BEYOND PROFICIENCY: A COMPREHENSIVE MODEL FOR ASSESSING LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATORS

Dr. R SUBHASHINI

Assistant Professor (SG), Department of English, Saveetha Engineering College, Chennai.
*Corresponding Author Email: subhashiniimran@gmail.com, subhashinir@saveetha.ac.in;
ORCID: 0000-0002-6929-8699

Dr. MANISHA ANAND PATIL

Professor and Head, Department of English, Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu College, Kolhapur, Maharashtra.
Email: manishapatil@rcsc.ac.in

Dr. JESINTHA.J

Assistant Professor, (SS) Rajalakshimi Institute of Technology Department of Humanities and Science.
Email: jesintha.j@ritchennai.edu.in

P.V. VINITHA

Symbiosis Institute of Technology, Hyderabad Campus, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune, India. Email: vinitha.pv@sithyd.siu.edu.in

Dr. SREELATHA R. H.

Assistant Professor of English, Velammal Engineering College, Chennai. Email: sreelatha5497@gmail.com

Abstract

This study delves into the linguistic competency of English language instructors by addressing the limitations of current evaluation methodologies and exploring perspectives on a more comprehensive assessment process. The study explores several assessment procedures, such as standardised tests, classroom observations, self-assessments, and peer evaluations, using a qualitative research methodology that includes in-depth interviews and focus groups with thirty English Language instructors. Results expose the complex character of language competency in educational settings and the inadequacies of one evaluation strategy. The study emphasises the need for context-sensitive assessments and the possibility of complete evaluation procedures. Based on participants' experiences and points of view, an integrated framework is suggested combining several assessment techniques to offer a more complete picture of instructors' linguistic skills. This approach addresses the shortcomings of certain evaluation instruments and aligns the challenging requirements of language instruction in many different environments. Emphasising the need for language competency assessment in continuous professional development, the study offers ideas for implementation including resource allocation, evaluator training, and supporting assessment cultures. In addition to discussing potential future research directions, this article explores the implications for lawmakers, schools, teacher training programmes, and classroom educators. The study concludes that assessing linguistic proficiency using a comprehensive and sophisticated technique will significantly enhance the quality of English language education and learning in general.

Keywords: Linguistic Competence, Teacher Assessment, English Language Teaching, Integrated Assessment Framework, Professional Development, Language Proficiency.

1. INTRODUCTION

English has become the dominant language for worldwide communication, trade, and cultural interaction in the contemporary world. The widespread occurrence of this phenomenon has resulted in an unparalleled need for English language instruction on a global scale, emphasising the importance of English language teachers with high levels of linguistic proficiency. The competence of these educators has a substantial influence on the academic achievements of learners. Thus, evaluating their language skills has become crucial for educational institutions, legislators, and academics.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Globalisation has elevated the status of English from simply being a foreign language to becoming a necessary proficiency for engaging in global society. Crystal stated that English is currently spoken by almost 1.5 billion individuals globally, with non-native speakers surpassing native speakers by a ratio of 3 to 1. The trend has increased the demand for proficient English language instructors with a profound comprehension of the language and the capacity to efficiently explain and educate it to pupils from various linguistic origins (Crystal 2003).

Linguistic competence is the natural ability to understand and use proper grammar by noticing patterns in language. In language training, this idea has grown to include using language well in different social situations which is termed as communicative competence. English language teachers must be linguistically competent. They must excel at grammar, vocabulary, and speech and should be able to use the language well in school and set a good example for their students in how to use language correctly. The challenge is to routinely and accurately assess these abilities to ensure that instructors achieve the required standards.

Conventional evaluation techniques, such as standardised examinations, sometimes fail to fully capture the complex nature of language ability, especially its practical use in the classroom. Bachman and Palmer assert that language aptitude is not a single, unifying aptitude but a composite of distinct language abilities and knowledge (Bachman & Palmer, 1996).

The lack of standardised and comprehensive examination methods are major hindrance in assessing language proficiency. The IELTS and the TOEFL are two of the most popular ways to measure a teacher's English proficiency. However, they are not always reliable indicators of language proficiency and teaching efficiency. Several approaches including classroom observations, self-evaluations and peer assessments are utilized to evaluate students' progress in the classroom which has its advantages and disadvantages.

The goal of this study is to bridge this gap by creating a more thorough and reliable way to check the language skills of ESL teachers by looking at and contrasting different methods and approaches that are already in use. The objective of this study is to make English language instruction better by changing the way teachers are evaluated.

This study investigates the most effective tools and techniques for assessing the linguistic competence of English language teachers, identifies the limitations of current assessment methods and explores ways to improve them. Additionally, it explores the potential for creating a comprehensive assessment framework to facilitate a better comprehensive and precise assessment of linguistic competence. This study proposes more effective and reliable methods for evaluating and developing the linguistic competence of English language instructors by addressing these aspects, thereby providing valuable insights for policymakers, educational institutions, and teacher training programmes.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Importance of Linguistic Competence

The foundation of effective language instruction is linguistic competence. The notion, first presented by Chomsky in 1965, pertained to the intrinsic linguistic ability that permits people to generate and understand an endless quantity of sentences in their mother tongue. Nevertheless, linguistic competence is defined more comprehensively in the context of language instruction, particularly for non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs). Hymes broadened Chomsky's concept in 1972 to incorporate communicative competence, which extends beyond grammatical knowledge to encompass the capacity to employ language effectively in social settings. The intricate nature of linguistic competence for language instructors is emphasised by the dual emphasis on structural and functional aspects of language. Canale and Swain further elaborated that communicative competence encompasses grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence (Canale and Swain, 1980).

Linguistic proficiency is important for English language instructors for several reasons. Instructors play a pivotal role in shaping the learners' language skills. Thus, the level of competence that teachers exhibit directly impacts the input that students receive (Medgyes, 2001). According to Richards, instructors possessing superior linguistic competency are better equipped to explain concepts clearly, give precise feedback, and manage unforeseen language scenarios in the classroom (Richards 2017). Murdoch also noted that instructors possessing good language abilities are generally more confident in their profession and are seen as more authoritative by students (Murdoch 1994). In addition, cultural knowledge frequently correlates with linguistic competence, which enables educators to serve as cultural mediators and promote intercultural comprehension (Byram, 1997).

According to Farrell and Richards, educators possessing strong language skills actively interact with professional literature, participate in conferences abroad, and are part of online teaching communities (Farrell and Richards 2007). The significance of language competence is emphasised further by research demonstrating its influence on student results. A favourable association has been shown between instructors' language ability and students' performance in language acquisition, as evidenced by studies conducted by Tsui and Bunton and Butler (Tsui and Bunton 2000 and Butler 2004)

Current Assessment Methods

Numerous assessment methods, each with its strengths and limitations, are employed to evaluate the linguistic competence of English language instructors. The following section discusses the most widely used methods:

Standardized Tests

Standardised language proficiency tests, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and the Certificate in Advanced English (CAE), are widely used to assess linguistic competence by evaluating various aspects of language ability, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These tests have several advantages, including rigorous development and validation processes that ensure reliability and validity (Chapelle et al., 2008), scores that can be easily compared across different test-takers and contexts (Bachman & Palmer, 1996), and comprehensive coverage by assessing a wide range of language skills (Powers et al., 2009). However, there are several disadvantages, such as the inability to represent the specific language skills necessary for teaching owing to insufficient context-specificity (Elder, 2001; Alderson, 2005) and the lack of a pedagogical focus, since they do not measure teaching-related language usage (Freeman et al., 2015).

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations entail assessing teachers' language usage in real-time teaching settings, which provides information about instructors' practical language abilities and capacity to use English successfully in an instructional setting. This technique captures genuine classroom language use, providing authenticity (Wajnryb 1992). It also gives a contextualised evaluation, demonstrating instructors' abilities to adapt their language to students' levels (Richards & Farrell, 2011), as well as a comprehensive picture by examining both linguistic and pedagogical skills at the same time (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011). However, there are limitations, such as the observer effect, which causes teachers to change their behaviour when observed (Wragg, 2012), subjectivity, as observations can be influenced by observer bias (O'Leary, 2014), and resource-intensive which requires significant time and trained observers (Cosh, 1999).

Self-Assessment Questionnaires

Self-assessment tools enable instructors to reflect on and evaluate their linguistic talents. They frequently take the form of thorough questionnaires or checklists that cover many areas of language ability. These tools enhance reflection by challenging instructors to think critically about their language abilities (Brown & Knight, 1994), and they are low-cost to deploy (Ross, 2006). They also assist teachers in discovering areas for growth, which promotes professional development (Oscarson, 2010). However, there are drawbacks, such as subjectivity, which occurs when teachers overestimate or underestimate their abilities (Butler, 2004), and dependability problems, since self-assessments may not always correspond with more objective measurements (Blanche & Merino, 1989).

Peer Evaluations

Teachers use peer assessments to examine each other's language ability, which is generally done through classroom observations or collaborative activities. This strategy encourages collaborative professional growth and collegial learning (Sluijsmans et al., 2004). It also gives ideas from many viewpoints, drawing on the experiences of individuals in comparable jobs (Topping, 1998), and is cost-effective by leveraging existing resources within the teaching community (Falchikov, 2001). However, there are limitations, such as the possibility of bias due to personal relationships influencing evaluations (Pond et al., 1995), varying standards where different peers may apply different criteria (Cheng & Warren, 2005), and confidentiality concerns, as teachers may be hesitant to provide honest feedback to colleagues (Keig and Waggoner, 1994).

Limitations of Existing Methods

Although each assessment method mentioned above provides useful information, they also have limits when utilised individually. An important problem with present techniques of evaluating language proficiency in education is their lack of comprehensiveness since no single method encompasses all essential features (Freeman et al., 2015). Moreover, several methods, especially standardised assessments, do not consider the distinctive language requirements of the classroom, therefore missing contextual sensitivity (Elder, 2001).
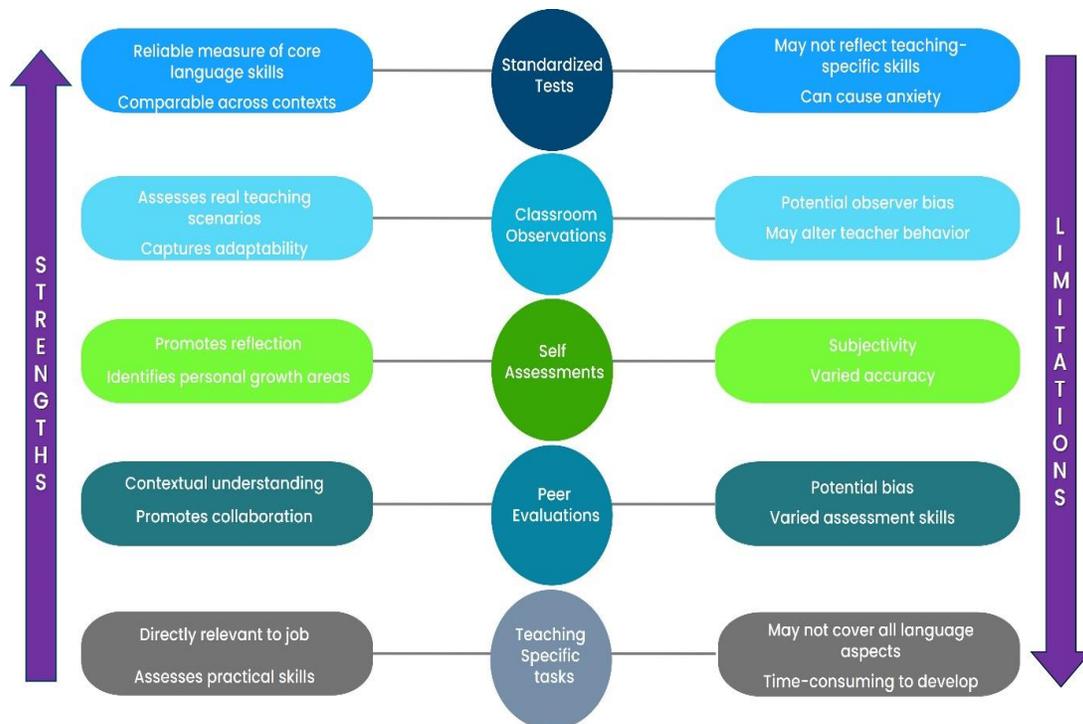

Figure 1: Strengths and Limitations of the Existing Assessment Methods

Practical limitations sometimes provide a difficulty; for instance, techniques such as lengthy classroom observations may need too many resources to be used regularly (O'Leary, 2014). In addition, subjective approaches such as self-assessments and peer evaluations may encounter challenges in terms of reliability and validity when compared to more standardised measurements (Butler, 2004). Another constraint is the insufficient emphasis on teaching-specific language since several examinations fail to sufficiently cover the specialised language abilities necessary for effective instruction (Freeman, 2017). These limits emphasise the necessity of adopting a comprehensive strategy for evaluating language proficiency, which incorporates the advantages of several methodologies while minimising their specific drawbacks. **Figure 1** illustrates the strengths and limitations of the existing assessment methods.

4. RESEARCH GAP

The literature review highlights four key areas where existing research and practice in assessing the linguistic competency of English language instructors are deficient:

Research undertaken in assessing language proficiency has shown some notable shortcomings. A fundamental concern is the absence of comprehensive assessment frameworks. Although various assessment procedures exist, there is a lack of research on the best combination of these methods to offer a complete evaluation of language competence. Most research papers focus on individual assessment techniques rather than looking into synergistic ways that might provide a more comprehensive analysis. Furthermore, few evaluation techniques, notably standardised tests, lay less emphasis on teaching language skills relevant to a certain topic. These tools frequently fail to address the specific language abilities required for effective instruction, emphasising the need for assessment techniques that are more closely aligned with the linguistic needs of the classroom.

Another significant shortcoming is the insufficient consideration given to the perspectives of instructors. While there has been much research on the technical aspects of assessing language proficiency, there has been comparatively little exploration of teachers' viewpoints on these evaluation methods and their perceived effectiveness. This error suggests a disconnect between the development of assessment tools and the actual experiences of educators in the real world. Additionally, several current assessment methods lack specificity and fail to account for the vast range of contexts in which English is taught globally. The lack of tests specifically designed for different situations emphasises the need for research on the flexibility of assessment methods in various educational and cultural environments to improve their effectiveness.

Moreover, there is a lack of longitudinal study in this specific area. The majority of research on linguistic competence is limited in its focus since it lacks extensive, prolonged studies that investigate the progression of teachers' language abilities and the effectiveness of various evaluation techniques in gauging this change over an extended period. Furthermore, the extent to which technology is utilised in evaluation has not been sufficiently examined. Despite the increasing influence of technology in education, there

is a dearth of research on the optimal use of digital tools and platforms for evaluating language proficiency. This suggests a significant area that needs further investigation in future research.

This study seeks to overcome these constraints by proposing and examining an integrated assessment framework that integrates many methodologies, takes into account language skills relevant to teaching, incorporates the viewpoints of instructors, and investigates the possibilities of technology in assessment. It aims to enhance the comprehension of linguistic competence evaluation for English language instructors in a thorough and precise manner.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research design to provide a comprehensive analysis of linguistic competence assessment. The qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the complexities and nuances of linguistic competence evaluation in teaching contexts (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Clark, 2017).

Research Design

This study utilises a qualitative research approach to conduct a thorough investigation of the evaluation of linguistic competency. It utilises a descriptive qualitative technique to provide a comprehensive and detailed portrayal of the issue under investigation (Sandelowski, 2000). This approach is particularly suitable for examining the intricate aspects of assessing language competency and collecting the perspectives and experiences of English language instructors.

The study employs three primary methodologies for data collection: document analysis, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Document analysis is a detailed examination and evaluation of assessment procedures, policy papers, and institutional norms for determining the language competency of English language instructors. The researcher utilised a semi-structured technique to conduct detailed interviews with English language instructors, teacher trainers, and education authorities. The purpose is to gain their viewpoints on existing assessment processes and explore potential changes. Focus group talks are conducted with cohorts of English language educators to investigate shared experiences and produce concepts for improving linguistic proficiency evaluation. The data obtained from these approaches is examined using thematic analysis, adhering to the six-step procedure described by Braun and Clarke (2006): becoming acquainted with the data, creating initial codes, identifying themes, evaluating themes, defining and labelling themes, and preparing the report.

The application of this technique enables the discovery of major themes and patterns within the data, resulting in a full and nuanced knowledge of the techniques and viewpoints involved in assessing language competence.

Ethical considerations

The study follows strict ethical standards, such as collecting informed permission from all participants, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity, and giving them the option to withdraw from the study at any time.

6. DISCUSSION

The results of this qualitative research show that there are many different ways to evaluate the language skills of ESL teachers. By conducting in-depth interviews, focus groups, and document analyses, this study sheds light on the current assessment processes, their limitations, and potential opportunities for improvement. This study synthesises these findings and examines their implications for the area of English language instruction. It also suggests a more complete method of assessing language competency.

The notion of this study is realising that linguistic competency in educational contexts goes beyond simple language abilities. It covers several skills appropriate for the classroom, such as the ability to explain complex ideas in an accessible way, adjust the language to fit students' proficiency levels, and exhibit responsible language usage. To improve comprehension of linguistic ability, current evaluation approaches must be modified, and more complex processes adapted to the specific circumstance should be established.

This research examines a variety of assessment methodologies, including self-evaluations, peer reviews, classroom observations, and standardised assessments. The advantages and disadvantages of various evaluation tools and techniques are also explored. Furthermore, it explores educators' perspectives, offering a vital insight into the real-world experiences of those in charge of setting standards for English language teaching.

Finally, it gives a complete assessment framework that aims to maximise the specific benefits of each strategy while simultaneously addressing the limits of current methodologies.This discussion intends to expand on the current issue of effective linguistic competency assessment and its influence on increasing the standard of English language education worldwide. It does this by thoroughly examining each of these components.

Linguistic Competence Assessment

The study's findings indicate that no single assessment method is sufficient to comprehensively evaluate the linguistic competence of English language teachers. Each method - standardized tests, classroom observations, self-assessments, and peer evaluations has its strengths and limitations. Therefore, a combination of these methods provides a more accurate and holistic assessment.

Standardized Tests

The reliability of standardised examinations, such as TOEFL and IELTS, in assessing grammatical understanding, vocabulary, and pronunciation has been established. These assessments provide a reliable standard for evaluating language skills in various situations. Nevertheless, the qualitative data obtained from interviews with teachers revealed notable constraints: "The IELTS test indicated my proficiency in grammar, but it failed to accurately assess my language usage in a classroom setting," said an instructor. Another individual said, "These assessments fail to evaluate my proficiency in effectively conveying intricate concepts to students or adjusting my language to suit varying levels of understanding." This follows Alderson's finding that standardised assessments have limitations in evaluating actual teaching skills. The research illustrates that while these assessments provide a strong foundation for comprehending language, they are inadequate for assessing the language abilities used in particular situations, which are essential for successful instruction (Alderson 2005).

Furthermore, the study revealed that standardised assessments often provoked anxiety among instructors, possibly impacting their performance. According to one participant, the high-stakes tests may be quite burdensome. It fails to truly represent the nurturing atmosphere we want to establish in our educational institutions.

Furthermore, the research revealed that excessive dependence on standardised exams might result in a limited emphasis on test readiness, hence disregarding other crucial aspects of language proficiency. The problems raised here are in line with the ones described by Shohamy about the influence of standardised testing on instructional practices, often referred to as the washback effect (Shohamy 2001).

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations are now a crucial approach for obtaining valuable insights on teachers' practical use of language and their capacity to create an interactive and communicative learning atmosphere. One educator remarked: "The act of being observed in the classroom provided a more accurate depiction of my actual utilisation of the English language during instruction." It is not only a matter of possessing knowledge of the language, but also how one applies it while interacting with pupils. This is consistent with the viewpoints of Richards and Farrell, who emphasised the importance of assessing language use in authentic educational settings. The study revealed that observations were able to capture nuanced aspects of language skills such as the ability to deliver clear instructions, offer constructive criticism, and engage in spontaneous classroom conversations (Richards and Farrell 2011).

However, the inquiry revealed that there were other issues with classroom inspections. During the monitoring period, a significant percentage of educators reported feeling anxious or changing their usual teaching methods. One participant observed that when people are aware they are being inspected, they tend to adopt a more official and less spontaneous demeanour. The research also emphasised the need of conducting several observations over a period of time to get a more precise assessment of a teacher's

language competency. An individual observation may not include the whole spectrum of a teacher's capabilities or may be impacted by external variables such as student conduct or class material.

Moreover, the credentials and education of observers have been identified as a significant element. According to an administrator, the effectiveness of the feedback is greatly influenced by the observer's proficiency in both language instruction and evaluation.

Self-Assessment Questionnaires

The use of self-assessment questionnaires was shown to stimulate instructors to contemplate their language abilities and pinpoint areas in need of improvement. This is in line with the increasing focus on reflective practice in teacher education (Farrell, 2018). One educator stated: "Self-assessment prompted me to engage in critical thinking regarding my language proficiency, although I have reservations about the accuracy of my evaluation." It was enlightening to become aware of areas that I may need improvement.

The research revealed that self-assessments might be very advantageous in fostering continuous professional growth. Teachers used self-assessments to establish individual language learning objectives and monitor their progress. However, the poll revealed distinct differences in the self-evaluation methods of teachers. It was observed that some instructors had a propensity to overstate their powers, while others tended to underestimate their capabilities. Findings from Butler's analysis of the credibility of self-assessments support these arguments (Butler 2004).

The survey also indicated a need for assistance in the process of self-evaluation. According to some teachers, there was ambiguity over the criterion used for evaluating their language proficiency. Some expressed that clearer instructions would have been beneficial. In addition, the inquiry emphasised the possibility of combining self-assessments with other types of evaluation to provide a more precise depiction. Moreover, the study highlighted the potential of integrating self-assessments with other forms of evaluation to provide a more accurate portrayal. Self-assessments are most beneficial when they are integrated into a broader discussion about professional development, as stated by an education instructor.

Peer Evaluations

It has been shown that peer evaluations provide a collaborative and supportive environment for language competence evaluation. Instructors expressed gratitude for the insights from other educators who had a profound understanding of the distinct challenges they encountered in their learning environment. One educator said that it was quite helpful to hear what their peers had to say as they can provide useful advice because they have a thorough awareness of the challenges that come with utilising the English language in our specific educational setting. The study implies that peer evaluations may catch certain aspects of language competency that other assessment techniques may ignore. These abilities include the capacity to successfully communicate

in a way that is acceptable for the unique cultural environment in which one is functioning, as well as the ability to negotiate unexpected language obstacles in an educational setting.

Nevertheless, the investigation also revealed certain disadvantages associated with peer review. Several educators, particularly in tightly-knit teaching groups, have expressed concerns over the impartiality of peer criticism. One participant said that it may be difficult to provide honest criticism to a close colleague, especially when the feedback is unpleasant. The study also emphasised the need for organisation and instruction in peer assessment procedures. Teachers who have undergone training in providing constructive comments reported having more pleasant experiences with peer review. One department head said that the implementation of procedures for peer observation and feedback resulted in a notable improvement in the quality and effectiveness of assessments.

Furthermore, the research found that peer evaluations were most effective when implemented in a culture that encourages continuous professional development. Schools that offered regular opportunities for peer observation and feedback indicated heightened teacher engagement and more positive attitudes towards assessment in general.

Teacher Perspectives

The semi-structured interviews yielded more profound insights into instructors' viewpoints on the evaluation of language proficiency. The study of the data identified many significant themes. Initially, educators usually endorsed the notion of using many evaluation techniques, acknowledging that a solitary approach cannot fully include the whole spectrum of language aptitudes. Furthermore, several educators emphasised the need of evaluating language abilities that are tailored to instructional environments, as opposed to overall language aptitude. In addition, instructors appreciated tests that offered positive comments and presented clear strategies for growth. Nevertheless, several educators have voiced apprehensions over the feasibility of incorporating extensive evaluation frameworks, highlighting time limitations and the need for sufficient training of assessors. In addition, educators emphasised the need for examinations to be attuned to the specific educational environments and cultural standards of a given locality. These viewpoints agree with recent research that highlights the importance of assessment procedures in language teacher education that take specific situations and focus on growth into account. (Freeman et al., 2015; Richards, 2017)

Framework for Integrated Assessment

This study aims to develop a complete assessment framework to evaluate language abilities in educational contexts based on the results. This framework employs a comprehensive strategy by combining standardised assessments, in-class observations, self-evaluations, peer reviews, and teaching-specific language assignments. The objective is to make use of the unique benefits of each assessment method while simultaneously identifying and coping with their inherent limitations.

Framework components

Standardised tests are used to evaluate essential areas of language ability, such as grammatical proficiency, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Standardised tests are useful instruments for measuring language competency reliably and fairly because they give a consistent set of criteria against which all individuals may be measured. Systematic classroom observations are conducted using a defined checklist to assess the use of language skills and teaching abilities in real-time educational situations. Competent assessors are required to ensure the consistency and reliability of these observations. Assessors must be able to accurately document and assess instructor performance based on predetermined standards. Educators may measure and scrutinise their language proficiency by using self-assessment questionnaires that identify their areas of strength and improvement.

Although individuals' self-evaluations can be employed to discern their opinions of themselves, it is necessary to employ additional evaluation techniques to generate more precise and objective results. In peer assessments, peers offer constructive criticism and commend one another's academic and linguistic capabilities. This strategy helps to enhance professional abilities by allowing for group analysis and assessment. Standardisation and thorough monitoring are required to ensure impartiality and reduce the possibility of bias in the peer review process. Language activities for teaching assess language skills relating to classroom teaching. Typical tasks may include assessing pupils, explaining ideas, and receiving orders. These projects exhibit instructors' abilities to engage their students and express complex ideas in the classroom by using language effectively.
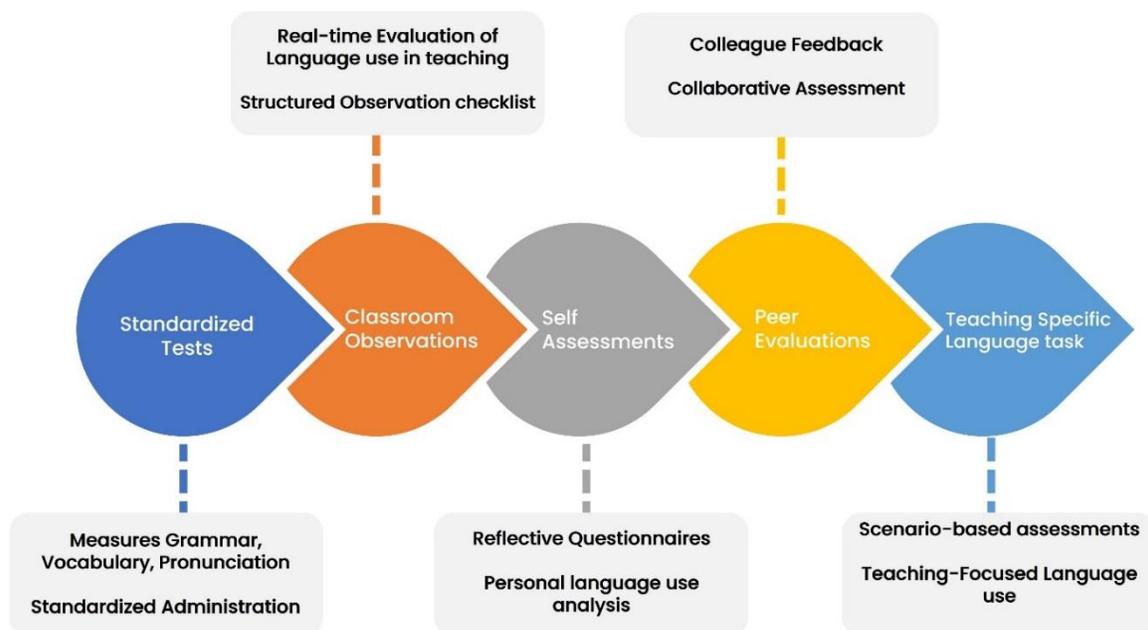

Figure 2: Components of the Integrated Assessment Framework

This integrated assessment framework is designed to provide educators with a comprehensive evaluation system that facilitates their ongoing professional development. The framework endeavours to improve the quality and efficacy of teaching by employing a variety of assessment methods as illustrated in **Figure 2** to ensure a comprehensive and complete understanding of language proficiency.

7. FINDINGS AND SOLUTIONS

Findings

The study indicates that linguistic proficiency among English language instructors is not a unified, singular element but multifaceted. It includes overall language competency and specialised language abilities unique to teaching situations. This discovery highlights the need for evaluation techniques capable of capturing this intricacy.

It is impossible for one single assessment method to fully measure all elements of a teacher's language ability. Standardised examinations accurately gauge overall language competency, but they do not evaluate language abilities particular to teaching. This discovery emphasises the need to use a comprehensive evaluation method. The study also emphasises that classroom observations provide distinct perspectives on instructors' actual language use in genuine teaching scenarios. These observations include facets of linguistic proficiency that other approaches may overlook, such as the capacity to tailor language to the proficiency levels of pupils or elucidate complex topics with clarity. The significance of teacher reflection is paramount, as it serves as a vital instrument for fostering self-assessment and pinpointing opportunities for professional growth. Although subjective, these evaluations motivate instructors to analyse their language abilities and establish personal objectives for progress. Peer feedback is a significant resource according to studies. It provides important insights into linguistic ability, especially in understanding how language is used in certain teaching circumstances. Peers have more experience in the educational setting than external assessors, enabling them to contribute new insights that might otherwise be ignored. The study accentuates the need to consider various academic contexts and cultural norms when assessing language competency. The concept of effective language competency might vary depending on the academic situation. One significant finding is that technology is recognised for its ability to conduct more efficient and comprehensive tests. Nonetheless, the research emphasises issues with fair and equitable access to technology in diverse educational settings. Teachers strongly demand evaluations that measure competency and provide clear avenues for advancement in professional development. This discovery emphasises the need for evaluation techniques strongly linked to chances for professional growth.

Solutions

A comprehensive framework incorporating various assessment methodologies, including standardised tests, classroom observations, self-assessments, peer evaluations, and teaching-related language activities should be constructed. This framework will recognise and address language competency's complex and diverse components, going beyond

the limitations of utilising a single assessment tool. The study suggests creating assessment tools that are tailored to the specific context and recommends the development of customised assessment tools that cater to the special linguistic requirements of teaching English in diverse settings. This may include the development of localised iterations of standardised assessments or the creation of observation checklists that accurately mirror local pedagogical methods. Comprehensive training programmes can be developed for evaluators to ensure that evaluations are consistent and unbiased. This course will cover several assessment methodologies and ways for mitigating bias.

Employing technology is advocated to enhance the assessment process and increase its effectiveness. Examples include creating online platforms for examinations, using digital technology to monitor classrooms in real-time, and producing fortified databases for storing and evaluating assessment outcomes. The significance of professional development could be highlighted by creating an assessment process to facilitate ongoing progress and enhancement. This entails offering comprehensive, constructive comments after each evaluation and formulating personalised improvement strategies based on the assessment outcomes.

Collaborative assessment practices could be fostered by promoting teacher participation in the assessment process. Possible tactics for achieving this goal might include the implementation of peer observation programmes, the facilitation of teacher study groups to address language issues and strategies, and the establishment of mentorship systems that link experienced instructors with novices. Regular review intervals should be established to systematically track and measure advancement over a given amount of time. This means doing thorough evaluations once a year in addition to smaller, more frequent reviews conducted all year long. A supportive evaluation culture can be encouraged through an atmosphere where evaluation is viewed as a tool for professional and personal growth rather than a tool for criticism.

Based on the findings of the study and the proposed framework, it is recommended that various assessment methods should be implemented at specific intervals to balance comprehensive evaluation with practical application. Standardized tests should be administered annually to provide a consistent benchmark for overall language proficiency. Classroom observations are best conducted quarterly to capture seasonal variations in teaching practices and offer regular feedback.

Self-assessment questionnaires should be completed monthly to encourage ongoing reflection and self-improvement. Peer evaluations should occur bi-annually to provide valuable feedback while accommodating the constraints of teaching schedules. Additionally, teaching-specific language tasks should be assessed bi-monthly to regularly evaluate the practical application of language skills in teaching contexts. These recommended frequencies aim to optimize assessment effectiveness while considering the time and resource limitations faced by educational institutions. **Figure 3** visually represents these recommendations.
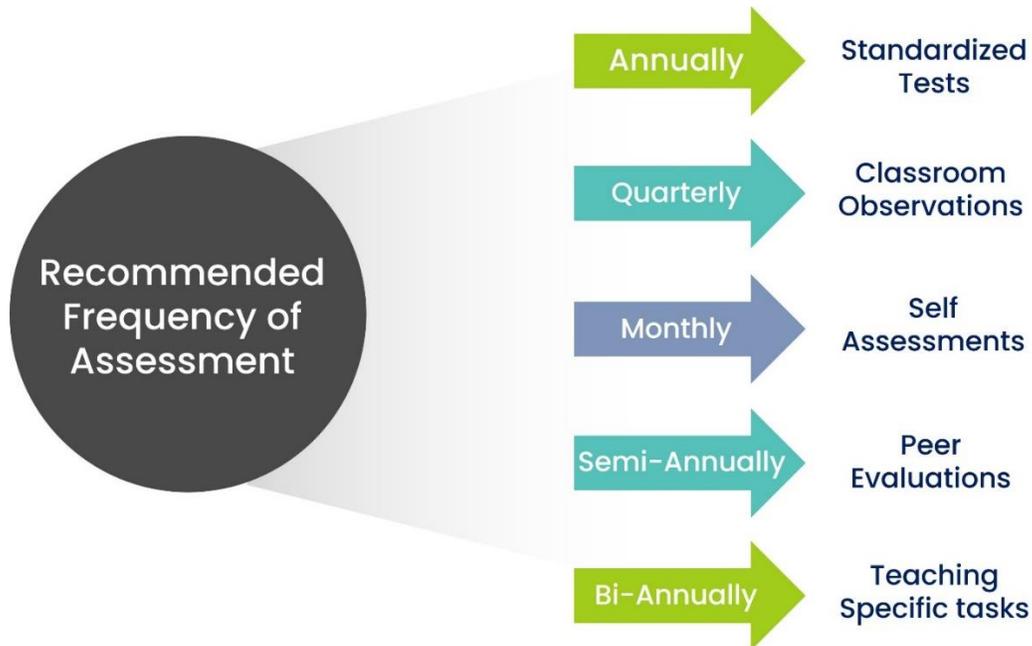
Figure 3: Recommended Frequency of the Assessment Methods for Evaluating the Linguistic Competence of English Language Instructors

These strategies highlight the need to employ a range of evaluation methods that are attentive to the particular circumstances and aimed at fostering advancement.

8. SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDY

This research offers useful insights into evaluating the linguistic abilities of English language instructors. However, some areas require more exploration. Longitudinal studies are necessary to monitor the progression of teachers' language ability and analyse the effectiveness of various evaluation systems in capturing this growth. In addition, conducting cross-cultural comparisons can provide insights into the variations in assessment processes across other cultural and educational settings, facilitating the identification of internationally adaptable best practices. Another crucial field to explore is the integration of technology. Researching the efficacy of different technological tools, such as AI-powered assessment platforms and virtual reality simulations for classroom observations will potentially improve the evaluation process. A more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between teacher competency and student achievement would also be achieved by examining the impact of teachers' language abilities on student learning outcomes as assessed by the integrated assessment framework. It is essential to conduct focused research on the evaluation of non-native English-speaking instructors (NNESTs). The primary objective of this investigation is to investigate the distinctive obstacles and variables linked to the assessment of their linguistic abilities. The utilisation of cognitive psychology and neurolinguistics methodologies to investigate the cognitive components of language proficiency in educational settings may provide valuable insights into the cognitive processes that enhance language training.

9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although this study provides vital insights into English language instructors' linguistic proficiency, its limits must be acknowledged. The study's restricted regional focus may limit its applicability to other groups or places. Additionally, the cross-sectional study only briefly examines linguistic competency evaluation.

However, a longitudinal strategy may better explain assessment procedures and teacher skills over time. The research was also done in a specific cultural environment, which may restrict its applicability to other cultural or educational situations. Moreover, the study's exclusive concentration on English language instructors implies that the results may not be immediately applicable to teachers of different languages, hence limiting the extent of its consequences.

Although the study focused on evaluating instructors, it did not include the viewpoints of students about the language ability of teachers. This omission prevents a more thorough understanding of the efficiency of assessment methods.

10. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The results of this study have substantial implications for a variety of stakeholders in the field of English language teaching:

For Policymakers:

The findings highlight the need for multi-method assessment strategies beyond standardised testing. This would allow for more sophisticated teacher language competency and effectiveness evaluations. The report also emphasises the need for teacher assessment and professional development funding. Continuous evaluation and improvement for educators will help them learn and adapt, improving English language education. Policymakers may strengthen English language education teacher assessment and professional progress by addressing these demands.

For Educational Institutions:

This study highlights numerous significant educational institution factors. First, integrated assessment frameworks that use many ways to evaluate teacher language competency are valuable. Using an integrated framework would provide a more complete picture of instructors' talents and performance. The report also suggests regular training for assessors to ensure fairness and consistency. Trainers may improve their neutrality and accuracy by assessing instructors' classroom performance. These criteria will help teachers and students to be evaluated fairly.

For Teacher Training Programs:

This research emphasises the necessity of language competency evaluation in pre-service and in-service teacher training. With these methods in training programmes, prospective and present teachers will learn how to use successful evaluation strategies in their teaching. This inclusion helps instructors assess the language proficiency of their

students and themselves resulting in improved education. Research shows increasing self-assessment and reflective practices encourage teachers to self-assess and reflect on their teaching, identify areas for improvement, and make informed adjustments. This emphasises professional growth, continuous progress, and self-awareness in teaching.

For English Language Teachers:

This research's results highlight the need to see linguistic competency as a multifarious concept beyond simple language ability. This viewpoint recognises that language competency is multidimensional and includes communication efficacy, contextual appropriateness, and the capacity to negotiate many language usage contexts. Understanding these numerous factors allows a more complicated and comprehensive language assessment and improvement method. The study also stresses the need for self-evaluation and actively seeking mentor and peer feedback. Critical reflection on strengths and weaknesses via self-evaluation helps individuals grow and develop skills. Peer and mentor comments, however, give outside viewpoints that could provide helpful advice and insights, thus improving one's language skills and professional practice. These methods, when used together, help to provide a more complete and successful growth of language competency.

11. CONCLUSION

This extensive investigation into evaluating the linguistic proficiency of English language instructors has uncovered the intricate and diverse characteristics of this essential element of language instruction. The study has identified the strengths and limits of present practices by analysing several assessment techniques, such as standardised examinations, classroom observations, self-assessments, and peer reviews.

It is feasible to cope with this complexity by using the integrated assessment framework that has been recommended. This framework provides an evaluation process that is more complete, egalitarian, and development-focused. In light of the growing demand for English language instruction all over the globe, it is impossible to overstate the need to ensure that teachers are conducting effective evaluations to ensure that they are providing high-quality instruction. By employing more thorough and sophisticated methods for assessing language ability, it is possible to significantly help improve English language education and instruction on a global basis.

References

1) Alderson, J. C. (2005). Diagnosing foreign language proficiency: The interface between assessment and learning. Continuum International Publishing Group.

2) Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). Language testing in practice: Designing and developing useful language tests. Oxford University Press.

3) Blanche, P., & Merino, B. J. (1989). Self-assessment of foreign-language skills: Implications for teachers and researchers. Language Learning, 39(3), 313–338. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1989.tb00595.x

4) Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

5) Brown, S., & Knight, P. (2012). Assessing learners in higher education. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203062036

6) Butler, Y. G. (2004). What level of English proficiency do elementary school teachers need to attain to teach EFL? Case studies from Korea, Taiwan, and japan. TESOL Quarterly, 38(2), 245. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588380

7) Byram, M. (1997). Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence. Multilingual Matters.

8) Canale, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. Applied Linguistics, 1(1), 1–47. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/1.1.1

9) Chapelle, C. A., & Enright, M. K. (2008). Building a validity argument for the Test of English as a Foreign Language. Routledge Member of the Taylor and Francis Group.

10) Cheng, W., & Warren, M. (2005). Peer assessment of language proficiency. Language Testing, 22(1), 93–121. https://doi.org/10.1191/0265532205lt298oa

11) Chomsky, N. (2014). Aspects of the theory of syntax, 50th anniversary edition (50th ed.). MIT Press.

12) Cosh, J. (1999). Peer observation: a reflective model. ELT Journal, 53(1), 22–27. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/53.1.22

13) Creswell, J. W. (2014). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. Sage Publications.

14) Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. (2017). Designing and conducting mixed methods research. Sage Publications.

15) Crystal, D. (2004). English as a global language - second edition. Klett.

16) Elder, C. (2001). Assessing the language proficiency of teachers: Are there any border controls? Language Testing, 18, 149–170.

17) Falchikov, N. (2001). Learning together: Peer tutoring in higher education. Routledge.

18) Farrell, T. S. C. (2018). Reflective language teaching: Practical applications for TESOL teachers. Bloomsbury Publishing PLC.

19) Farrell, T. S. C., & Richards, J. C. (2007). Teachers' language proficiency. In T. S. C. Farrell (Ed.), Reflective language teaching: From research to practice (pp. 55–66). Continuum International Publishing Group.

20) Freeman, D., Katz, A., Garcia Gomez, P., & Burns, A. (2015). English-for-Teaching: rethinking teacher proficiency in the classroom. ELT Journal, 69(2), 129–139. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccu074

21) Freeman, Donald. (2017). The case for teachers' classroom English proficiency. RELC Journal, 48(1), 31–52. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688217691073

22) Hymes, D. H. (1992). The concept of communicative competence revisited. In Thirty Years of Linguistic Evolution (p. 31). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

23) Keig, L., & Waggoner, M. D. (1994). Collaborative peer review: The role of faculty in improving college teaching. ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, 2.

24) Lasagabaster, D., & Sierra, J. M. (2011). Classroom observation: Desirable conditions established by teachers. European Journal of Teacher Education, 34(4), 449–463.

25) Medgyes, P. (2001). When the teacher is a non-native speaker. Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language, 3, 429–442.

26) Murdoch, G. (1994). Language development provision in teacher training curricula. ELT Journal, 48(3), 253–265. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/48.3.253

27) O'Leary, M. (2020). Classroom observation: A guide to the effective observation of teaching and learning. Routledge.

28) Onwuegbuzie, A., & Collins, K. (2015). A typology of mixed methods sampling designs in social science research. The Qualitative Report. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2007.1638

29) Oscarson, M. (1989). Self-assessment of language proficiency: rationale and applications. Language Testing, 6(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1177/026553228900600103

30) Pond, K., Ul-Haq, R., & Wade, W. (1995). Peer review: a precursor to peer assessment. Innovations in Education and Training International, 32(4), 314–323.

31) Powers, D. E., Kim, H. J., Yu, F., Weng, V. Z., & Vanwinkle, W. (2009). The TOEIC® Speaking and Writing Tests: Relations to Test-Taker Perceptions of Proficiency in English. ETS Research Report Series, 1, i–47.

32) Richards, J. C. (2017). Teaching English through English: Proficiency, pedagogy and performance. RELC Journal, 48(1), 7–30.

33) Richards, J. C., & Farrell, T. S. (2011). Practice teaching: A reflective approach. Cambridge University Press.

34) Ross, J. A. (2019). The reliability, validity, and utility of self-assessment. Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation, 11(1).

35) Sandelowski, M. (2000). Whatever happened to qualitative description? Research in Nursing & Health, 23, 334–340.

36) Shohamy, E. (2001). The Power of Tests: A Critical Perspective on the Use of Language Tests.

37) Shohamy, E. (2020). The power of tests: A critical perspective on the uses of language tests. Routledge.

38) Sluijsmans, D., Dochy, F., & Moerkerke, G. (1998). Creating a learning environment by using self-, peer-and co-assessment. Learning Environments Research, 1, 293–319.

39) Topping, K. (1998). Peer assessment between students in colleges and universities. Review of Educational Research, 68(3), 249. https://doi.org/10.2307/1170598

40) Tsui, A. B. M., & Bunton, D. (2000). The discourse and attitudes of English language teachers in Hong Kong. World Englishes, 19(3), 287–303. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-971x.00180

41) Wajnryb, R. (1992). Cambridge teacher training and development: Classroom observation tasks: A resource book for language teachers and trainers. Cambridge University Press.

42) Wragg, T. (2011). An introduction to classroom observation (classic edition). Routledge.