



to simplify because they often show narrow views of different cultures and encourage people to talk about them.

It's clear from the discussion above that culture and language are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture'. If any one of them is separated the other remains incomplete. In EFL or ESL class room the students should be taught English with the culture identity associated with it so that the students can acquire the target language with cultural background and correspond in real life situations. It is observed that many students, who have excellent academic performance in English subject, sometimes, find it very difficult to correspond with native speakers or in real life situations. This might be the result of learning English without proper awareness of its culture. Therefore, the role of culture identity plays in teaching and learning of English as a foreign/ second language cannot be avoided while designing course for EFL/ ESL students and in the class room situations. The teachers should keep in mind the importance of culture identity and must have a prior knowledge of the cultural knowledge of the lesson and material she/he is going to teach the students.

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PROFESSIONAL AND PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE OF EFL TEACHERS

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Abstract

The majority of people believe if a person has a decent command of the language, he will be able to teach it without any problems. However, reality shows the exact opposite. Even some native English language teachers fail to educate the language effectively. Teaching encompasses not only demonstrating the teacher's knowledge but also enabling students to use their potential confidently, this process requires both professional and pedagogical competence from the educators. However, it is not easy for EFL teachers to develop their skills to reach high education quality and enthusiasm of students towards English. In this process, teachers feel extremely exhausted and burned out without the necessary pedagogical competence. In this article, the researcher suggests that EFL teachers need to advance their pedagogical and professional competence by combining a differentiated instruction approach and classroom management techniques in the classroom. These methods are useful in conducting lessons for each grade, especially, for primary school students whose linguistic skills and language acquisition have not fully developed yet.

Key words: EFL teachers, pedagogical competence, professional competence, differentiated instruction, classroom management

In recent years teaching English has become one of the important pillars of education in many countries due to the rapid globalization process and increasing demand of people who want to master this language for different purposes. To improve the effectiveness and success of this process, professionally and pedagogically EFL teachers are in high demand in multiple educational realms. In some countries like Uzbekistan, the process of teaching English as a foreign language has improved a lot due to the efforts of the government in contributing to English learning engagement, yet there are some undeniable challenges that EFL teachers encounter in their professional career path.

It should be admitted that a great number of youngsters show an interest in becoming an EFL teacher, but after getting their qualification in this field they may lose their interest to work in this field. Some reasons are obvious, as they struggle with coping with a rowdy class, teaching the language to the school students who are not enthusiastic to learn it, and a constant state of “burning out” mode which leads them to a lack of creativity and motivation to teach in a classroom and reach the objectives of the curriculum. Other reasons are related to their own abilities and teaching skills that do not match with the modern educational setting environment. Thus, to become successful and resourceful English teaching masters, EFL teachers



must constantly update their knowledge, reflect on their lessons, and learn and grow pedagogically and professionally.

Each profession requires certain skills, knowledge, and expertise to achieve great results and bring benefits to society and science as a whole. So, what competencies and expertise should EFL teachers have so that they and their students become satisfied with the learning and teaching process and master in English language?

According to Cambridge Dictionary, “competency is the ability to do something well”. Professional competence encompasses a blend of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to perform tasks and achieve objectives in a specific profession or occupation. In the realm of education, pedagogical competence denotes the aptitude and capacity of educators to facilitate learning, foster student development, and create conducive learning environments. Although the notions of professional and pedagogical competence of EFL teachers are similar and interchangeable, there is a subtle nuance between them. The distinction between the pedagogical and professional competence of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers lies in the specific focus and application of skills within the educational context.

Wulandari, et al (2020) (6) Lungu (2015) (3) and Husein (2014) (2) cite that a teacher should have both professional and pedagogical competence in EFL teaching; professional competence comprises English proficiency, and, while pedagogical competence refers to the capacity to teach English as foreign language learners.

Professional competence of EFL teachers. The term professional competence is a broad concept that encompasses the linguistic competence of EFL teachers adding the whole skills that constitute their pedagogical competence as well. Foreign language teachers deal with the language itself making it a direct object of their work. Thus, it is highly important for them to master English. Their main aim and purpose are to convey language acquisition and this means they should



represent the language in practice. However, language is not just the block of words that learners need to translate from L1 to L2. Language is a complicated phenomenon that encompasses several skills and aspects including reading, writing, speaking, and listening along with phonetics, grammar, and vocabulary aspects. Furthermore, linguistic knowledge is essential for EFL teachers as it enables them to understand the intricacies of language structure and usage. Proficiency in phonetics helps teachers accurately model pronunciation for students, facilitating their development of clear and understandable speech. A deep understanding of grammar allows teachers to effectively explain grammatical rules and structures, aiding students in constructing grammatically correct sentences. Vocabulary knowledge allows teachers to select appropriate words and phrases for different contexts, enriching students' language skills and expressive abilities. Additionally, comprehension of reading and listening strategies enables teachers to design engaging activities that enhance students' comprehension skills. In essence, linguistic knowledge equips EFL teachers with the tools necessary to guide their students through the complex process of language acquisition effectively.

EFL teachers' self-awareness in updating, upgrading, and refreshing their target language knowledge and mastery and also teaching skills, will be able to attract students to make them more engaged in their learning by becoming more effective in their teaching and able to become a model for the students. Having a good mastery of the target language is one of the qualities of a good English teacher. Richards (2010), mentions 10 qualities or characteristics of exemplary language teachers, one of them is about language proficiency. (4)

Learners tend to look up to their teachers as their model in the process of learning and acquiring the target language. The possibility for the learners to get the experience to communicate with native speakers of English is very small. Therefore, EFL teachers' teaching competence and language proficiency are still very important for the teachers to master or possess. Teacher lack of English proficiency



has been pointed out as one of the biggest obstacles to successful teaching and learning of English.

Pedagogical competence of EFL teachers. The ability to teach a foreign language effectively goes beyond just being a proficient speaker but also requires a set of pedagogical competencies that can enhance the teaching and learning experience. Pedagogical competence primarily pertains to the educator's ability to employ effective teaching methods, instructional strategies, and assessment techniques to facilitate language learning among students. It involves a deep understanding of language acquisition theories, proficiency in lesson planning, and the capacity to adapt teaching approaches to meet the diverse needs of learners. Generally, the pedagogical competence of EFL teachers includes pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), lesson planning, classroom management, assessment and evaluation, classroom language, differentiation and individualization, classroom language, and technological proficiency that would be helpful for them while teaching the language.

Most of the students who major in the EFL teaching context are already aware of different language teaching strategies that refer to the PCK, they can excel in assessing students' knowledge and progress, using different technological tools to engage learners but they still fail to conduct their lessons successfully. Even in primary school teaching great pedagogical skills are required despite the misconception that little students are self-motivated, enthusiastic, and controllable learners. However, the reality shows the difference. The young learners have limited attention span, difficulty in the language development process, and different levels of English (as some students already got acquainted with English in pre-school environment, some of them just started learning English in the 1st grade of school), and limited vocabulary in the target language. As a result, the classroom can become chaotic and disorganized. To facilitate this process, EFL teachers should implement a differentiated instruction approach based on the background knowledge of little



students and apply effective classroom management strategies to provide discipline and an engaging learning environment.

Classroom management. It is essential to manage the class in the primary school realm. These students are not fully disciplined and organized thus teachers should make a great effort to create an optimal environment for teaching. Establishing clear and predictable routines for transitions, activities, and behavior expectations is important as it provides structure and security for young learners. This can be established at the beginning of the academic year and the list can be created with young students to make it sensible and unforgettable. Moreover, setting a time frame for each activity and demonstrating it during the tasks minimizes the difference between slow and fast doers submitting the task deadlines. Additionally, promoting a friendly environment and teaching young learners to work in a group with mutual understanding effects positively to their academic achievement. As it was mentioned by Domitrovich “Classroom management strategies such as visual aids and positive reinforcement between students have been shown to enhance engagement and decrease disruptive behaviors in preschool settings” (1).

Differentiated instruction. EFL teachers should observe and group young students based on their language proficiency levels. This allows teachers to design different activities and engage students to work individually or even together with peers of similar abilities. For instance, beginner students might work on basic vocabulary, while more advanced students focus on constructing sentences. Another important aspect is creating an engaging lesson that includes different multi-sensory activities since young learners have different preferences and needs. Some of them like learning through music and chanting, and some of them through drawing and painting. For example, including flashcards with pictures, sounds, and gestures to teach vocabulary may give better results and reinforce their learning process. Flexible Learning Paths offer various learning pathways or activities to accommodate diverse needs and interests. Providing different activities for the same vocabulary words based on their level provides better engagement of students. For



example, low-level students can find one missed letter in the word, while high-achievers can find out the words from scrambled letters. Research conducted by Tomlinson in 2001 emphasizes the benefits of differentiated instruction for diverse learners, including young children, by promoting individualized learning experiences and improving academic performance. (5)

To conclude, the professional and pedagogical competence of EFL teachers is important to building a successful career and helping their students achieve high language proficiency, better engagement, and creating a positive learning environment. It prevents EFL teachers from getting burned out and demotivated in the process of teaching. Using creative teaching methods such as differentiated approach and effective classroom management strategies helps teachers cope with challenges in pre-school English teaching process and provides great results both for students and the teacher.

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ASSESSMENT TECHNOLOGY OF SPEAKING SKILLS BASED ON A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

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