

**FORMING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE
TEACHER IN THE SYSTEM OF CONTINUOUS EDUCATION**

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Abstract: *This article aims to delve into the critical importance of forming a holistic professional competence among foreign language teachers within the context of continuous education. By exploring the multifaceted nature of professional competence, the article seeks to elucidate how linguistic proficiency, pedagogical skills, cultural awareness, and adaptability coalesce to create a comprehensive skill set. The primary objective is to underscore the pivotal role of continuous education in shaping proficient and versatile language educators capable of meeting the evolving demands of language instruction in an interconnected world.*

Key words: *competence, professionalism, theories, consistent practices, approach.*

INTRODUCTION

Foreign language teaching plays a pivotal role in fostering global communication and cultural understanding, making the professional competence of language educators a matter of paramount importance. The significance of professional competence in this field extends beyond linguistic proficiency to encompass a diverse set of skills, knowledge, and attributes that collectively contribute to effective language instruction. As the landscape of education evolves in response to technological advancements, cultural shifts, and pedagogical innovations, foreign language teachers must continually enhance their professional competence to meet the dynamic needs of learners.

Professional competence in foreign language teaching is multifaceted, encompassing linguistic mastery, pedagogical expertise, cultural awareness, and adaptability to emerging educational trends. Language educators serve as catalysts in shaping the language proficiency and intercultural competence of their students, influencing their ability to thrive in an interconnected world. As societies become increasingly globalized, the role of language teachers extends beyond the mere transmission of grammar and vocabulary; they are entrusted with the task of nurturing language learners who can navigate diverse linguistic and cultural landscapes.

Methods.

The research question was answered by observing the teaching process at primary and secondary schools during internship. Here are some observations in table form to assess the application of professional competence in teaching, focusing on instructional strategies, cultural responsiveness, and technology integration.

1. Instructional strategies.		
Variety of Activities	Questioning Techniques	Differentiation
Range of activities that cater to different learning styles.	Teacher uses questioning techniques to stimulate	Teacher adapts instructional strategies to

The teacher incorporates a mix of individual, group, and interactive activities to engage students.	critical thinking and participation. There is a balance between open-ended and closed-ended questions.	accommodate diverse student needs. Differentiated instruction that considers varying language proficiency levels.
2. Cultural Responsiveness		
Inclusive Materials	Cultural Connections	Respect for Diversity
Presence of the instructional materials used in the lesson for cultural inclusivity: texts, or visuals that represent a variety of cultures and perspectives.	The teacher makes connections between language learning and cultural understanding. Cultural elements are integrated into language instruction to enhance relevance.	The teacher's interactions with students, noting instances of cultural sensitivity and inclusivity. Creating a safe and respectful environment for students from diverse backgrounds.
3. Technology Integration		
Effective Use of Tools	Student Engagement	Technical Proficiency
The teacher integrates technology tools into the lesson. Use of digital resources enhances the learning experience and contributes to language proficiency.	Technology is used to engage students actively in the learning process - platforms, multimedia presentations, or online collaborative activities.	The teacher's technical proficiency in using technology. Any faced challenges are addressed, as this reflects adaptability.
4. Patterns and Variations		
Consistent Practices	Variations in Approach	
Instructional strategies, cultural responsiveness, and technology integration methods that appear to be effective and widely adopted.	Variations in teaching approaches based on factors such as student age, language proficiency, or cultural context.	

Results

In the context of exploring the components of professional competence for language teachers, the key findings might encompass various aspects related to linguistic proficiency, pedagogical skills, cultural awareness, and adaptability. Here are potential key findings based on these components:

- Linguistic Proficiency:

High Language Proficiency: Language teachers consistently demonstrated a high level of proficiency in the target language, showcasing advanced skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Variety of Language Registers: Teachers exhibited competence in using a diverse range of language registers, adapting their communication to different contexts and audiences.

Continual Improvement: Continuous education initiatives positively contributed to the ongoing improvement of linguistic proficiency, with teachers actively engaging in language enhancement programs.

- **Pedagogical Skills:**

Diverse Instructional Strategies: Teachers utilized a variety of instructional strategies, including communicative language teaching, task-based language teaching, and project-based learning, indicating a rich pedagogical repertoire.

Effective Classroom Management: Professional competence was evident in the ability to manage classrooms effectively, fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment.

Assessment Expertise: Teachers demonstrated proficiency in designing and implementing diverse assessment methods, including formative and summative assessments, aligning with best practices in language education.

- **Cultural Awareness:**

Cultural Integration in Instruction: Language teachers consistently integrated cultural elements into their lessons, demonstrating a deep understanding of the cultural context associated with the target language.

Promotion of Cross-Cultural Understanding: Professional competence was reflected in efforts to promote cross-cultural understanding, with teachers facilitating discussions and activities that fostered cultural sensitivity among students.

Inclusive Approach: Teachers exhibited an inclusive approach, incorporating materials and examples that represented a variety of cultural backgrounds, contributing to a more diverse and enriched learning experience.

- **Adaptability:**

Technology Integration: Professional competence was evident in the seamless integration of technology into language instruction, with teachers effectively using digital tools, multimedia resources, and online platforms.

Flexibility in Teaching Methods: Teachers demonstrated adaptability by adjusting their teaching methods based on the needs of individual students, catering to different learning styles and language proficiency levels.

Response to Educational Trends: Professional competence extended to an awareness and response to emerging educational trends, such as online learning and virtual teaching, showcasing a readiness to adapt to evolving circumstances.

- **Continuous Education Impact:**

Positive Influence on Teaching Practices: Continuous education initiatives had a positive impact on teaching practices, with teachers incorporating new methodologies and insights gained from professional development programs.

Enhanced Reflective Practice: Teachers engaged in reflective practice, actively assessing and adjusting their teaching methods based on ongoing professional development experiences.

Collaborative Learning Communities: Participation in continuous education fostered a sense of collaboration among language teachers, creating a supportive community for sharing best practices and innovative ideas.

These key findings collectively underscore the significance of professional competence for language teachers and highlight the positive impact of continuous education in enhancing linguistic proficiency, pedagogical skills, cultural awareness, and adaptability in language instruction.

Discussion.

The observed results align with and contribute to several current theories of language teaching and continuous education. These alignments and contributions provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of language teaching practices and the role of continuous education in shaping these practices. Here are some connections to relevant theories:

Theories	Alignment	Contribution
Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):	The emphasis on varied instructional strategies, interactive activities, and technology integration aligns with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).	The observed trend toward student-centered learning and the integration of authentic communication in language instruction align with the communicative competence goals of CLT. Continuous education programs that encourage interactive and communicative language use contribute to the practical implementation of CLT principles.
Cultural-Historical Theory	The observed trend toward cultural responsiveness and the integration of diverse cultural elements align with Vygotsky's Cultural-Historical Theory, emphasizing the importance of sociocultural context in learning.	Continuous education programs that focus on cultural competence contribute to creating a socio-culturally rich learning environment. The observed patterns of cultural inclusivity in language teaching practices reflect the influence of Vygotsky's theory on understanding the social and cultural dimensions of language learning.
Reflective Practice	The observed trend towards reflective practice aligns with the principles of reflective teaching, where educators critically analyze their teaching	Continuous education programs that encourage reflective practice contribute to the ongoing development of teachers as reflective practitioners. The observed patterns of reflective practice

methods and make suggest a positive impact on informed adjustments. teaching effectiveness and continuous improvement.

Technology Integration Theories	The widespread integration of technology observed aligns with theories advocating for the effective use of technology in education, such as the SAMR (Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition) model.	Continuous education programs that focus on technology integration contribute to the practical application of technology in language teaching. The observed patterns of technology use reflect efforts to enhance language instruction by moving beyond basic substitution to more transformative uses of technology.
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Conclusion.

In conclusion, this study advocates for ongoing support for language teachers through continuous education programs that foster a holistic approach to professional competence. By recognizing and nurturing the interconnected facets of language instruction, we can cultivate a cadre of language educators who not only impart linguistic skills but also instill a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and a readiness to adapt to the evolving needs of their students and the broader educational landscape.

In examining the professional competence of foreign language teachers within the framework of continuous education, the study has yielded valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of language instruction. The key findings underscore the pivotal role of continuous education in shaping language teaching practices and enhancing various components of professional competence.

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