

**MENTAL ENLIGHTENMENT SCIENTIFIC –
METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL****MENTAL ENLIGHTENMENT SCIENTIFIC –
METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL**<http://mentaljournal-jspu.uz/index.php/mesmj/index>**RESEARCH COMPETENCE AS A KEY COMPONENT OF THE PROFESSIONAL
PROFILE OF FUTURE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS*****Dilafruz Sarimsakova****DSc, Associate Professor**Uzbekistan State World Languages University*dilafruz89@gmail.com*Tashkent, Uzbekistan***ABOUT ARTICLE**

Key words: future English language teacher, profession, research competence, professional identity, communicative competence, digital pedagogy, reflective practice, teacher education.

Received: 01.05.26**Accepted:** 02.05.26**Published:** 03.05.26

Abstract: In the context of globalization, digital transformation, and competence-based educational reform, the professional profile of the future English language teacher is becoming increasingly multidimensional. The modern English teacher is no longer expected to function only as a transmitter of linguistic knowledge, but also as a facilitator of learning, a reflective practitioner, a researcher, a mentor, and an agent of pedagogical innovation. This article examines the characteristic features of the profession of the future English language teacher and argues that research competence should be treated as one of its core components. Also, special attention is paid to the role of research competence in linking theoretical knowledge with classroom practice, strengthening professional identity, and supporting continuous professional development.

Introduction. The role of the teacher in contemporary education has undergone a profound conceptual shift. In earlier models, the teacher was largely understood as an authoritative source of knowledge whose primary task was to deliver content and maintain

classroom order. In current educational discourse, however, the teacher is increasingly positioned as a co-designer of learning, an adaptive expert, and an agent of change. This broader conception of the profession is visible both in reform-oriented scholarship on engaged learning (Schlechty, 2009) and in the OECD Teaching Compass, which frames teachers through identity, agency, competencies, and well-being rather than through narrow instructional functions alone (OECD, 2025). In foreign language education, this shift is especially visible because English language teachers must integrate linguistic expertise, communicative mediation, intercultural sensitivity, methodological flexibility, and digital pedagogy into a single professional role.

For that reason, the preparation of future English language teachers can no longer be reduced to the acquisition of subject knowledge and routine teaching skills. It must involve the formation of a holistic professional identity in which knowledge, skills, values, dispositions, and reflective judgment interact. The source text on which this article is based strongly supports this view by portraying the future teacher as a professional whose personal traits, methodological readiness, digital literacy, and research orientation are inseparable from one another. In this respect, the concept of a *professiogram* becomes especially important because it provides a structured description of the qualities and competencies that define successful professional performance.

The *Professiogram* of the Future English Language Teacher

A *professiogram* may be understood as a scientific and methodological model of the professional portrait of a specialist. In teacher education, it identifies the essential personal, psychological, pedagogical, linguistic, ethical, and organizational qualities that enable a teacher to act effectively in real educational settings. For the future English language teacher, this model is necessarily multidimensional, since foreign language teaching requires mastery not only of the target language, but also of teaching methods, classroom communication, intercultural interaction, learner psychology, and continuous professional self-development.

Methods. The source text demonstrates that such a *professiogram* includes personal responsibility, empathy, initiative, flexibility, creativity, emotional stability, tolerance, and self-regulation, alongside pedagogical, communicative, methodological, and digital competencies. This understanding is also consistent with scholarship that presents the future English language teacher as a specialist whose professional image integrates psychological and pedagogical preparedness, methodological readiness, communicative ability, and intercultural awareness (Ibragimov & Abdullayeva, 2008; Jumanazarov, 2021; Lomakina, 1998; Riskulova, 2016). An integrative reading of the *professiogram* further aligns with Avazbaev's view that

teacher preparation should unite methodological, communicative, organizational, and didactic dimensions into a coherent developmental system (Avazbaev, 2001).

International Standards and the Changing Expectations of English Teachers

The expansion of teacher roles is also evident in contemporary language education frameworks. The CEFR Companion Volume broadens the scope of language teaching beyond the traditional four skills by foregrounding mediation, plurilingual and pluricultural competence, online interaction, and the action-oriented view of the learner as a social agent (Council of Europe, 2020). For future English teachers, this means that professional competence cannot be limited to grammatical accuracy or textbook delivery. Instead, teachers must be able to create learning environments that support communication, collaboration, mediation of meaning, intercultural awareness, and reflective use of language in varied contexts.

The implications of this shift are substantial. A future English language teacher must demonstrate high English proficiency, but also the ability to design learner-centered tasks, interpret learners' needs, differentiate instruction, use digital tools meaningfully, and evaluate the impact of teaching decisions. Al-Seghayer (2017) similarly argues that successful ESL/EFL teachers are characterized by the interaction of cognitive knowledge, content knowledge, language proficiency, professional dispositions, and other related pedagogical variables. Research on teacher quality likewise emphasizes that preparation pathways, certification, coursework, and tested proficiency influence effectiveness, while fairness, preparedness, empathy, and high expectations shape students' experience of teaching (Rice, 2003; Thompson et al., 2004; Wayne & Youngs, 2003).

Results. Teacher Knowledge, Beliefs, and Professional Identity

One of the most important insights in teacher education research is that teaching is shaped not only by visible classroom techniques but also by teachers' "mental lives," including their beliefs, prior experiences, values, and implicit theories of learning. Freeman (2002) describes this as the "hidden side" of teaching and argues that teacher knowledge and teacher learning are central to the design of teacher education. This observation resonates with Lortie's (1975) notion of the apprenticeship of observation and with Peacock's (2001) finding that preservice language teachers often enter preparation programs with well-formed beliefs about second language learning. This perspective is particularly important for future English language teachers, whose professional judgments are often influenced by their own prior experience as language learners, by models of teaching they observed in school, and by earlier assumptions about what counts as effective language learning.

Related to this, Wright and Bolitho (1993) show that language awareness is a crucial component of language teacher education because it allows teachers to examine language not simply as content to be transmitted, but as a system to be analyzed, interpreted, and taught strategically. This is highly relevant to English teacher preparation: strong teachers do not merely know English; they understand how language operates structurally, pragmatically, socially, and pedagogically. Such understanding supports more precise feedback, more principled methodology, and more conscious lesson design.

Professional identity research further deepens this argument. Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004) show that teacher identity is not a fixed attribute but an evolving professional construct shaped through experience, reflection, and role interpretation. OECD (2025) echoes this view by placing self-concept at the center of the profession and by defining teaching through the interrelated dimensions of being, belonging, and becoming. From a vocational-development perspective, Holland's (1997) theory of work environments also helps explain why congruence between personal orientations and professional roles can support stable professional motivation and commitment. Thus, the future English language teacher's profессиogram should not be interpreted as a rigid checklist of traits, but as a developmental framework through which identity, competence, and practice grow together.

Research Competence as a Core Integrative Dimension

Within this multidimensional framework, research competence deserves special emphasis. Research competence may be defined as the ability to identify pedagogical problems, formulate questions, collect and interpret evidence, critically analyze teaching and learning processes, and develop justified solutions for practice. In the context of teacher education, it is not limited to writing a thesis or conducting formal academic studies. Rather, it includes classroom inquiry, reflective observation, needs analysis, assessment interpretation, action research, lesson evaluation, and the habit of making pedagogical decisions on the basis of evidence rather than intuition alone.

Discussion. Research competence is system-forming because it connects the other components of the profессиogram. It relies on language proficiency in order to interpret classroom discourse accurately; it depends on methodological competence in order to design and evaluate instruction; it requires digital competence for data collection, online assessment, and resource analysis; and it strengthens reflective competence by turning experience into analyzable evidence. In this sense, research competence is not an extra academic requirement attached to teacher education from outside. It is the mechanism through which the future

teacher learns to transform experience into knowledge and knowledge into improved practice (Freeman, 2002).

Moreover, research competence supports the teacher's professional autonomy. When future teachers learn to investigate their own teaching, they become less dependent on ready-made prescriptions and more capable of making context-sensitive decisions. This is especially valuable in English language teaching, where local realities, learner profiles, motivation patterns, language exposure, technological access, and classroom interaction vary widely. An inquiry-oriented teacher is better prepared to ask why learners struggle with speaking tasks, which feedback strategies improve participation, how online platforms shape engagement, or what forms of scaffolding are most effective for mixed-ability learners.

Motivation, Mentoring, and the Development of Research Competence

The development of research competence is closely connected with academic motivation and professional identity. Self-Determination Theory explains that human motivation is strengthened when the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are supported (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In teacher education, this means that future English teachers are more likely to engage meaningfully in inquiry when they feel capable of conducting it, when they have some ownership over their professional learning, and when they participate in supportive communities of practice.

The source text places particular emphasis on mentoring and school-based practicum as mechanisms through which future teachers integrate theory and practice, strengthen self-determination, and develop a sense of professional belonging. This claim is compatible with contemporary views of identity formation in teacher education, where guided practice, feedback, and structured reflection help student teachers develop confidence and pedagogical judgment. Mentoring becomes especially valuable when it is not reduced to supervision, but instead functions as a research-oriented dialogue in which student teachers learn to notice patterns, interpret evidence, and justify methodological choices.

Digital Pedagogy and Inquiry-Oriented Professionalism

Another major dimension of the future English teacher's profессиogram is digital competence. Contemporary English language teaching requires teachers to work across physical and virtual environments, to use platforms for communication and assessment, to curate multimodal materials, and to evaluate digital resources critically. UNESCO's ICT framework and TESOL's preparation standards both treat digital readiness as a professional, pedagogical, and developmental issue rather than a narrow technical one (TESOL International Association, 2019; UNESCO, 2018).

For this reason, digital pedagogy should be linked directly with research competence: teachers should be able not only to use platforms such as Google Classroom, Padlet, Quizlet, Kahoot, or Zoom, but also to evaluate whether and how these tools improve participation, interaction, and learning outcomes in specific contexts. From a research perspective, digital environments also create new opportunities for reflective analysis. Online quizzes generate data about learner performance; collaborative platforms provide evidence of participation and interaction; and digital portfolios make it easier to document growth over time. When future English language teachers are taught to interpret such evidence critically, digital pedagogy becomes a site of inquiry rather than mere technological adoption.

Implications for Initial Teacher Education

If research competence is accepted as a central component of the profессиogram of future English language teachers, then teacher education programs must be designed accordingly. First, research-oriented tasks should be embedded throughout the curriculum rather than limited to final-year qualification work. Second, teaching practicum should include structured observation, data-informed reflection, and small-scale classroom inquiry. Third, language methodology courses should teach future teachers how to evaluate evidence, not only how to apply methods. Fourth, mentoring systems should support analytical dialogue about real teaching problems. Finally, assessment in teacher education should value reflective and investigative capacities alongside lesson delivery and theoretical knowledge.

Such a model also aligns with current international thinking about the profession. OECD's recent work on teaching highlights the importance of professional identity, agency, adaptation, and continuous growth, while the CEFR Companion Volume calls for language education that is socially situated, plurilingual, mediated, and action-oriented (Council of Europe, 2020; OECD, 2025). Preparing future English teachers for this reality requires more than methodological training; it requires a sustained culture of inquiry in which teachers learn to question, investigate, interpret, and improve their own practice.

Conclusion. The analysis shows that the profессиogram of the future English language teacher should be understood as an integrative professional model that combines linguistic proficiency, pedagogical expertise, methodological flexibility, digital literacy, ethical maturity, communicative readiness, and reflective capacity. Within this model, research competence functions as a system-forming component because it links knowledge with practice, reflection with action, and professional identity with continuous improvement. It enables future teachers not merely to teach, but to understand teaching as an object of inquiry and development.

Accordingly, the preparation of future English language teachers should aim at forming a reflective, inquiry-oriented, technologically competent, and value-conscious professional. Only such a specialist can respond effectively to the demands of modern education, align local practice with international standards, and support learners in increasingly complex linguistic, cultural, and digital environments. In this sense, the development of research competence is not peripheral to teacher preparation; it is one of its most important conditions and outcomes.

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