such as dictionaries (thesaurus, collocation, idiom and phrasal verb…), encyclopedias and exam materials (IELTS, SAT, TOEFL, GMAT…) that prevents Teacher development programs to achieve stipulated goals and objectives such as accomplishing stipulated aims of curriculum. Existing resources are either too outdated or of low quality. This is the consequence of shortage of Material designers who can design English teaching resources or translating dictionaries such Oxford Academic Learners' Dictionary into Uzbek. This gap can be covered by English teachers' training on Material Development theories and modern teaching methods such as CALL and MALL methods whose significance in teaching and learning a language is emphasized by Hayo Reinders (2010), and further, Bo'z do'gan underlined the efficiency of modern technologies and electronic devices in learning, in other words Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)equipment, which are portable and ubiquitous to incorporate in teaching and practicing second/foreign languages (2015). Additionally, Segaran, K. et al. (2013) stress that using MALL and CALL in language classrooms can accelerate students' pronunciation, whereas Holmes underlines significance of introduction of new resources and methodologies acquired online into teachers' practice which ensures teachers advance in their professional development (2013).

Nonetheless, Kaiser (2018) argues that generally, "training programs that prepare teachers to work in ESL and EFL settings often focus more on classroom-based strategies without sufficient attention to the external policies or systematic approaches to language instruction that may affect the efficacy of classroom methods". This fact is also confirmed by Hasanova (2007) by saying that almost all teachers in secondary schools of Uzbekistan use traditional approach while teaching languages due to the fact that there is a shortage of technical equipment and teaching resources at secondary schools, which creates an obstacle to successfully employing innovations in teaching language.

Interestingly, even now when almost all schools are supplied with modern technologies, most of the classroom time is spent for modeling new knowledge while there is left little time for consolidation and application of that new content, which is main characteristic of traditional classrooms. As a consequence, excessive homework is given to do at home where there is neither English atmosphere to practice the learnt language content, nor necessary resources to explore the content further. We can conclude that technology and teaching material deficit is the primary

cause of this situation; however, we must also confess that this claim does not work anymore. Every English teacher, having their own laptop or notebook with the internet access, and every student having their own or their parents' mobile phones and laptops at home with the internet access, teachers can successfully employ above counted innovations in language teaching. So, we cannot justify teachers' ignorance by claiming technology shortage or lack of materials, instead, the main cause of this situation, the ELT teachers' inexperience about latest methodology of SLA and Material Development, should be corrected. This is the gap which was not covered in above mentioned weekly courses. After all, this course was designed to accomplish the Nationwide Language Policy which began in the early 1990s, with the hope that English will replace Russian as the language of international communication in Uzbekistan(Glenn, 1996), which expresses country's intention to model new identity by breaking away from Russia and being acknowledged as an independent and sovereign state.

Thus, teacher development plays the key role. Taking these factors into consideration, this proposal aims:

1) to organize an extra session for ELT teachers, which will be held last Fridays of every month on the base of Methodology days, where they will be informed about latest research findings about SLA and Second Language teaching methodology;

2) to introduce and implement Flipped Classrooms into English classes to maximize effectiveness of ESL lessons;

3) to teach English teachers principles and methodologies of Material Development (online teaching materials - using CALL and MALL technologies; as well as preparing teaching materials using authentic materials - involving printed and online resources).

1. <u>Goals and Objectives</u>

Primary goal of this course is enhancing English language teachers' expertise by motivating to do a self-study and research and stimulating their interest to explore areas of SLA beyond teaching; namely, Material development and Flipped Classroom approach.

Teachers will be able

- to design extra materials to support a course-book, for example, from a simple handout or worksheet to a dictionary, a story book or a grammar reference book, etc…;
- to employ Computer Assisted Language Learning(CALL) and Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) techniques, which will be explored in detail since 90% of Language teachers have difficulty in incorporating these methods into language teaching process;
- find and adapt authentic materials from the internet to use in their classrooms to increase students' language use;
- to convert their classrooms from traditional to Flipped classroom to boost learners active engagement in language learning process;

Purpose

There are a lot of highly skilled and experienced but undiscovered teachers in Uzbekistan whose works can be equal to that of specialized experts'. By inspiring them to create their own teaching tools using computers, mobile apps and educational websites and teaching materials including worksheets prepared from authentic materials, we can help the best teachers to sparkle with professionalism as Material Designers, in the process, a strong team of Material Designers can be merged which is what we desperately in need of today. Outstanding and perfect teaching materials will be published by government and funding will be provided by government, too, and these particular materials will serve as resource for new generation learners. Moreover, the

designed materials will be distributed among schools and libraries so that teachers and language learners can use them during English classes.

2. **Inventory**

It will not be problem to find common materials such as English-Uzbek or English-Russian bilingual dictionaries or general phrasebooks for everyday conversations; however, on the contrary, finding Thesaurus, Technical vocabulary, Idiom dictionary, Collocation dictionary, Graded readers with activities and authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, brochures can be a real challenge.

Existing:	The Gap:
- National and Foreign literature on teaching English - bilingual dictionaries of general English - Phrasebooks - technology	- Thesaurus - Technical vocabulary - Idiom dictionary - Collocation dictionary - Graded readers with activities - Authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, brochures, - Paper - Stationary - Internet connection - English Course-books

3. **Recommendations**

Similar Teacher educational program; namely, a Small Private Online Course (SPOC), which is integrated as a compulsory module for future teachers, is being coordinated at a large Norwegian university (Lisbeth et al., 2019). The SPOC module enables student teachers to integrate Professional Digital Competence (PDC) during classes and seminars which appear to be rather complicated for student teachers. Future teachers are expected to learn how to implement ICT effectively in teaching and learning. The primary goal is that teachers connect academic and experiential forms of knowledge and have "the ability to develop innovative ways of using technology to enhance the learning environment and to encourage technology literacy, knowledge deepening and knowledge creation"(UNESCO, 2011, p. 8).

Ultimately, this kind of Teacher development courses established in every corner of the world are delivering intended outcomes. Thus, now-proposed course can be regarded as replication and adaption of those highly successful teacher development courses.

Requirements for materials

The books and teaching resources can be translated from other languages or can be originally designed including differentiated activities. These activities must be designed to enhance students' Linguistic skills. For example, to design a graded reader, a teacher will find a suitable source such as a newspaper article, brochure information, a BBC podcast or a short story. Then, these sources will be adapted to the levels of students and revised by adding vocabulary list, which should consist of synonyms, collocations, prepositional phrases, idioms as well as famous quotes and proverbs. These lexical items should be leveled according to students' level, too. As for CALL and MALL activities, they can be created online using KAHOOT.it or Purple.mash websites. Teachers receive Funding for designing their teaching materials from their work place, precisely, from Director's Fund which supports and gives salary bonuses to outstanding teachers who contributed to the school's success by enhancing students' knowledge. After submitting materials, teachers receive a modest honorarium by school authority for their hard-work, which

encourages and serves as an incentive for teachers; indeed, many studies have found that teacher retention can be improved by targeted bonuses (Clotfelter, Glennie, Ladd, &Vigdor, 2008).

4. Timeline:

Phase 1 –March-June, 2020	Selecting and Training Teacher trainers to Material Development in Tashkent UZSWLU
Phase 2 - September to December, 2020	Piloted at secondary schools of Samarkand city
Phase 3 – January to June, 2021	Launched at secondary schools of Uzbekistan
Phase 4 – July- August, 2021	Collecting best materials and publishing as teaching resource for English teachers of Uzbekistan

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5. Target Language

Material development course will be included as an extra course for English teachers on the base of their Methodology day - fourth Friday of every month, as a piloting course and will implement the Flipped classroom approach to enhance ELT teachers' expertise in designing teaching materials as well as using them effectively during ESL classes. Unlike traditional classroom where a teacher delivers the content in classroom and practice is left for students as homework, Flipped classrooms also encourage use of CALL and MALL, where explanation of content, grammar rules and vocabulary is done at home via the multimodal and media presentations, and then at class, students practice the content (Online learning: Flipped classroom., https://americanenglish.state.gov). Not only this innovative course develops speaking, listening, vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing skills, but also it ameliorates pronunciation and intonation. Watching authentic videos and listening to authentic podcasts can help students and teachers to achieve this.

6. Assessment

A table of experts specialized in designing materials will be selected and set to assess the teachers' works. Analytic assessment should be employed while evaluation process. The evaluation checklist is taken from Richards (2001):

Learners:	Learning:	Language:
1. make relevant to their experience and background 2. make relevant to their target needs (outside of class) 3. make relevant to their affective needs	4. engage in discovery, problem solving, analysis 5. develop specific skills and strategies	6. target relevant aspects (grammar, functions, vocabulary, etc.) 7. integrate four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing 8. use/understand authentic texts
Social Context :	**Activity/Task Types :**	**Materials:**
9. provide intercultural focus 10. develop critical social awareness	11. aim for authentic tasks 12. vary roles and groupings 13. vary activities and purposes	14. authentic (texts, realia) 15. varied (print, visuals, audio, etc.)

7. Actors

There will be two types of active actors in this project: 1) People with power and 2) people with expertise(Zhao, 2011). They collaborate to implement innovative Flipped classrooms during the proposed material development course. State and Local Educational Departments as people with power develop an extra course for EFL/ESL teachers to learn how to make use of ICT; namely, MALL and CALL; and help to create conditions for successfully introducing and implementing the Flipped Classroom approach to language teaching classes by applying for fund raising agencies andLocal Government bodies to receive enough funding to purchase needed inventories. The Ministry of Public Education will address to the British Council or US Embassy to get practical help with experts to design a course for Material Development and evolve existing weekly courses to correspond with macro Language Policy of the country which stipulates taking extra measures on enhancing learning and teaching English as a second language (Presidential Decree № 18/75). People with expertise (teachers, teacher trainers and experts in material designing) will undertake smoothly going of the teaching and learning process, ensuring attaining of course's goals.

1. Secondary school English teachers will be:
   (1) trained to develop new materials using online resources and authentic materials;
   (2) taught to implement Flipped classroom approach in language classes.
2. Teacher trainers who are trained in material designing and curriculum development will be:
   (1) trained to deliver training to boost teachers' knowledge about materials development, latest innovations such as CALL and MALL, and applying Flipped Classroom approach in classrooms;
   (2) teach teachers to develop materials, apply ICT and Flipped classroom approach in learning the English language.
3. State and Local educational departments will:
   (1) develop an extra course for Language teachers to learn how to make use of ICT; namely, MALL and CALL;
   (2) help to create conditions for successfully introduce and implement the Flipped Classroom approach to language teaching classes.
4. Experts in material designing will:

(1)design a curriculum for teachers so that the teachers will have practical outline of Material development course;
   (1) design materials for the course;
   (2) observe teachers development;
   (3) assess materials which will be designed by teacher trainees

8. Funding

- School Authority provides money for initial stages of designing materials, approximately $ 400.
- Government funds publication of worthy teaching materials which comprises $2300.

Approximately$ 2700 is budget for the course.

paper	$100	Director's Fund
dictionaries	$200	Government funding
Salary for experts	$500	Government funding
Salary for teacher trainers	$500	Government funding
Honorarium for teachers	$200	Director's Fund
Internet bills	$100	Government funding
Books	$1000	Government funding

Stationary	$100	Director's Fund
Total:	$2700	

9. Reallocation of the resources

A classroom for weekly courses will suffice for this proposed material development trainings. However, extra technology such as computers, headphones, USB drivers are needed to teaching how to create online Flipped classrooms and CALL/MALL apps. Furthermore, dictionaries, books, stationary and authentic supplementary materials which will be provided by Government funding will also be placed in these rooms. 30 teachers will be trained at once in one such classroom, which can be considered as a micro language policy (Siew&Baldauf, 2011.).

paper	for teacher trainees and materials
dictionaries	for training rooms
Salary for experts	experts
Salary for teacher trainers	trainers
Honorarium for teachers	teachers
Internet bills	For the internet connection
Books	For the training room
Stationary	For the training room

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