

NOVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS: NAVIGATING CHALLENGES AND
BUILDING CAPACITY**Mirkabil Alimbaev**

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Annotation. The induction phase for novice English teachers is a critical stage in their professional journey, marked by both significant challenges and opportunities for growth. Literature on the experiences of early-career educators highlights the complexity of teaching in diverse and dynamic classroom environments, underscoring the need for effective support mechanisms. This article synthesizes relevant research on novice English teachers, focusing on the challenges they face, the strategies they employ, and the systemic interventions that facilitate their success.

Key words: novice teachers, classroom management, mentorship programs, reflective practice

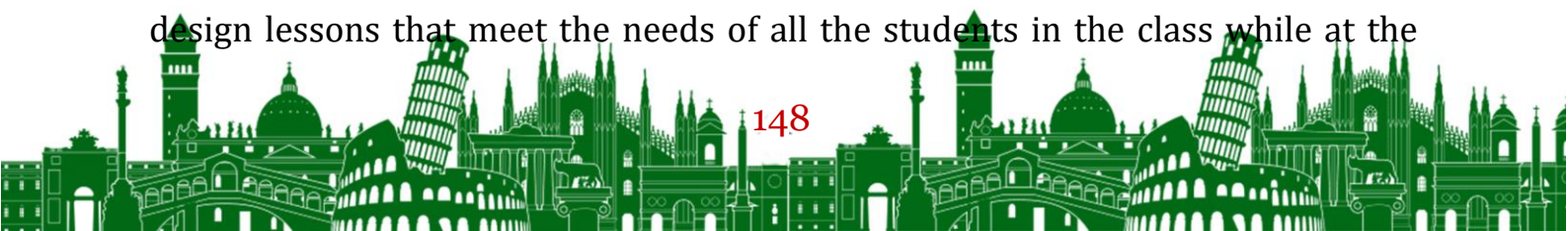
Challenges Faced by Novice English Teachers

Novice English instructors face a number of problems that are related to each other and originate from internal factors and external pressures.

Classroom Management and Student Diversity. It is important to note that the problem of classroom management is always included in the list of challenges that new teachers face. A study by Farrell (2016) found out that new teachers battle to assert their authority and at the same time, foster good relations with the students. This is especially so in English classrooms because learners come from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and have different language proficiency levels. This is supported by Kelchtermans (2017) who also discusses the psychological impact of including all while at the same time ensuring that one has control, especially for a first-timer in such a setup.

Curriculum Demands. The conflict between the need to follow a certain curriculum and the need to be creative is another common issue. As Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) point out, first-year teachers face the challenge of how to help students get good test scores and at the same time, learn to think critically and be creative. This is especially so in English teaching since the subject matter is by its very exploratory in nature.

Assessment and Lesson Planning. These challenges are compounded by the lack of experience in lesson planning and assessment. The teachers have to design lessons that meet the needs of all the students in the class while at the



same meeting the curriculum requirements. Moreover, it is quite hard to determine the students' progress in English since the assessment of writing and speaking skills is rather subjective.

Emotional and Professional Isolation. Feelings of isolation are therefore common among new teachers especially where they cannot draw support from other professionals. It has been seen by Hobson et al. (2009) that the first years can be filled with doubts and worries about the performance and the consequences it will have on the students' learning experience.

Role of Mentorship and Professional Development

Ongoing professional growth is crucial in assisting teachers in adjusting to the changing landscape of education according to Avalos (2011). The importance is highlighted for workshops that cater to obstacles like incorporating technology into teaching methods and embracing creative approaches while also managing linguistic differences, in class settings. These professional growth programs that concentrate on tactics empower teachers to boost student participation and academic achievements effectively.

The Significance of Reflective Practice

Engaging in practice plays a vital role in the development of new teachers by encouraging them to thoughtfully assess their teaching techniques and adjust them to better cater to the individual requirements of their students while honing their strategies progressively over time as suggested by Farrell (2016). Structured reflection assists beginner educators, in recognizing their competencies and areas necessitating enhancement in an organized manner through scrutinizing classroom dynamics and evaluating the efficacy of teaching methods alongside exploring tactics. Engaging in practice not only fosters personal development but also elevates the standard of teaching by promoting decision making based on evidence. Teachers who embrace practice are more adept, at making well informed adaptations that cater to the changing requirements of their students.

Systemic Interventions and Policy Implications

Systemic interventions at institutional and policy level are important in supporting NETs or novice English teachers.

Comprehensive Induction Programs. Professional induction programs help the new teachers to have a clear and sequential process of their practice. These programs usually consist of an introductory phase, stipend meetings and availability of teaching materials. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) pointed out that



the schools with strong induction programs have better retention of teachers and better results of students.

Reduced Teaching Loads. Policies that help in reducing the teaching load of the new teachers to some extent go a long way in reducing the burden on the new teachers. This way they are able to dedicate more time on lesson plan, professional development and even on classroom management.

CONCLUSION

The practice of novice English teachers is influenced by a number of factors which include challenges and support factors. Despite these challenges, proper mentorship, professional development, and institutional support can help these teachers overcome these challenges and be effective in their practice. It is, therefore, important that the education system identifies the needs of these teachers and address them to enable the novice to teachers make a positive impact on student learning and the goals of education.

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