

Developing the EFL Teaching Process through Electronic Teaching- Portfolios Techniques.

Case of: EFL Secondary Schools Teachers in Bejaia.

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Abstract:

This paper explores and examines the role the Electronic Teaching Portfolios on developing the EFL teaching process in secondary schools in Bejaia. For this aim, important considerations have to be taken because we strongly believe that these tools if introduced and implemented by EFL teachers, they can not only serve as developmental and summative assessments for teachers, but they can also contribute in the conceptual experience in developing the teaching process as well. Therefore, the data collected through the teachers' questionnaire enable us to conduct our investigative work in order to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and thus, help promote the teachers' practices and methods. The general research questions directed in the present study are: (1) - How can web-based teaching portfolios bridge the gap between two parties typically not communicating with one another in order to promote the teaching practices? (2) – Do the web-based teaching portfolios prove to be effective tools with which to solicit participation of faculty and teaching staff towards progress? Hence, this article is divided into four parts which are as follows: the first part provides an overview on the process of developing the teaching as a craft, and teachers as professionals. The second part sheds light on the suggested tools and the importance they have on developing the target points. The third part is devoted to analysing and interpreting the data gathered. The forth part is however, devised to provide our readers with constructive recommendations and answers to the research questions posed.

Key words: Teaching Improvements, Electronic Teaching Portfolios, and Developing EFL Teaching.

Introduction

Nowadays, in a world where English is used almost in every field because of the communicative importance it represents, teachers in all educational institutions mainly in secondary schools have to move forward toward a more developed and updated teaching process.

As a matter of fact, we believe that the environmental changes, particularly in teaching and learning, need the very appropriate strategies and long terms planning. This is why it is very important for teachers of the secondary schools to adopt fundamental rules and styles that will form the required strategies which will comply with the accelerating needs of today's

world. This will cement and foster the competition of the global environment of an effective teaching/ learning process.

Consequently, professionals need to acquire certain strategic discourse with an eye to teach English more effectively and purposefully since developing teaching and teachers is based on constantly refreshing and adopting new techniques that suit best the demands of the learners and the world.

1. Statement of the Problem

We know that the teacher's professional development plays an essential role in a successful educational reform. High quality professional development refers to rigorous and relevant content strategies and organizational support that will ensure long-term teacher development. However, all along our teaching experience in a secondary school we have noticed that teaching as a profession and teachers of EFL in secondary schools of the targeted location have remained almost peripheral to the used strategies and methods of more than a past decade, and that the techniques to improve the teaching process have been restricted to seminars that chewed the same ideas.

2. Aim of the paper

Through this research paper, we aim at:

- Setting better connections with technology literacy;
- Emphasizing the need for a long-term commitment to training, not only through formal methods such as conferences or seminars, but informally as well, for instance using internet for electronic learning sessions which we hope can be delivered on an ongoing basis in institutions, or in other public places or even at home and
- Capturing and transmitting to the cohort of teachers' expertise, and figuring out a way to encourage information sharing.

3- Basic Assumptions

Throughout the present study, we will be assuming that:

- Teachers' self-reflection and self-assessment are indeed key factors to ensure effective and successful teaching/learning processes,
- Teachers become more aware about their teaching weaknesses and strengths when they engage in the process and project of electronic teaching portfolios implementation,
- Teachers will, as they perceive it, be able to react to new acquired experiences through this device and thus, develop their objectives in the directions that help them evolve and meet their learners' needs, and
- Teachers' involvement in the project is not only a major aspect of teachers' expertise but a collaborative endeavour through which they will be able to determine how to implement changes into the professional teaching as well.

I. Theoretical Background

According to Teresa Pica, (1985), teaching language learners is also carrying out research on language learning. They both share common concerns. As language teachers and advocating the term research, we would rather refer to a type of reflecting constant personal and practical inquiries which are informed by their own belief systems as they continuously analyze the teaching practice, their students' progress too. They not only plan classroom activities and organize course content but they tend to teach through appropriate techniques and strategies to meet their students' needs as well.

Based on Swales', (1988) claim, Dudley Evans, (1998) describes language teachers as needing to perform five different roles which are: 1)-teacher, 2)- collaborator, 3)- course designer and material provider, 4)-researcher, and 5)- evaluator. The author suggests that in order that language teachers meet their learners' needs and adopt the methodology and activities of the target objective, they must first work in close collaboration with one another, a fact that has been emphasized by Orr, (1995) and who has declared that "collaboration does not have to end at the development stage but rather, it can extend as far as the teaching process occurs."

If we agree with these statements, we will surely share the concept that there should be one ultimate alternative which is to develop the teaching process and teachers as professionals and practitioners of the target language. Therefore, we are quite confident that the delivery of teachers development based on finding out adequate and appropriate new techniques to undertake their teaching task is the key to progress and thus to success, and that learning to teach is a process of a constant and continuous production whose grounding is to supply it with good raw materials and a solid design in short and long term programs. Gina Abu Fadel, July 5th, (2003: 91), states: « *L'enseignement est sans doute l'un des terrains d'expérience les plus fertiles pour celui qui se donne pour objectif de réfléchir sur la pratique.* »

In that sense Rebecca Smoak, (2003: 27), states that teaching is a real challenge in itself and it offers virtually unlimited opportunities for professional growth which is why we must be prepared to find out how language is used in real world situations and how to teach this language. She adds that knowledge of discourse and genre analysis is crucial for every teacher and that we must be ready to develop courses that teach authentic language from many different fields, based on accurate needs analysis and appropriate materials and methodologies. Marjorie Rosenberg, (2004) expresses the urgent need for professional development stating:

Our students deserve the best we can give them and that includes a relaxed but energetic and lively atmosphere in the classroom, creating a community to which both learners and teachers are eager to belong.

Marjorie Rosenberg, 2004: 34

On this perspective, many researchers have chosen to speak about teaching education and most of the time this refers to teacher learning for instance, Strevens, (1976); Spolsky, (1978); Kaplan, (1980), and Larsen-Freeman, (1990). Nevertheless, a great deal of work towards developing teaching and teachers remains to be done.

Jack C. Richards, (1998: xiv), "*Beyond Training*" book examines the nature of second language teacher development and how teacher's practices are influenced by their beliefs and principles. In the preface of the book, the author says that this is the primary focus of teacher preparation toward an orientation that seeks a more holistic approach to teacher development built on the notion of the teacher as critical and reflective thinker and that teaching can be defined in terms of a given set of effective teaching, and that their application is enough to produce good Second/Foreign language teaching. He puts it:

Such competencies, or skills are often identified with procedural and managerial aspects of teaching, such as lesson planning, rules and routines for classroom management, strategies for setting up grouping and seating arrangements, ways of opening and closing lessons, techniques for effective questioning, eliciting, and giving feedback.

Jack C. Richards, 1998: xiv

So, teacher education towards development needs, according to the author, to engage teachers not only in the mastery practice rules but in an exploration of knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and thinking that uniform such practice. We consequently agree that this is a long-term process but it is achievable through ongoing dialogue and contact with colleagues in order to acquire more experience in the field. Marland, 1995: 131, mentions:

...Rather, the classroom actions of teachers are guided by internal frames of references which are deeply rooted in personal experiences especially in-school ones, and are based on interpretations of those experiences.

At this level and as teachers develop their skills, awareness and knowledge, they move from the level of technical rationality as stated by Putorak, (1993), where the stress is on mastery of basic teaching techniques and skills, to a level of critical reflection where teaching is guided by the teacher's personal theory and philosophy of teaching, and is constantly renewed by critical reflection and self-assessment.

Seeking information about preconceived notions of the professional development, David Nunan and Clarice Lamb, "*The Self-Directed Teacher*", (1996: 55), give more importance to collaboration with colleagues under planning and staff meetings because they believe that the professional growth embedded in the potential of collegial collaboration presents "*an essential strand in the fabric of any educational institution.*" They add that this can be enhanced if procedures such as managing the meeting, contributing to the

agenda of the meeting and affording a regularly scheduled time with a degree of sensitivity are adhered to. Rebecca Smoak, (2003) emphasizes this idea saying: *Naturally, to prepare ourselves (teachers/practitioners) to do all of this, we must take advantage of training and professional development opportunities, and we should rely on the expertise of more experienced colleagues.*

Rebecca Smoak, 2003: 27

Furthermore, there exists in the EFL/ESL situation a real need for the continuing professional development. Therefore, in order to meet the demands of the profession, we must create awareness that continuing professional development is deemed to be the systematic maintenance, improvement, and widening knowledge and skills, and the development of personal qualities necessary for the function of professional and technical duties. This development as underlied by Marks, (1990: 8), will aim at updating the teacher with knowledge about the field as well as refining his/her skills in using procedures and exploiting materials.

The teacher should be more aware of his/her role as a facilitator of the process of teaching and learning, of choice made in the domains of methodology, material, interaction; enabling self-propelled and self-monitored further development. Teacher development is thus a continuous process encompassing pre-service preparation, induction into the teaching profession and in-service activities. This might be conducted by teacher-educators (known in Algeria as Inspectors), personnel from the Ministry of education, and professional as English language teacher (known as the English subject responsible: *responsable de matière*) as a community and as a learning resource for the individual teacher.

In a more recent research, compared to Marks', Pennington, (1995: 706), says that teacher change and development require an awareness of a need to change. She defines this development as "*a metastable system of context-interactive change involving a continual cycle of innovative behaviour and adjustment to circumstances.*" This development, as also seen by Jack C. Richards, (1990: 5), is based on two key components: innovation and critical reflection. In an interview with Farrell, (1995), J.C. Richards says:

Critical reflection refers to an activity or process in which experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated; usually in relation to a broad purpose. It is a response to a past experience and involves conscious recall and examination of the experience as a basis for evaluation and decision-making and as a source for planning and action.

Farrel, 1995: 95

Consequently, Farrell, (1996), suggests five core components of a teacher development model which are not isolated but are all connected. These are:

1. Provide different opportunities for teachers to reflect through a range of different activities such as

- Group discussions: it can simply be a group of teachers for regular meetings
- Observation: self-observation, in pairs,
- Journal writing: in a form of a diary, alone or in pairs (Brock et al. 1992, "*Journaling Together*").
- Critical friends: Francis, (1995: 234), says that critical friends can "stimulate, clarify, and extend thinking...and feel accountable for their own growth and their peers' growth".

2. Build in some ground rules to the process and into each activity

3. Make provisions for four different kinds of time:

- Individual: for self-professional development
- Activity: time spent on each activity providing more dialogue, and observation

- Development: Elbaz, (1998: 173), says that "teachers have a common concern to reduce the complexity of the situation, to accept neat and obvious accounts of the causes of the problems."

- Period reflection: to put in mind that "we have an end insight"

4. External input: Ur, (1993: 20-22), says:

Reflection emphasizes personal experiences and promotes a relative neglect of external input, this is why teacher education requires input from vicarious experiences, other people's observations and reflection...and from other people's experiments, and from theories learnt from research and literature.

5. A low affective state: for in-depth reflection to occur which is not automatic; anxiety is present. Therefore, a non-threatening environment should be fostered in the group by the individuals themselves. As the objective is traced, Lange, (1990: 240-250), says, "*It begins the developing teacher's path toward becoming an expert teacher.*"

Freeman, (1982), saw that professional development was through developing knowledge, skills and habits in teachers and these almost always included the use of self-assessment, peer learning and positive attitudes. With a coordination of English language teachers' professional development, Liz England, (1998: 20-23), suggests three steps identifying the changes needed:

- Pre-service teacher education: based on pre-service programs, the aim is to prepare teachers with a variety of techniques and strategies to be fully involved into their profession,

- In-service teacher education and accountability: this is related to an in-service training program to develop teacher's skills and provide the environment for teachers to gain an identity as individual professionals,

- Developing an in-service training program: this should include opportunities for learning and for sharing ideas on one's own, with colleagues and with a supervisor. It should contain a core of self-requirements, elements of

self-assessment, chances for brainstorming, planning and identifying ways of meeting the needs of a specific student, or a group of students, and building on individual teacher strengths.

By viewing professional development as a coordinated effort and a life-long process extending throughout one's career, we thoroughly agree that providing the teachers as professionals with the necessary support for positive efforts is an urgent condition. To reinforce this idea, Christopher N. Candlin and Henry Widdowson in Tony Wright's book *"Roles of Teachers and Learners"* (n.d: 3), state:

We believe that advances in language teaching stress from the independent efforts of teachers in their own classrooms. This independence is not brought about by imposing fixed ideas and promoting fashionable formulas. It can only occur where teachers, individually or collectively explore principles and experiment with techniques.

In addition to this, the real world communication problems of the twenty first century are already on our shoulders. We obviously admit that successful international communication will become more critical than ever and that "Global" matters and difficult problems will be addressed more effectively by people who can speak and write clearly to one another. More, this communication, either we want it or not, will actually take place in English, and this is why it is advisable that teachers become more critical in performing their role and delivering courses being forcefully equipped with the necessary skills to encounter these challenges. For this reason, Watanabe, (2004: 132), states:

...Now in response to the need for international communication, there is a greater emphasis on active language, involving the exchange of both spoken and written information.

This reality leads us to gather the different propositions and positions that concern the continuing professional development and suggest a new technique that goes along with the objectives traced which consist in encouraging self-reflection, self-monitoring, and self-assessment. We also aim through this technique to reinforce the ideas of keeping journals, concerting colleagues, sharing and discussing new points of view, but in a very updated material; we then say "Teaching Portfolios" which will be electronically framed; simply: "E-Teaching Portfolios".

II- Electronic- Teaching Portfolios in Professional Development.

In recent years, there has been an upsurge of interest in the use of electronic materials in the ELT field. Admittedly, technology is continuously changing the way we get to prepare our lessons in order to be able to employ the most effective teaching and learning strategies for more progress. In fact, we are no more allowed to go backward; we have to cope with the tremendous changes that are moulding our world, and accepting these new technologies and doing with in our professional life is a "must do" because as Gerard Koster, (1994:

47), said, "*Nothing is as old as yesterday's newspaper.*" Furthermore, we also believe that the need for more flexibility and freedom in the teaching/learning process has encouraged the digital revolution to be constantly present; if not part of the educational system as it provides an entrée to libraries, research institutions, databases, and myriad other sources of data. As Brown, (1994) has stated: "*The era of methods is over*", and Woodward, (1996), noted that the profession (teaching) is now in a period of "*post-method thinking.*"

We therefore recognise that the electronic transfer of information in the teaching/learning process is so important as it leads to success and progress, and that it is global without any boundaries in order to create chances for cultural and linguistic exchanges impacting on language education and our roles as language teachers.

II- 1. Teaching Portfolios

Educational portfolios, according to Bergman, (1994); Pintrich et al. (1993), are used worldwide because they not only teach to think critically, but encourage also active, independent and self-regulated learners. They have become popular in the educational community because of the different needs expressed either by the teachers or by the learners.

II- 2. Definitions of Teaching Portfolios

A large proportion of the current literature is today available concerning educational portfolios in general and teaching portfolios in particular, although there is no main difference between these two. We would rather accept the fact that teachers in the professional developing phase are simply learners. Therefore, teaching portfolios are a creative form of summarizing and developing stronger teaching. They are as parallel to the more familiar process of presenting one's research achievements, documenting and sharing scholarly activities. They might be seen as an extension of one's curriculum vitae whose reflective and communal activities are a form of personal growth. Frederick and Shaw, (1996: 3), define portfolios as: "*Purposeful collections of student work that exhibit to the student (and/or others) the student's efforts, progress or achievement in (a) given area(s).*"

Through this definition, we openly understand that portfolios are a powerful tool used to demonstrate learning and progress. Arter and Spandel, (1992:36), believe that a portfolio is: "*A purposeful collection of student's work that tells the story of the student's efforts, progress and achievement in a given area.*"

Also, Paulson and Meyer, (1991); Adam and Hamm, (1992: 105), have all traced the same conclusion concerning what a portfolio is since the general consensus among educators is that effective professional development is extremely valuable for teachers as pointed at by Adgers, (1999), and that school improvement is dependent upon professional development as underlied by

Darling Hammond and Mc Laughlin, (1995). According to Retallick and Groundwater Smith, (1996: 13), a teaching portfolio is:

...A compilation of evidence which demonstrates the acquisition, development and exercise of knowledge and skills in relation to...work practices. It offers information and interpretation about a practitioner's philosophy, plans, methods and the students learning outcomes they produce.

In essence, it is a reflective piece that shows the characteristics of effective teaching practice, and highlights evidences of how the teacher has demonstrated learning, skills and understandings.

II- 3. Teaching Portfolios: Profile and Components

Fundamentally, teaching portfolios should present a sampling of the breadth, depth and quality of one's work in order to convey one's abilities, strengths or style and achievements because as defined, these tools can be multi-purposed. They can have a form of summative evaluation as they address an administrative need to summarize one's teaching contribution in a teaching institution. They can also have a formative evaluation if used for self-reflection and growth. More important, not taking these tools as simple folders, the teaching portfolios must be built on some principles which are as follows:

- **Content:** it might include any of the following criteria:

- Statement of teaching goals: to articulate an agreement on a set of goals that all teachers share together. It can also include other educational members in order to constitute what a good teaching is and what characterizes it.
- Teaching methods: this includes the strategies and teaching environment used to meet these goals.
- Documentation and interpretation: this means collecting and assembling different forms of relevant information and evidence.
- Feedback/evidence from students and/ or from peers.
- Samples of work/products of teaching: this is related to syllabi or any other materials to students' papers.
- Reflection on feedback including self-reflection.
- Setting habits of self-assessment.
- Evidence and discussion of professional development involving research, innovation, publications and grants.

- **Format:** for a teaching portfolio to be effective, it should be:

- Structured: through organization, creativity, thoroughness and neatness.
- Selective: since a teaching portfolio is not an archive, it must therefore be concise having an argumentative device aspect, interpretative, and goal-focussed profile.
- Representative: a teaching portfolio must be comprehensive, reflecting the achievements of one's responsibilities.

- **On-going process:** because the aim of a teaching portfolio is to promote and encourage reflective practice so, regular and periodic adding, revising, collecting material are the process to ensure its on-going.

- **Guidance:** one source of guidance to faculty discussion on evaluating teaching is through exemplars or samples.

II- 4. From Teaching Portfolios to E-Teaching Portfolios

Rick Reis, (2004), states:

The landscape of portfolio development has expanded astonishingly with the advent of multimedia and hypermedia. Yet, though the mediums have changed from print on paper to electronic hypertext, the fundamental process of learning portfolio remains steadfast.

According to the quotation, one may understand clearly that basically there is no difference between the traditional teaching portfolio and the digital one, bearing in mind that the advent of the digital technology has progressively done much to change the way in which learning and teaching are shared, demonstrated and analyzed in multimedia and hypermedia environments.

Considered as a powerful method to enhance and assess student learning, Cambridge, (2001: viii), emphasizes on reading about the practices of individuals and institutions, about imagining "*what it might be as we move at ever more accelerating rates into new possibilities.*" Along with these realities, e-portfolios therefore, have emerged as a valuable online tool that learners, faculty, and institutions can use to collect, store, update, and share information.

They also allow the students to reflect on their learning, communicate with instructors, document credentials, and provide potential employers with examples of their work. In educational institutions, e-teaching portfolios are used to easily capture and share teaching and learning methods both to advance pedagogy and for promotions. Helen C. Barrett, (2003), simply calls them "*the revolutionary tool for education and training.*" In a very clear and concise definition Yancey, (2001: 20), states that "*electronic portfolios are created through the same basic process used for print portfolios: collection, selection, and reflection.*" George Lorenzo and John Ittelson, (2005: 1), add that:

E-portfolios are a valuable learning and assessing tool. An e-portfolio is a digitized collection of artefacts including demonstrations, resources and accomplishments that represent an individual, group or institution. This collection can be comprised of text-based, graphic or multimedia elements archived on a web site or on other electronic media such as CD-Rom or DVD. An e-portfolio is more than a simple collection. E-portfolios encourage personal reflection and often involve the exchange of ideas and feedback. E-portfolios can support student advisement, career preparation, the sharing of teaching philosophies and practices. They offer higher education when implemented.

II- 5. How to Use E-Teaching Portfolios

Electronic media and their diversified choices have introduced a host range of strategies for archiving, organizing and reflecting on information about a student's learning. For instance, when using hypertext links, students can access and explore multiple layers of accessible information in order to reinforce the notion of learning as a shared interactive process, inviting both the portfolio author and audience to progressively deepen and widen the process of learning. Because web portfolios often enable the students to work publicly online, they consolidate what Yancey, (2001: 20), calls "*the social action and interactivity*." For this, the e-portfolio holder and user must know how to use electronic communications and respond to their requirements.

II- 6. Basic Conditions

- **A computer:** we do not really need to have a new, fancy, powerful or expensive one and we do not need to be a computer expert to surf on the net. In fact, it is less complicated than programming a video cassette recorder as stated by Anthea Tillyer, 1995: 4.

- **A modem:** to get "online" requires a connection to a central computer. This is called "hardwiring".

- **An internet address or provider:** to get to the heart of the electronic communication, one needs to be provided with internet address or authorization.

These electronic communications can take different forms called "synchronous" and "asynchronous". For the former, we can mention for instance "chatting"; whereas for the second, we can have electronic mails (e-mails), forums which are the most known and used amongst the public user. In the next chapter, we will provide our readers with ample information that concern the practical side of these revolutionary tools when implementing the e-teaching portfolio.

III- Data Analysis and Interpretations

In order to render the theories, we have been relating and defending, more adaptable and more valid to the situations described so as to respond to the needs expressed, there must be an evaluation design. For this purpose, there should be an analysis of the population sample needs for professional development objectives. We therefore, selected some 23 teachers as a respondent population from various parts of the main city; Bejaia.

1. What makes, according to you, a good and an advanced skills teacher?

As the question requires from our participants to express themselves as freely as possible in respect to the content inquiry, the totality (23) has provided us with the following data:

- The one who received a reliable training course and who still believes in learning teaching; all of which is based on three characteristics: authenticity, respect, and empathy;

- The who masters highly the competencies required for a successful teaching,
- The one who detains the ability to explain well, to involve the students in their learning, to create the conditions which enable these learners to study and learn for themselves,
- The one who believes that teaching is practice and self-training; which also rests on the collaborative principles, and the one who is dedicated;
- The one who is committed to his/her profession, rethinks his/her way of teaching in order to move forward, setting clear objectives in respect to the new teaching strategies in accord to his/her learners' needs.

In front of this great range of answers and data, we therefore, believe that the participants are fully conscious about the requirements that make a good and an advanced skills teacher. We then, may add that within these qualities, the ability to contextualize the teaching process is then another condition to motivate the learners, and that the ability of achieving one's teaching aims, being knowledgeable, patient, passionate, open-minded, tactful, and inspiring are the very highest standards of classroom practice.

2. How would you qualify the different changing methods and approaches in the teaching process?

According to the data provided by all our respondents (23), we could collect the following:

- These changes prove necessary;
- There are changes in the form but absolutely not in the content;
- These changes have been done without real analyses;
- They are simply imperfect;
- These are logical as the world is in a perpetual evolution;
- They are positive as they put competency in the front position, and that
- They are suitable and are a reply to the needs of the learners.

Based on the provided data, our interpretation goes towards underlying the teachers' consciousness about the changes the teaching methods and approaches have witnessed. These points of view vary between being positive and negative. These two different positions may make us think that there is a lack of information, inquisitiveness, and control. Because, we strongly believe, if these conditions were available, the teachers' opinions would not be shared and that every effort would be directed into making of these changes a basic foundation, a starting point to cement the teaching/learning process with more research theories, policies of providing the learners with more adequate and updated knowledge, finding out solid strategies for learning and teaching to render the process more effective and a correlation with the new social and economic evolving world.

3. What positive aspects have you noticed over the recent past in EFL teaching theories?

Only fifteen teachers (15) out of twenty three (23), a percentage of (65.21%) responded to this question. This position goes back to the initial one the teachers revealed. However, we could gather some interesting data and therefore gain insights into:

- Adaptation of the teaching contents, contexts, and materials to the learners' needs and level of difficulty,
- Emphasis on giving importance to learning and teaching theories and strategies,
- Introduction of more real activities and tasks to enable the learners get fully involved in the process,
- Encouraging research-based teaching and learning practices,
- Encouraging twin teaching and learning through using electronic learning platforms.

This is really wonderful but we still deplore the static profile our teaching/learning practices are presented with, because there are, and this is according to the data gathered, some factors that hinder these achievements, amongst which, we can state scarcity of the adequate materials, lack of teacher training and formation, inadequacy of the content-based syllabus as seen in our learners case study, and then inappropriateness of the teaching/learning contexts since all the teaching/learning processes take place within one unique context: classrooms, with unique materials: textbooks.

4. Do you think that these changes encourage more the communicative aspect of the teaching/learning process as well as the teacher's development?

- Yes:
- No:

Table 1: Teachers' Position towards Teaching/Learning and Teacher Development Changes Impacts.

Alternatives	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	20	86.95
No	03	13.04
Total	23	100%

Despite the fact of being slightly disappointed by the changes which brought very meagre contributions to the teaching/learning process, an interesting number (20) of the respondents affirm the question, while only three (03) answered negatively. We would rather emphasize on the majority's answer to highlight first that both targeted objectives are based on communication and then, to achieve this, there must be available and omnipresent conditions to maintain this communicative aspect. These conditions can be summarized in teachers' strong willingness to communicate effectively the basics of a

consistent teaching content in respect to the learners' learning styles and levels, in the learners pre-disposition to be fully involved in the process, to take their learning in hand for more self-responsibility, and finally in the teaching staff to facilitate the teaching/learning practices to take place.

5. If yes, please justify your position.

In relation to this request, our respondents (20) said:

In fact these changes encourage a lot the teacher's development. With technology, learners today can have access to the Internet, and so they come to the class very well-equipped with materials and knowledge that they use in the group work to defy the teacher with and compete with him-a reflection point the teacher should think of-go and prepare well-before he comes to the class and in the course of preparation, the teacher develops his linguistic competence, improves his shortcomings and learn from his learners at times.

Rightly from these revealing truths, we could understand that:

- There is a field of competition where teachers and their learners are competitors,
- On each competitive field, there should be a winner and a loser. However, because of the fairness the competition is presented with, there should be only winners because in each case, both of them will gain knowledge, will foster pedagogical inquisitiveness, will train better for more presentation and more assimilation, and
- This might be a sound and intelligent way to induce learners in research-based learning, and give teachers a new role of analysts, synthesizers and moderators to play as well.

6. What new teaching/learning tendencies have you already chosen in order to develop your teaching profession and your students' learning process?

Surprisingly, when reading the participants' data, we have found that all of them have mentioned the "Internet".

This is according to the participants, an action research tool when using the Internet. Learners, when guided and framed, may prepare tasks through web-quests. Teachers assign learners projects periodically therefore, the latter in turn can help with mini-exposés during the regular teaching sessions, and can be group leaders helping the teachers with weak peers.

Rather satisfied with the arguments handed above, we would simply imply that thanks to this professional consciousness, teachers can reinforce, re-adjust, and widen their teaching horizons and thus, provide more constant and meaningful contents to their learners.

7. Can continuing professional development help meet professional standards for teachers?

- Yes:
- No:

Table 2: Teachers' Reaction to Continuing Professional Development

Alternatives	Numbers	Percentages
Yes	23	100
No	00	00.00
Total	23	100%

Our participants (23) show a profound awareness through the shared response. This implies that there is an in-depth-reflection about the what, how, and the when to develop one's professional practices. In replying in the way they did, we understand that our respondents realize consciously that the process of Teaching is a dynamic process and that it continuously needs to be refreshed, revised, and adapted to the needs that emerge, and in acting the sort, they reveal a certain ability to endeavour this progress; they express their desires for change, and mostly through the performance of research, analysis, reflection, and evaluation, they emphasize on the necessity to evolve their teaching skills.

8. If yes, is this achieved through?

a- Having permanent training sessions that form teachers' education

b- Attending conferences, seminars and other colleagues' classes whenever this is possible

c- Finding new strategies and techniques in order to develop both your teaching profession and your learners' language acquisition

d- All of them

Table 3: Principles to Achieving Continuous Professional Development

Alternatives	Numbers	Percentages
A	00	00.00
B	00	00.00
C	00	00.00
D	23	100
Total	23	100%

The totality (23=100%) of the participants have decided on "D"; All of them. This is to focus on two major parts:

1. The necessity to plan for a continuing professional development (CPD) idea;
2. The necessity to implement a CPD program.

As we believe that all the elements stated represent the core basis for the teachers to develop their professional skills which mainly will enable them to get more involved in the staff community and supply simultaneously colleagues, especially the novice with constructive and helpful instructions.

9. Which techniques have you already worked with to develop your teaching process and induce your learners towards successful learning?

Most of the respondents (18= 78.26%) have given some interesting and meaningful answers which are as follows:

- Attending conferences, seminars, and other colleagues' classes;
- Reading on and putting into practice some teaching theories and strategies to break the monotonous practices;
- Registering in electronic-learning and conferences to get supplied with the newest techniques on teaching, mainly those related to assessments;
- Selecting, adapting, rejecting, and supplementing (SARS Technique) lessons based on self assessment activities;
- Pair work, role play, simulation, chorus repetitions, and self-assessment;
- Applying the Competence-Based- Approach (CBA);
- Taking every opportunity that comes to us;
- Implementing Internet-based documentation (IBD), electronic mails, electronic forums/blogs-based discussions;
- Creating a web-site and inviting the teaching staff to share, criticize, supplement, and enrich the craft.

Well, three main techniques which reveal actual and updated ones: SARS, IBD, and CBA, and other original ideas have been mentioned. A giant step towards finding out other new and purposeful techniques which rest most of the time on introducing and implementing technology-based teaching techniques (TBTT) and take advantages from, not only to foster and cement the teaching community but to involve and instruct the learners as well through e-learning platforms for instance to encourage collaboration and cooperation.

10. Have these techniques helped you

a- More effectively reflect on your teaching experiences and construct faculty reflection?

b- Be more responsible of your teaching profession?

c- Evaluate your teaching process and adjust it according to the actual situational needs?

d- Construct a staff of collaboration and cooperation around your teaching profession environment?

e- Provide a host of opportunities to be assessed and corrected by your peers?

f- Get a closer and stronger relationship with your learners?

g- All of them?

Table 4: The Suggested Techniques' Role in Developing the Teaching Process.

Alternatives	Numbers	Percentages
A	00	00.00
B	00	00.00
C	00	00.00
D- E- F	03	13.04
G	20	86.95
Total	23	100%

86.95% responded that these techniques helped them in achieving all the objectives set. Three of them (03= 13.04%) opposed the ideas (D- E- F). It is

clear for the great majority that the techniques are meant to bring changes and involve both characters. However, concerning the respondents who opposed the ideas that these techniques encourage collaboration and cooperation, provide opportunities for peer-assessment, and set relationship between teachers and learners, we may interpret this as lack of experimentation and experience in the techniques' application domain. According to us, this activity needs time, patience, determination and a lot of efforts because, we believe that, developing the process is not unilateral. When speaking about progress and development, this should go towards both directions: the teachers and the learners.

11. Which conditions are often set to apply these techniques in your teaching process?

A good range of conditions the totality of our respondents (23) has provided us with. They have shed light on:

- A reduced number of learners in the class;
- Inviting colleagues to attend classes;
- Time and competence as major factors;
- Appropriate class management and syllabi;
- Materials availability;
- Appraising efforts and rewarding devotion;
- Self-training, teaching pause and reflection;
- Asking questions, and considering learners as mature;

Based on the host number of the suggested conditions or requirements, we can say that our respondents have done well because they have tackled the most important points. Therefore, we may only add that some of the necessary conditions relate indubitably to wisdom the teachers carry with them. They would present as individuals who know nothing but question everything, be curious in knowing, go after everything that contributes in improving their teaching, change and vary in techniques and procedures, evaluate themselves, and give opportunities to colleagues and why not learners to evaluate them.

12. Would you evaluate the techniques, bearing in mind all the factors that contribute in their application? As:

a- positive because they have developed a sense of analysis, criticism, and reflection, and a deep sense of autonomy;

b- positive because they have revealed more collaborative and communicative;

c- Negative because of many contributing factors as: time, space, materials, and the learners' and teachers' predisposition to the new techniques.

Table 5: The Suggested Techniques Evaluation

Alternatives	Numbers	Percentages
A	00	00.00
B	00	00.00
A & B	22	95.65
C	01	04.34
Total	23	100%

95.65% evaluate these techniques as positive because they have enabled teachers develop a sense of analysis, criticism, reflection, and a profound sense of autonomy, and because they have revealed in teachers the existence of a certain character of collaboration and a deep communication.

Accordingly and being aware of the factors that may hinder the right functions these techniques provide, we cannot therefore, ignore that time, space, materials, and both learners and teachers pre-disposition to these new techniques play an immense role in achieving the target objectives. This is why, we believe, that teachers should be prepared and trained for, and the factors of time and space as well as materials must be jointly studied and analyzed.

IV- 1. Recommendations for Professional Development

In order to enhance the status and quality of the teaching profession, to further strengthening learning communities, to carry on developing professionals, the curriculum and related systems of assessments, teachers must be prepared to engage into an ongoing developmental process which aims at improving the quality and standard of teaching and learning as well as professional standards which describe the skills, knowledge and values for effective teaching and reflect the teachers expertise and professional aspirations and achievements based on professional knowledge, professional practice, professional values, professional relationships, and professional engagement; all of which are based on foundational elements and dimensions of effective teaching. For this, we recommend that:

1. Teachers should work productively with colleagues and other professionals to enhance the learning of their students,
2. Teachers need to set a relationship that is underpinned by trust, respect and confidence,
3. Teachers must continually analyse, evaluate and enhance their professional practice,
4. Teachers are recommended to possess a repertoire of inquiry techniques and teaching strategies using a range of tools, activities and resources to engage their learners in effective learning,
5. Teachers had better select and organize the content in logical and structured ways to meet learning goals,
6. It is necessary for teachers to create safe and supportive learning environments and integrate information and communication technologies to enhance learning,
7. Teachers' values have to be based on the principles of flexibility, commonality of language, credibility, simplicity and transparency, and structured around innovative learning experiences,
8. It is better for teachers to fully contribute in professional teams and commit to professional practice.

As part of professional development, we also recommend to incorporate technology into the teacher education curriculum in order to foster a general interaction of education and technology, and set a structure and content of pre- and in-service teacher education, content and structure of teaching materials, and structure and atmosphere of school communities.

Moreover, we recommend teachers to build up a teaching portfolio because it has been proved and demonstrated that it is a technique, presented as traditional or as a new electronic document that records the teachers' achievements, which allows reflection on their teaching and supports applications for tenure and promotion.

Additionally, this technique enables teachers to communicate important traits through its organization, creativity, thoroughness and neatness. Being a living document whose main characteristics are flexibility and availability, it enables the teachers to evaluate their teaching, reflect and act on the results and therefore develop different approaches to teaching.

Furthermore, through teaching portfolios, and more exactly collaborative electronic teaching portfolios –because of the great advances in technology in the field of education- teachers can state personal objectives that they can share and discuss via electronic messages, blogs, or forums with their colleagues or peers to agree as well on working plans to foster their craft because, we would rather say that these new revolutionary techniques are active acts highlighted as forms of self-expression in the professional context of teaching. Therefore, teachers can:

- Work with faculty as peers, relating to various teacher audiences, and understanding the challenges of teaching English to specialized fields and streams,
- Have a talent for tutoring and a clear grasp of the most appropriate practices in secondary school level teaching and learning,
- Promote a pedagogical strategy that aims at raising the visibility of key English for specific purposes concepts, and a more active learning environments,
- Acquire techniques to teach target English, stream and class size, and sensitivity to possible problems developing thus an ability to criticize ones own teaching and solve problems,
- Identify and deal with multiple kinds of problems,
- Take every opportunity to gain professional development and be able to show evidence of the new ideas introduced into classes,
- Work willingly and collaboratively with other teachers, share and be open to new ideas, aware of the skills of other teachers and able to ask for advice and help when needed, articulate a consensus on a set of goals that all teachers might share in common.

Finally, being a formative and an informative technique, teachers are thus advised to review and revise it on a regular basis and blend it with clear expectations and frameworks in the form of evidence in order to promote

reflective practice. In front of these invaluable characteristics the Electronic-Teaching Portfolio offers, we cannot but strongly recommend teachers to use this technique to take the frameworks accomplished by the team under study (the experiment we conducted in our thesis) as models or samples to engage into self-reflective, self-evaluating and competitive process to develop their teaching practices, and thus meet self-needs and their learners' ones, but most importantly find out answers to their worries and questions.

IV- 2. Answers to the Research Questions

- How can the web-based teaching portfolios bridge the gap between parties typically not communicating with one another in order to promote the teaching practices?

When selecting the population sample, we purposefully have targeted this concept: "communication and bridging the gap". We forwardly based this on the fact that apart from some rarely held seminars whose topics are "workshops", the faculty teachers seldom set the communicative principle and this, we strongly believe, affects negatively both, the teaching and the learning practices.

Therefore, in designing and suggesting these techniques, we provide a crucial concept to increasing the efficiency of the teaching process, the teaching content, and improving the learning strategies and competencies. This online sourcing and online processing bridge proves efficient, since it not only fosters the self-directed approach through which the faculty can manage its own learning but it also provides a direct use of available sources embedded in hyperlinks to wealthy online information as well. More, the bridge sets a direct connection with community peers performed through direct responses and interactions, as well as encourages discussions and group work both synchronous and asynchronous through electronic logs, electronic forums, web-sites, and electronic mails, having as a master trump or asset flexibility of time and space, and this will certainly promote the teaching craft and develop the professional teachers.

- Do the web-based teaching portfolios prove effective tools with which to solicit participation of faculty and staff towards progress?

Yes! This can mean web-based teaching portfolios, research portfolios or some combination of the two, especially used in tenure and promotion. According to us, when committed to improving one's teaching on an ongoing basis and obviously constantly seeking to try new things, or to progress in fields of interest using additional technology as the digitized portfolios, one may feel the satisfaction of:

- Participating in workshops for professional development,
- Attending online teaching and learning conferences,
- Encouraging membership in teaching associations,
- Editing publications related to teaching,

- Participating in teaching practices,
- Allowing faculty and staff to observe progress over time,
- Launching projects that involve collaboration, and
- Understanding and judging the teaching process with peers.

This is to underlie that many teaching and learning activities do not only take place in classrooms, or schools; but can take place in other settings to supply the teaching and learning practices with important supports. Therefore, through these techniques in which committee service composed of the teaching community or staff as whole, can contribute to strengthening the profession.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed and presented much of the current literature related to the topic under study. It has moved gradually and purposefully through the different points that constitute our thesis showing how the teaching process that is cemented by the diverse use of methods and techniques to improve and induce the teaching profession. In addition to this, we have also shown how implementing these new techniques in teaching can serve the professional progress and improvement because it characterizes and gives importance to self-evaluation, self-reflection and self-monitoring.

Magnifying this concept, we would rather say that the successful outcomes in using E-Teaching Portfolios would hopefully result at not only modernizing the teaching and learning processes, but introducing the teachers to maintain and expand in a permanent way into the strategies and the structures of the model application of technical "know-how" to didactics and new learning/teaching events.

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