

Teacher Professional Knowledge and Practices for Effective English Language Teaching

Matodzi Nancy Lambani

*Department of English, University of Venda, P/Bag X5050, Thohoyandou, 0950, South Africa
E-mail: Matodzi.Lambani@univen.ac.za*

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ABSTRACT The lack of implementation of professional knowledge and practices by both qualified and unqualified teachers in certain classrooms is a cause for concern, as effective teaching is the cornerstone in support of the academic achievement of learners. Therefore, all teachers are required to be professionally equipped with the requisite knowledge and practices for effective teaching. Learners in classrooms where the language of instruction is English as a second language (L2) face serious challenges of both learning content and language proficiency, so the importance of principles that might facilitate better teaching and learning should not be underestimated. Thus, teachers should abide by the principles for quality teaching to the fullest extent in order to benefit learners. This conceptual paper seeks to discuss some selected, useful professional principles, which teachers need to be aware of and ultimately apply in their daily classroom practice. Although most teachers are aware of these principles, some seem to not implement them. Indeed, researchers have found many teachers wanting in this regard. However, the paper also focuses on professional practices that ideally should permeate some crucial relevant instructional methods and/or strategies. If teachers apply these principles in conjunction with adequate subject knowledge, it might lead to substantial improvement in the academic achievement of learners.

INTRODUCTION

Explaining Teacher Professional Knowledge

Teacher professional knowledge entails the knowledge of the teacher about the school, what the teacher is supposed to do, and how learners learn. However, Shulman (1987:8) highlights some of the critical principles of which teachers should not only be aware of but also apply, if successful teaching has to take place. These include:

- ♦ Broad academic knowledge, related to the general principles and approaches of classroom organization that seem to surpass subject matter.
- ♦ Information about learners and their personalities.
- ♦ Clear understanding of educational environments, including how the group works or classroom dynamics, the governance and funding of school districts, to the character of societies and their beliefs.
- ♦ Information of educational targets, determinations and ethics, and their theoretical and historical groundings.
- ♦ Subject knowledge.
- ♦ Curriculum knowledge, with specific knowledge of the resources and programs that serve as “tools of the trade” for teachers.

- ♦ Academic content knowledge that particular arrangement of content and pedagogy that is exclusively the domain of teachers, their own particular form of professional understanding.

This paper seeks to discuss the following selected fundamental teaching principles for a successful target language classroom lesson.

- a) An explanation of learning outcomes/objectives,
- b) Teacher commitment and provision of conducive and responsive learning environments,
- c) Teacher awareness of the prior knowledge/background knowledge of the learners,
- d) Understanding learner-coding and encoding processes,
- e) Teacher language usage and learner expectations
- f) Comprehension verification
- g) Teacher ability to balance cognitive and language demands.

These principles are addressed because some professional teachers seem to ignore them, even if they are aware of their importance in the development of learner proficiency, while others might not apply them simply because of a lack of knowledge. Hence, this is an attempt to shed more light on teacher professional knowledge and practices that should be employed in the classroom.

In many South African classrooms, teachers find themselves teaching subjects they did not specialize in due to a lack of relevant, professionally qualified staff in quite a number of schools (O'Connor and Geiger 2009). Chandler (1989), Tedick and Walker (1994), and Mohammed (2015) confirm that teachers in many classrooms also lack the professional dedication that is supportive of successful learning and the development of language proficiency. This is contrary to the general expectation that teachers should be cognizant of the conceptual and language inadequacies of learners and therefore, improvise ways of improving their proficiency. This might be ascribed to a lack of professional teacher knowledge, skills and motivation or simply an inability by some teachers to implement professional knowledge and practices adequately (Coonan 2003). Consequently, as long as teachers are incapable of applying professional knowledge and practices, successful learning will not take place. On the other hand, it is unclear whether all teachers have the requisite professional knowledge, skills or motivation to link academic concepts or academic content to the contexts in which learners find themselves in order to support the learning process (Salifu and Saram 2013). Hence, uncertainty surrounding the issue of teacher knowledge and understanding of best practices in the language classroom should be a cause for serious concern. Accordingly, effective target-language learning should be dependent on the efforts made by both learners and teachers in facilitating learning, based on the application of the principles inherent in the teaching profession.

Shulman (1987) proposes that each teacher should be equipped with what is known as the 'good teaching principles', in order to improve instructional practices for effective teaching and learning. For instance, teacher subject knowledge is one of the most crucial principles underpinning successful teaching, because the teacher cannot teach what s/he does not know. However, Kyeyune (2003) found that the inability to master English at an adequate level is a huge setback and debilitating hurdle for learners, despite their determined struggle to improve their knowledge levels. On the other hand, the mastery of the English language knowledge is a fundamental qualification for future job opportunities as it enjoys a high, even dominant, and official status in South Africa (Heugh 1995). For

this reason, English teachers should be equipped with knowledge for the effective implementation of professional knowledge and practices, so that they assuage the problems of learners who are expected to master both content and the target language simultaneously. Learners should also be made aware of what they are to learn and for what reason. In particular, teachers are required to explain learning outcomes with the aim of giving learners a sense of ownership and the importance of a given lesson, even if outlining the lesson objectives might be viewed as of lesser significance.

Explanation of Learning Outcomes and Objectives

Uys et al. (2005) and Glossary (2014) advise that the teacher should clearly state and define academic content objectives to learners, because they are likely to achieve the required and presented outcomes. In addition, stating the objectives makes the learning process of learners more meaningful and points to the focus for learning activities to follow. Dean et al. (2015) attest to the fact that learners are motivated to improve their performance and solidify their understanding when teachers provide feedback on learning objectives. Furthermore, teachers are able to identify the level of language proficiency required of learners for understanding a specific concept and then to internalize it. Based on the proficiency level attained, teachers can possibly design language objectives with a much better understanding and simplify difficult academic concepts or terminology. The insight gathered in this process will enable teachers to sequence content objectives in a suitable manner, considering the level of language skills that learners acquire for both current and future learning. For example, learners cannot venture into academic writing and reading before the teacher has identified the knowledge required for specific task objectives. Moreover, if the language structures for learners are identified, teachers will be able to prepare the scaffolding in order to bridge the learning gaps preventing learners from completing specific tasks. Hence, the positive effects of stating the objectives of language learning in the classroom should not be underestimated.

Rothkopf (1972) asserts that informing learners about objectives shows positive results, and this can be demonstrated by the understanding

of the lesson by learners. For this reason, teachers should explain learning goals taking into account the interest of learners and their background knowledge. Learners also have to be shown the relevance of teaching material, as well as instilling the essence of autonomous learning. The intention is that learners should be clear of what they are expected to learn. Again, Presiosi (1990) maintains that the explanation of objectives by teachers, through frequent advising and coaching of learners and avoiding excessive negative feedback, minimizes misunderstanding, frustration and other factors that may inhibit the learning process. On the contrary, Uys et al. (2005) found that most L2 teachers seem to lack the ability to state instructional objectives, linking them to previous lessons. Another factor is that some teachers lack the necessary English language competence beyond that which they had prepared, such as providing relevant examples, prompting responses from learners and offering immediate follow-up tuition or practice (Lambani 2014). Likewise, most teachers are unable to implement an approach, which charts an organizational framework for enhanced, successful and efficient learning. On that account, target language teachers must strive to improve the way in which they present their lessons in order to arouse the interest of learners and develop their proficiencies. In addition, in stating the objectives, there is a need for teachers to provide an environment that is conducive and responsive to learning.

Teacher Commitment and the Provision of Conducive and Responsive Learning Environments

According to Mercer and Mercer (1998), second language teachers should be professionally committed to meet the needs of all learners in the classroom. This would be attainable by setting aside time for planning and evaluating how best they can meet the needs of learners. As planning provides a structure and context for both learners and teachers, teaching practices designed to improve the academic achievement of learners should be immersed in the instructional program. This includes the provision of sustained instruction in the basic learning skills that is appropriate as a teaching strategy for a given class of learners. A class environment where, for instance, the teacher recognizes and

calls each learner by name is a motivational tool, which may encourage learners to learn even beyond the formal classroom setting (Pascarrela and Terenzini 1991). Therefore, teachers should make the best use of learning opportunities that may be achieved through proper planning, a positive attitude towards learners, well-structured activities and most importantly, a commitment to provide a positive learning environment.

According to Roucche and Roucche (1999), good teachers who are committed to effective teaching always improve learner attitudes related to academic success. On the other hand, indifferent teachers are not able to encourage or motivate learners to succeed educationally. Thus, it is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that learners are motivated with the intention of activating and connecting that which they have already learnt with the new information due to be imbued. Ehrenberg (1981) and Lambani (2014) confirm that central to helping learners to absorb new information, a process of linking prior knowledge and current knowledge should take place. However, in most cases learners are unable to activate and connect these two knowledge spheres due to poor vocabulary, and hence, the teacher is required to provide a conducive and responsive learning environment for meaningful learning to be effected.

Both Tiffen (1969) and Kyeyune (2003) confirm that some teachers simply assume that their learners understand the lesson when in fact they do not. In addition, teachers take the linguistic incompetence (lack of a sufficient level of literacy) of learners for granted and assume their failure to understand is only caused by a lack of care for schoolwork. On the other hand, teachers of other subjects in the school curriculum solely focus on content and care less about the target language competence forgetting that these cannot be separated. In order to improve the target language competence of learners, Breiseth (2015) advises teachers to encourage learners to read schoolbooks, as well as to do reading simply for pleasure and relaxation. In this way, learners will develop the spirit of independent learning and gain new knowledge, in particular broadening their vocabulary through reading. Therefore, learners should be made aware of what assistance to provide to them to learn better, and also develop a broader range of problem-solving skills so that they freely experiment with familiar and unfamiliar learning strategies.

Cohen (2003) further supports the notion that teachers have to make decisions about how to approach language tasks, which can expand the knowledge base of learners. For instance, learners should be empowered to observe and self-evaluate their performances including transferring successful strategies to new learning environments. Smittle (2003) emphasizes that these goals can be achieved if teachers engage in professional development and constantly embrace change in their quest for self-improvement and progress of learners. Similarly, teacher awareness of the background knowledge of learners assists them in identifying language knowledge gaps, which should be filled.

Teacher Awareness of the Prior Knowledge/Background Knowledge of Learners

Prior knowledge entails the knowledge that learners bring into the formal education setting, because they arrive with a variety of knowledge expertise, principles, ideas and practices that considerably influence what they see about the environment and how they arrange and understand it. This in turn affects their capabilities to recall, reason, solve problems and gain new knowledge (Bransford et al. 2000). However, a lack of relevant prior knowledge creates stumbling blocks for successful learning, because the development and construction of new understanding is achieved by elaborating on previous knowledge through the support provided by knowledgeable teachers (Raymond 2000). In most cases, learners are left to fend for themselves, as some teachers do not activate the background knowledge of learners for current conceptualization. Short (2000) argues that non-English speaking learners, who have to learn concepts through the medium of English, face a more difficult task of meeting a common set of learning standards. Equally, these learners have to focus on the cognitive conceptual demands of a given lesson, that is, learning new subject matter, procedures and tasks, new vocabulary, linguistic structures and academic discourse (Fraser, Meier and Le Roux 1998). For these reasons, teachers have to assist learners by building upon what they already know and in so doing, expand their knowledge base (Hagan 2010). Still, the process has to be done in the target language failing, which no meaningful learning will take place.

Vygotsky (1967) states that language can be learnt effectively if the meaning is attached to words, which form the foundation of the entire learning. The meaning of the word unites the way the person thinks and speaks into spoken thought. Transfer of knowledge is determined and promoted by learning with understanding than simply committing to memory information from a text or a lesson. This experience or idea or meaning, which is the knowledge together with language that the learner brings into the learning environment, is the essential aspect that supports learning (Lemmer 1995). Additionally, in a school-based learning environment, language is used as the primary means of gaining access to knowledge and skills (Ovando 1989). It is, therefore, important that teachers should have the ability to help learners from a poor English linguistic background to acquire both language and knowledge simultaneously, without simply memorizing content. It should be appreciated that these learners come into the school environment after having had to master their primary language and this should not be undermined. Then again, the primary language might interfere with the learning of the target language, because of the differences in structure as well as a lack of exposure to the native language speakers.

Mellisa (2015) maintains that learners bring all they know to the school environment in their home language, and they rely on this strength to learn another language, including being infused with new knowledge and skills. Unless conditions are appropriate and conducive, it is very difficult to learn a foreign language and be so well versed as to be able to study through that medium. In addition, in order to achieve quality learning, teachers have to assist learners to believe that school-based learning takes into consideration their current knowledge. Similarly, Dochy et al. (1999) recommend that teachers use information obtained from formal and informal assessments to help learners acknowledge the influence of different settings, contexts and content regarding their performance. Based on personal experience, the educational structure of most schools does not cater for the prior knowledge of learners, because teachers rely mainly on final examination assessment results and ignore individual strengths and weaknesses of learners. Furthermore, Naveh-Benjamin et al. (1989) maintain that teachers who have infor-

mation about the prior knowledge of learners are able to use it in developing relevant learning materials, improving the organization of a range of topics, and identifying which misconceptions or stereotypes may exist. Likewise, they facilitate the generation of meaning and understanding of learners by helping them to relate new knowledge and previously acquired knowledge (Schandler 1989). Moreover, Jaramillo (1996) argues that teachers can teach learners things that are the next step up from their current skills levels once they have a good and solid grasp of current learning. Nevertheless, most teachers do not employ their professional skills in assisting learners to make a connection between their old knowledge and currently acquired knowledge within the school environment.

Tomlinson and Alan (2000) posit that helping learners develop a sophisticated 'understanding' of the content matter being studied can be a considerable challenge in classrooms where learners have diverse abilities, particularly when some learners experience significant learning disabilities. Consequently, learners who do not understand the content matter of the lesson may develop superficial or erroneous understandings about the topic at hand. Excellence (2000) advises that in order to help learners develop academically teachers should adjust their teaching styles to match the learning and contexts for learning of learners. This assertion is supported by Teaching (1989), who says that learners develop academically when enabled to remember and apply the facts and theories they have learned. In order to establish a solid basis for continuing learning, teachers should have information about the prior knowledge of learners (composed of accurate and inaccurate knowledge previously learnt). Heugh et al. (2006) recommend that teachers, who are supposed to be well-trained, should have cultural competence or an understanding of the culture in English as a First Language (L1), and subject matter knowledge that would assist learners to understand content. In juxtaposition, Ho et al. (2001) emphasize that it is also the responsibility of learners to commit themselves to academic achievement, taking advantage of effective teacher knowledge and practices. Likewise, if proper understanding of the lesson is to take place, teachers have to value the background knowledge of all learners, as well as acknowledge their coding and encoding processes.

Understanding Learner Coding and Encoding Processes

Gagné (1977) describes encoding as a process, which transforms information into an appropriate form to be stored in one's long-term memory. The process involves the retrieval from the learner's long-term memory to the working memory, which is the short-term memory. The presentation or suggestion of an encoding scheme, affects the form in which newly learned material will be stored in the long-term memory. If new concepts are learnt, secondary skills must be retrieved so that they can be recorded as part of the new skill set. If spoken information is being learnt, formally learnt, structured knowledge might be retrieved so that it forms part of a larger significant framework for newly learnt knowledge. Therefore, teachers are expected to guide learners about the recall of various pre-requisites in the process of encoding, using verbal directions.

There are two types of verbal directions used to induce retrieval of previously learnt concepts or knowledge. If a relatively simple concept definition is being learnt, it may be sufficient for directions to stimulate recognition of what has previously been learnt. When more complex rules such as reported speech and past tense are being acquired, it may be desirable for directions to require a recall of subordinate intellectual skills, such as present tense. The learning of the new rule can then proceed satisfactorily, with the assurance that the necessary subordinate concepts are accessible in the working memory (Gagné 1977).

Verbal directions are often used to guide learners, and they suggest rather than specify the form of encoding to be used by learners. Many language rules are learned by providing verbal cuing. Directions that guide the discovery of encoding schemes by learners are very often in the form of questions designed to suggest the required answer. Most teachers prefer this method (Gagné 1977). The effect of questioning is to channel the thinking of learners away from extreme incorrect hypotheses and to speed up the learning process. Questions are also effective in suggesting encoding schemes for information learning (Rothkopf 1972). Teachers should acknowledge the usefulness of, and ensure regular feedback during the acquisition of newly acquired competencies. This should

not be overlooked (Gagné 1977). However, feedback ought not only to come from the external environment, but may also arise from the knowledge or rules previously acquired and recalled by learners. In this way, teachers should implement strategies that will encourage learners to perform beyond their normal expectations. Therefore, a teaching strategy such as prompting will be relevant in improving the communicative abilities of learners.

Prompting is a teaching strategy, which comes in different forms, ranging from verbal cues and partial physical prompts to fully assisted prompts. The importance of prompts is to help learners perform tasks that they could not, or would not, do under normal circumstances. The effectiveness of prompting in teaching new skills is supported by research conducted by Wolery and Wilbers (1994). Hence, prompting is beneficial in teaching oral practice in instances like learning vocabulary and tenses (Doff 1988). As communication between learners and teachers takes place through the medium of language, for that very reason teachers should adapt their language usage to cater for the expectations of learners.

Teacher Language Usage and Learner Expectations

In order to maintain high learner expectations in a given lesson, it is required of teachers to challenge and support individual learners to perform to the best of their abilities. Another factor is that teachers must expect high levels of participation by all learners and understand that limited proficiency does not necessarily mean limited cognitive ability. In particular, teachers have to teach difficult content matter using simplified language through the use of 'sheltered English techniques', which may lead to increased proficiency (Peregoy and Boyle 1993). As the target language plays an important role in everyday second language classroom learning, English teachers are bound to use it when introducing a lesson and expressing ideas related to what is being learned. Conversely, the target language is used to describe, organize, define new concepts for learners, as well as pose questions and tasks that engage and challenge the thinking of learners. In addition, it provides a cognitive tool that is able to play a vital role in shaping learning and thinking. At the same time, learn-

ers in English as a second language struggle to understand many of the discourse rules in the classroom. Therefore, teachers need to employ a dual approach, incorporating language instruction related to a particular lesson being taught (Yi and Ginsburg 2002).

Second language learners expect teachers to be more helpful when introducing a new lesson, such as that when learners experience difficulties, teachers employ teaching strategies to match a particular topic in order to meet learner expectation. Consistently, learners may be provided with opportunities to discuss, reflect upon and practice performing real-life tasks with classroom materials. Also, teachers are expected to provide feedback, which would help learners refine their own use of the language, as well as monitor their own understanding of the lesson. The successful usage of the target language by teachers is considered important, because an opportunity is created for learners to practice and meet their learning expectations (Englert 1984). Besides, the appropriate use of language by teachers should take into account the linguistic difficulties of learners in order for effective communication to take place.

Teacher Awareness of Linguistic Deficiency of Learners and Effective Communication

The research findings by Walqui (2000), Hancock (2002) and Lambani (2014) reveal that some teachers are not fully competent to teach all subjects confidently by means of English Medium of Instruction (EMI), as they are required to do most of the time. Kyeyune (2003) also raises concerns regarding the problem of L2 instruction, which does not only relate to linguistic competence, but has deeper roots in dominant modes of teacher and learner communication. He indicates that there is growing public concern in Africa that poor standards of English among teachers and learners are leading to unsatisfactory results and a lack of quality educational performance. Therefore, teachers and learners have to be equipped with a thorough command of the target language in order to attain communicative competence (Tiffen 1969).

Besides, Krugly-Smolka (1995) and Ortiz (2000) report that teachers seemed ill equipped to deal with the linguistic incompetence of learners, and more generally with learning difficulties in their classrooms. As a result, the inability of

teachers to deal with the linguistic deficiencies of learners causes serious challenges of miscommunication. Ideally, effective communication facilitates the utilization of ideas, objects, techniques and devices, and it is used to plan, design, carry out and evaluate human learning (Ogili 2005). In addition, Smittle (2003) and Cook (2015) suggest that adequate communication facilitates conditions in which learners can be kept to high standards of excellence and their expectations realized, especially in a situation where a good learning class environment is maintained. Another factor that is emphasized is that teachers must ensure checks on the correct pronunciation of words and clarity of personal articulation and in order to prevent any miscommunication (Titlestad 1999). Effective teacher communication helps learners follow lessons and understand discussions in the classroom. Some ways of doing this may include:

- ♦ Pausing frequently
- ♦ Paraphrasing often
- ♦ Emphasizing crucial ideas and terminology through intonation
- ♦ Writing significant terms and concepts on the board.
- ♦ Using pronouns clearly and shortening sentences
- ♦ Increasing the waiting time for learners to answer and process information

When teaching content in English, therefore, the language should be simplified in order to make concepts more understandable to learners. In a separate lesson, the academic language (terminology) necessary to access authentic textbooks and prepare for English language assessments with more complex language should be taught. Although language is simplified when introducing new content, the content has to be kept at a challenging level. Teachers have to identify which level of academic language to use prior to the lesson (during explanation of objectives), and review vocabulary, grammatical structures and functions. They should determine the background knowledge that learners would need to grasp in order to understand the concepts being taught. Teachers can only increase the language demands once the learners have mastered relevant aspects of the lesson. However, sometimes the confidence of learners is built by providing them strategies to approach problems that are presented in a complex language (LAB 2001). Determining and confirming whether learn-

ers are following the gist of the lesson or not is one of the requirements for good teaching that professional teachers must employ at all times.

Comprehension Verification

According to Data (2012), checking the level of understanding of learners throughout the lesson produces a high learning success rate, because the teacher is able to maintain progress based on the ability of learners to respond to questions. More importantly, teachers are able to bring learners to the desired level as the lesson progresses, as well as improve the classroom dynamics through interaction. Furthermore, when learners are engaged through a process of questioning, they pay more attention and problems with discipline will be reduced. Thus, teachers are expected to make frequent comprehension checks by asking learners to indicate that they understand by way of gestures and actions or by giving short answers. In addition, comprehension verification is carried out in order to ensure the understanding of difficult aspects of the target structure in terms of function and meaning. For instance, checking the understanding of learners is vital, because learners must fully comprehend a particular target language structure before any intensive practice of form and phonology is carried out. On the other hand, Graham (2006) suggests that oral explanations by the teacher to the whole class should be kept short and to the minimum by engaging learners in collaborative small group activities. In the same vein, sometimes teachers may encourage learners to display comprehension in collaborative, small group activities, for example, by dramatizing stories using the target language. Moreover, professional teachers would also take into account differences in learning styles and rate of target language proficiency of learners.

Teacher Ability to Balance Cognitive and Language Demands

Crawford (1993) is of the view that teachers should recognize the differences or strengths and weaknesses of each learner during the teaching process. TEP (2014) advises teachers to acknowledge the different learning abilities of learners at an early stage, and to inform them whether or not they are equipped with the requi-

site knowledge or skills in order to succeed. On the other hand, this practice might prove difficult to maintain, because of the overcrowding in most South African public school classrooms. This leaves little time to assess learners individually, let alone informing them of their level of proficiency. Therefore, the least teachers could do is to balance their preparation in order to cater for the worst and more advanced learners in a particular class.

Equally, Trudgill (1992) and Normal et al. (2003) suggest that teachers can address learner differences by using the level of target language proficiency that learners do bring to the classroom as a springboard to teach Standard English, that is, the variety of English used in writing, printing and spoken by educated people and taught to non-native learners. Teachers can carry out the task without belittling learners and/or criticizing their mother tongue as the main aim is to address the language underpinning meta-cognitive functioning and support the development and appropriation of language use.

Besides, Deschenes et al. (1994) suggest a number of ways on how different learners may adapt and respond to instruction and the extent to which they should be involved in the lesson. These include the provision of various instructional materials to meet the individual goals of a learner. However, the subject content and language should be introduced in a manner that offers learners an opportunity to give positive feedback, which implies successful teaching. Content should not necessarily focus on one aspect of teaching and learning, as this denies learners the opportunity to fully master the subject. Therefore, teachers are faced with the formidable task of implementing teacher knowledge and practices, resulting in more satisfactory learning outcomes for all learners regardless of the individual characteristics, personalities, abilities and circumstances or backgrounds of learners.

CONCLUSION

Teachers should ensure that they explain what the lesson is about and also be committed to provide conducive and responsive learning environments to facilitate the learning of English as a second language. The understanding of teachers of the background knowledge and linguistic deficiency of learners about the subject being taught is crucial. The teacher must be able

to present the lesson based on the current level of understanding of the learner. The teacher should guide the learners through coding and encoding processes using verbal directions. The language used should be simplified in order to assist learners in improving their own use of the English language. The understanding of learners can be verified by asking them questions or the use of graphic organizers. During the process of teaching a lesson, teachers should take into account the strengths and weaknesses of individual learners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although most teachers are aware of the professional knowledge and practices for good teaching, it is imperative that they receive in-service training support so that they implement these practices on a regular basis. English curriculum advisors should always remind teachers to incorporate these professional practices in their daily lessons. English language practitioners from universities, in collaboration with advisors, can organize workshops geared to support teachers with English as a second language.

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