

THE IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

Saidova Zulfizar Khudoyberdievna

*PhD of English linguistics department of
Bukhara state university*

Pulatova Raykhon Akbarovna

Student of 11-7ING-24 of Bukhara state university

Abstract: *Language proficiency in the language of learning and teaching is essential for academic success. Many secondary school learners lack the required academic proficiency in English, the language of learning and teaching.*

Key words: *fluency, assessment, competence, contextualization, benchmark, curriculum, integration, interaction, assessment-criteria*

In today's increasingly interconnected world, language proficiency has become a vital skill for university students. Proficiency in a language not only enhances academic performance but also opens doors to various professional opportunities. Understanding the levels of language fluency is essential, as it allows educators to tailor their teaching methods to meet the needs of diverse learners. Fluency refers to the ability to speak, write, and comprehend a language smoothly and accurately, and it is a key component of language competence.

Assessment plays a significant role in measuring a student's language proficiency. By employing effective assessment methods, educators can gauge the level of a student's competence in various language skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. These assessments are often guided by clear assessment-criteria that outline the expected outcomes for each level of proficiency. This ensures that evaluations are fair and provide a comprehensive understanding of a student's abilities. In the context of language education, contextualization is also crucial. This concept involves situating language learning within real-world scenarios, allowing students to apply their knowledge in meaningful



ways. For instance, when students learn vocabulary related to their field of study, they are more likely to retain the information and use it effectively in their academic and professional lives. Contextualization helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, enhancing overall language competence. To measure language proficiency effectively, it is essential to establish benchmarks that outline the expected levels of achievement. These benchmarks serve as reference points for both educators and students, providing a clear framework for assessing progress over time. By integrating these benchmarks into the curriculum, educators can design lessons that align with students' proficiency levels and facilitate their language development. Curriculum design plays a pivotal role in fostering language proficiency among university students. A well-structured curriculum should integrate various language components, including grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, while promoting interaction among students. Collaborative activities, such as group discussions and peer feedback, enhance interaction and encourage students to practice their language skills in a supportive environment. This not only boosts their fluency but also fosters a sense of community within the classroom. Moreover, the integration of technology in language learning has transformed how students acquire language skills. Digital tools and online resources provide students with access to authentic materials and opportunities for interaction with native speakers. This exposure enhances their language proficiency and prepares them for real-life communication challenges. In conclusion, language proficiency is a multifaceted skill that encompasses fluency, competence, and effective assessment. Through contextualization, benchmarks, and a well-designed curriculum that promotes integration and interaction, educators can facilitate the language learning process for university students. As the demand for proficient language users continues to rise, it is imperative that educational institutions prioritize language development to prepare students for success in an increasingly globalized world. The employment of different language varieties in a language teaching context should meet the learners' educational needs. Cheshire asserts that learning a language is more successful



when done in a variant of the pupils' native tongue. Cheshire further highlights how speakers' educational outcomes are greatly impacted when dialects are valued in the classroom. Furthermore, using dialects may result in benefits for both teachers and pupils depending on the dialect used for communication. Fromkin et al. describe dialects as the methodical ways in which a single speaker or a group of speakers of a language differentiates themselves from other speakers of the same language.

Language and culture go hand in hand, and students who are proficient in English can interact with and understand the subtleties of cultures from English-speaking countries. This is essential for students who want to become global citizens, as suggested by Byram, who emphasizes how studying English helps develop intercultural competence. The ability to communicate and collaborate effectively in English promotes research and creativity among academics from various linguistic backgrounds. Jenkins made the case that English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) research shows how proficiency in the language makes it possible for foreign researchers to exchange ideas and work together on ground-breaking research. English also assumes a significant position as the main language of online learning and communication in the Internet era. English is crucial for online cooperation since it enables students to interact with people around the world and access a plethora of materials. English language ability opens the door to a wealth of cultural and leisure content. According to Crystal, English is a crucial language for gaining access to other cultures since it dominates the global entertainment sector, from television and film to literature and video games. English is useful in the travel and tourism industries. Cameron underlines how communication with English-speaking people and the availability of English language resources in hotels and tourist attractions are made easier by English's status as the world's unifying language. Furthermore, as discussed by Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle, parents who speak English can actively assist their children in their language learning while they are in an educational setting. Speaking and mastering English also boosts self-assurance and empowerment. Crystal contends that learning a language helps one develop personally and feel more



confident. The literature's conclusion highlights the unquestionable significance of English literacy within the context of education. It goes beyond only developing linguistic proficiency to give students access to knowledge, job opportunities, cultural awareness, communication, and involvement in a globalized society. This in-depth analysis highlights the importance of English language competency in education on a variety of levels.

Speaking English is just as important in an educational institution as learning written English because written English is full of examples, and the pedagogy must allow students to practice creating sentences in a specific language while they are learning written models of the language. Students must first become proficient in pronouncing English sounds in order to have effective spoken English abilities. Students of spoken language spend many hours learning how to pronounce English sounds, first in isolated words, then in short isolated sentences, according to Brown most English speakers create phrases that are syntactically simpler than written language, therefore teaching nonnative speakers of the language requires them to speak the written language in addition to possessing spoken phrase qualities.

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