

Autonomous Continuing Professional Development for Algerian University Teachers of English

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Abstract

The educational landscape in Algeria has been undergoing significant changes in recent years. Increasing globalisation of academia, economy and culture has highlighted the need for learning English as a tool for education, academic research and publishing, as well as economic and political activities. Efforts to promote the learning of English language cannot overlook teaching quality as an important contributing factor. Yet, the issue of continuing professional development (CPD) that should empower teachers to tackle current as well as new challenges may be receiving little attention in Algerian higher education. There have been attempts to bring the topic to the fore as Algerian universities have started to initiate some work towards quality assurance. Before resources are invested in promoting CPD for teachers of English, we certainly need some systematic analysis and description of the current situation. This paper reports on a survey of sixty-three teachers of English from fourteen Algerian universities. The purpose of this research is to identify: 1- current CPD policies, forms, and stakeholders' attitudes, 2- strategies to enhance CPD for better quality ELT and 3- strategies to promote *autonomous* CPD. On the basis of the findings from the analysis of data collected via a thirty-four-item questionnaire and a focus group, the researcher assesses the current situation of CPD for ELT teachers in Algerian higher education especially in the departments of English and makes some suggestions for improving it. The researcher discusses the challenges and opportunities in current CPD and then attempts to make a case for a CPD that is primarily initiated and managed by the teacher and that this model would be much more effective than institutionally-based models.

Key Words: continuing professional development, autonomous, English teaching and learning, higher education , Algeria