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**THE NECESSITY OF DEVELOPING THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF
PRE-SERVICE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS**

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Introduction

The educational process is a two-way interaction; both the teacher and the student share responsibility for its outcome. Although Michael West famously stated that "a foreign language cannot be taught, it can only be learned," the teacher's role in structuring the learning process remains crucial. Modern demands, rapid innovation, and globalization necessitate a shift in foreign language learning, prioritizing student interests and needs. The learning process must adapt to meet the diverse requirements of learners. In every situation, we must consider the needs of the target audience; a key student need is a teacher who facilitates an engaging, effective, and motivating learning environment, ultimately ensuring success in language acquisition.

Main Part

The professional development of foreign language teachers in higher education institutions involves addressing several key tasks, with mastery of the subject matter being paramount. This includes a strong understanding of foreign language teaching methodology and practice, fostering a creative approach to the profession, cultivating a readiness for self-improvement, and developing strong pedagogical skills. The development of methodological thinking skills in future foreign language teachers is a primary objective within the training system.

Experience shows that many students lack sufficient professional-pedagogical preparation. This highlights a gap between theoretical and practical knowledge. Therefore, the question arises: how can this be addressed?

Improving the methodological skills of future foreign language teachers doesn't solely depend on their fluency. A successful foreign language teacher must not only master their subject but also understand how to integrate the learning process effectively. The teacher's approach must be creative, always considering individual student needs and learning contexts.

Farrell (2019), in his work on realities in foreign language teacher education, highlights two key challenges:

1. The gap between theory and practice.
2. The lack of interaction with experienced teachers.

The author emphasizes that these issues persist in foreign language teacher training (SLTE) systems. Farrell offers solutions for each of these problems. In foreign language teacher training, it's essential to address: the gap between theory and practice.

Future foreign language teachers often enroll in specialized courses and programs to become qualified EFL/ESL professionals. These programs offer structured training, and



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schools often prioritize hiring teachers who have completed such programs. However, this doesn't always guarantee success in the classroom.

While highly qualified TESOL teachers exist, Farrell points out that this isn't always the case in practice. Experienced TESOL teachers can confirm this. To improve foreign language teaching, we must identify and address these systemic issues.

Freeman (2016) argues that foreign language teacher education (SLTE) must bridge the gap between classroom theory and practice. This gap remains a significant challenge. We can address this by focusing on the training of future teachers.

Robinson (1998) notes a significant disconnect between theory and practice in general education. For example, Mardle and Walker (1980) found that teacher training courses often fail to provide sufficient new knowledge and skills, instead serving primarily to confirm or reinforce existing ones.

Over the years, teacher trainers have employed various strategies to make theory more practical, including micro-teaching, service learning, video lessons, and increased emphasis on practice-based teacher education (using Teaching Practice), with greater collaboration between universities and schools.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Developing professional training for foreign language teachers is crucial for creating effective learning environments. As teaching evolves, curricula must incorporate modern methodologies, knowledge, and skills. Teacher training should focus not only on language skills but also on integrating modern educational technologies, bridging the gap between theory and practice, and enhancing pedagogical competencies. To achieve this:

- Curricula need revision and analysis to emphasize pedagogical strategies and technology integration.
- Practical workshops should be implemented to help teachers apply new methodologies.
- Continuous professional development opportunities must be provided.
- Mentoring programs should be established to foster collaborative learning environments.

Investing in the professional development of foreign language teachers will significantly improve the quality of language instruction, increase student engagement, and cultivate a generation of highly skilled and knowledgeable educators.

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