

Professional Development, Research and Pedagogical Competence on the English Language Proficiency of Foreign English Teachers in Vietnam

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Abstract. Foreign English teachers in Vietnam play an important role in English language education, yet limited empirical evidence explains how professional development, research competence, and pedagogical competence relate to their English language proficiency. This study examined the relationships among these teacher competencies and determined their predictive effects on English language proficiency. A quantitative quasi-descriptive correlational and causal-comparative design was employed. Using stratified random and proportionate sampling, 140 foreign English teachers were selected from accessible English training centers across major provinces and cities in Vietnam. Data were collected through a validated and pilot-tested self-assessment questionnaire measuring professional development, research competence, and pedagogical competence, together with an adapted English language proficiency test. After obtaining the necessary permissions, the instruments were administered through an online survey platform. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, and factor analysis, including structural equation modeling. The findings showed that pedagogical competence had the strongest positive relationship with and predictive effect on English language proficiency, while research competence and professional development demonstrated comparatively weaker direct effects. The structural model further identified pedagogical competence as the most significant predictor of English language proficiency among the variables examined. These findings suggest that although professional development and research competence remain important dimensions of teacher development, effective teaching strategies, classroom management, instructional planning, and other pedagogical skills are particularly important in supporting teachers' language proficiency. The study concludes that professional development programs for foreign English teachers should place greater emphasis on targeted pedagogical training while maintaining opportunities for research engagement and continuous professional learning. Such programs may contribute to strengthening teacher competencies and improving the quality of English language instruction in Vietnam.

Keywords: Instructional Quality; Educator Effectiveness; Language Teaching Strategies; Workforce Capacity Building; Cross-Cultural Classroom Context

Introduction

Education is widely recognized as a major instrument for individual and national development because it equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, values, and competencies needed to participate meaningfully in society. In an increasingly globalized and technologically driven educational environment, improving the quality of teaching has become a priority for educational systems worldwide. Central to this effort is the continuous professional development of teachers, whose professional knowledge, instructional competence, and capacity for reflective practice contribute to the quality of teaching and learning. Research on effective professional development indicates that sustained, collaborative, content-focused, and practice-oriented professional learning can contribute to improvements in teachers' instructional practices and student learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

In Vietnam, English language education has received considerable attention because of the country's increasing participation in international education, business, and economic activities. National reforms have contributed to the expansion of English language education across different levels of schooling, consequently

increasing the demand for competent English language teachers. Research on English language teacher competence in Vietnam has highlighted the importance of teachers' ability to use English effectively for classroom instruction and communication (Ha, 2017).

Professional development is particularly important within the Vietnamese EFL context. Vietnamese research has identified professional development as an important mechanism for maintaining and improving teachers' professional qualities and competencies, while also emphasizing the importance of contextualized, school-based, individualized, and research-informed professional learning (Vien, 2017). More recent research has likewise reported that teachers' professional development may be influenced by factors such as personal motivation, self-directed learning, institutional support, financial constraints, and educational policies (Nghị & Nga, 2026).

Research competence represents another important dimension of teacher professionalism. Teachers who engage in research can systematically investigate classroom problems, examine evidence, reflect on their practices, and develop informed solutions to instructional challenges. Research has shown that teachers may experience difficulties in formulating research problems, reviewing literature, designing studies, and applying research skills to authentic educational contexts, demonstrating the importance of sustained opportunities to develop research competence. Recent evidence further suggests that action research can contribute to the development of teachers' professional competencies by strengthening reflection, problem-solving, innovation, and evidence-informed practice (Ferencová et al., 2025).

Pedagogical competence is similarly central to effective teaching. It encompasses teachers' capacity to design instruction, implement appropriate teaching strategies, manage classrooms, assess learning, and respond to diverse learner needs. For English language teachers, pedagogical competence must be complemented by sufficient language proficiency because teachers' classroom language influences their ability to explain concepts, model appropriate language use, facilitate interaction, and support learners' communicative development. Research examining English language teachers in Vietnam has specifically emphasized the importance of classroom English competence in effective English-medium instruction (Ha, 2017).

Although previous research has examined professional development, research competence, pedagogical competence, and English language proficiency, these areas have often been investigated independently or within different teacher populations. In the Vietnamese context, existing research has particularly examined professional development among EFL teachers and teachers' classroom English competence, while research on teacher research competence has also highlighted the need for greater research capacity. However, there remains a need to examine how these professional competencies collectively relate to the English language proficiency of Foreign English Teachers working in Vietnam. This gap provides the rationale for the present investigation.

Research Questions

The study examined the relationship between professional development, research, and pedagogical competence, and English language proficiency among foreign English Teachers in Vietnam. Notably, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What level of professional development does teachers have in terms of:
 - 1.1 training opportunities;
 - 1.2 mentoring and coaching;
 - 1.3 networking and collaboration;
 - 1.4 continuous learning culture?
2. What level of research competence does teachers possess in terms of:
 - 2.1 research question formulation;
 - 2.2 research design;
 - 2.3 data collection and analysis;
 - 2.4 critical thinking and problem solving; and
 - 2.5 research communication?
3. What level of pedagogical competence does teachers practice in terms of:
 - 3.1 instructional design;
 - 3.2 classroom management;
 - 3.3 teaching strategies; and
 - 3.4 assessment and evaluation?
4. What level of English language proficiency does teachers possess in terms of:
 - 4.1 Vocabulary Knowledge;
 - 4.2 Grammar Competence; and

- 4.3 Reading Comprehension?
5. Is there a relationship between teachers' English language proficiency and their:
 - 5.1 professional development,
 - 5.2 research competence; and
 - 5.3 pedagogical competence?
6. Which of the variables, singly or in combination, best predict English language proficiency of the teachers?
7. Which structural model best fits the English language proficiency of teachers?

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focused on Foreign English teachers in Vietnam and examined how their professional development, research skills, and teaching practices related to their English language proficiency. Its purpose was to understand which factors helped teachers improve both their teaching and their command of the English language. The study was limited to foreign teachers working in schools, language centers, and universities located in urban and semi-urban areas. Teachers in remote or hard-to-reach regions were omitted because they were difficult to access within the available timeframe. For this reason, the findings were applicable only to the context of Vietnam and may not have accurately reflected the experiences of foreign teachers in other countries. The study was conducted within a specific period, which meant it did not examine long-term or ongoing changes in teachers' development. Much of the information came from teachers' self-reports about their professional development, research abilities, and teaching practices, and this may have affected the accuracy of the data. Although careful steps were taken during data collection and analysis, some outside factors may still have influenced the results. The research focused on four key areas: professional development, research competence, pedagogical competence, and English language proficiency. Each of these areas was defined clearly so that the study would remain focused and manageable. Statistical methods such as Pearson Correlation, Stepwise Regression, and Path Analysis were used to analyze the data. Some schools and teachers were not included because the researcher could not reach all locations within the available time, especially those that were far or difficult to access.

Literature Review

Professional Development of Foreign English Teachers

Professional development has consistently been identified as an important mechanism for strengthening teachers' instructional, linguistic, and professional competencies. Existing literature indicates that effective professional development is most beneficial when it is sustained, collaborative, practice-oriented, and directly connected to teachers' classroom contexts. Studies of English-medium and foreign-language teaching environments demonstrate that professional development can improve teachers' classroom communication, lesson delivery, instructional decision-making, and confidence. For example, Siripol and Wilang (2024) found that structured classroom-language training strengthened teachers' ability to manage instruction in English, particularly when teaching content subjects such as mathematics and science. Similarly, Bryfonski (2021) reported improvements in teachers' instructional communication, classroom management, and confidence following task-based professional development. These findings suggest that professional development is most effective when it addresses the practical demands teachers encounter in actual classrooms.

Evidence from Vietnam supports this broader pattern. Nguyen (2023) found that professional development focused on academic English and classroom discourse improved teachers' preparedness and instructional confidence in English-medium university settings. Tran (2021) similarly reported that collaborative action research enabled Foreign English teachers in Vietnam to improve questioning, feedback, differentiation, and instructional planning. These studies complement one another by demonstrating that professional development can influence both linguistic and pedagogical dimensions of teaching. However, they differ in their emphasis: some focus primarily on language and classroom communication, whereas others emphasize reflective practice and collaborative inquiry. This distinction suggests that professional development should not be viewed as a single intervention but as a multidimensional process involving linguistic, pedagogical, reflective, and contextual development.

Despite these findings, much of the existing literature examines particular professional-development interventions or specific teacher populations rather than examining professional development as a predictor of English language proficiency among Foreign English Teachers in Vietnam. The present study therefore extends previous research by examining professional development alongside research competence and pedagogical competence and determining their collective relationship with teachers' language proficiency.

Research Competence

Research competence represents another dimension of teacher professionalism because it enables teachers to investigate classroom problems, evaluate evidence, and make informed instructional decisions. Previous studies generally agree that engagement in research can strengthen teachers' reflective practice and capacity for instructional improvement. Collaborative action research, in particular, provides teachers with opportunities to identify classroom problems, collect evidence, reflect on their practices, and implement evidence-based changes. Park (2018), for example, reported that collaborative action research strengthened lesson design, reflective skills, and teachers' confidence in adapting instruction to diverse learner needs. Similarly, Le and Phan (2020) found that Vietnamese teachers participating in school-based action research modified classroom strategies more effectively and incorporated student feedback into instructional planning.

Although these studies demonstrate the value of research engagement for pedagogical improvement, they primarily examine research competence as an outcome or component of professional development. Less attention has been given to whether teachers' research competence is associated with their English language proficiency, particularly among Foreign English Teachers working in Vietnam. This distinction is important because research competence requires teachers to engage with academic literature, interpret research findings, communicate ideas, and participate in scholarly discourse, all of which may involve substantial use of English. The present study addresses this underexplored relationship.

Pedagogical Competence

Pedagogical competence is widely regarded as a central component of effective teaching because it determines how teachers translate professional knowledge into classroom practice. The literature generally identifies instructional planning, classroom management, assessment, adaptability, and responsiveness to learners as key dimensions of pedagogical competence. Li (2017) found that teachers with stronger pedagogical competence were better able to align learning objectives with instructional strategies, scaffold learning, and adjust their communication according to learner responses. Similarly, Nguyen (2020), in the Vietnamese context, reported that Foreign English Teachers who used meaningful learning activities, student-centered approaches, and culturally responsive practices were perceived as more effective by learners.

Importantly, the literature suggests that pedagogical competence and language proficiency are not completely independent constructs. Teachers' command of English may affect their ability to explain concepts, respond spontaneously to learners, manage classroom interaction, and modify instructional tasks. Nguyen (2020) reported that teachers with stronger English proficiency demonstrated greater flexibility in scaffolding and instructional explanations, while those with lower proficiency relied more heavily on scripted and controlled activities. Freeman's (2017) concept of "English-for-Teaching" further emphasizes that teacher language proficiency involves classroom-specific functions such as managing interaction, communicating lesson content, and providing assessment and feedback.

Taken together, these studies indicate a reciprocal conceptual relationship between pedagogical competence and language proficiency. However, existing research tends to investigate these constructs separately or examine language proficiency as a component of teaching effectiveness. The present study differs by empirically examining pedagogical competence as one of several professional factors associated with the language proficiency of Foreign English Teachers in Vietnam.

Language Proficiency of Foreign English Teachers

Language proficiency is particularly significant for Foreign English Teachers because English functions simultaneously as the subject of instruction and the primary medium through which teachers explain concepts, facilitate interaction, provide feedback, and assess learning. Existing research increasingly distinguishes general English proficiency from the specialized language abilities required for classroom instruction. Freeman (2017), for example, conceptualized teacher proficiency through the functional demands of classroom interaction, lesson delivery, and assessment. This perspective suggests that effective teacher language competence involves more than achieving a high general proficiency level; it also requires the ability to use English effectively for instructional purposes.

Studies conducted in Asian and Vietnamese contexts generally report a positive relationship between teacher language proficiency and instructional performance. Nguyen (2020) found that Foreign English Teachers with stronger proficiency demonstrated clearer explanations, more flexible scaffolding, and greater responsiveness to learner needs. Zhang (2019) likewise reported that teachers with higher self-perceived proficiency showed greater confidence in interactive teaching, classroom management, and spontaneous

language use. Tran (2021) further demonstrated that collaborative action research could simultaneously strengthen teachers' instructional English and pedagogical competence.

However, an important qualification emerges from the literature. Tsang (2017) suggested that language proficiency may have a threshold effect, whereby increases beyond an adequate level do not necessarily produce corresponding improvements in teaching effectiveness. Instead, pedagogical knowledge, interpersonal skills, and classroom-management competence may become increasingly important. This finding is particularly relevant to the present study because it suggests that English language proficiency should not be examined in isolation but in relation to other dimensions of teacher competence.

Overall, the literature establishes that professional development, research competence, pedagogical competence, and language proficiency are interconnected dimensions of teacher professionalism. Nevertheless, the existing literature has generally examined these constructs separately, focused on specific professional-development interventions, or investigated teacher competence in contexts outside the specific population of Foreign English Teachers in Vietnam. The current study addresses this gap by examining the relationships among these professional competencies and the language proficiency of Foreign English Teachers in Vietnam.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental, correlational, and causal comparative quantitative design. This approach enabled the researcher to describe the characteristics of the participants, examine relationships among variables, and compare naturally existing groups to understand possible cause-and-effect patterns. The descriptive correlational part of the study was employed to investigate the relationship between professional development, research competence, and pedagogical competence, as independent variables, and English language proficiency, as the dependent variable. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data, while inferential statistics, such as the Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression, were used to determine the strength and significance of these relationships. A causal comparative design was employed to investigate whether differences in English language proficiency are associated with variations in teachers' competencies. Since the variables cannot be manipulated and teachers already differ in training, experience, and qualifications, this design was suitable for comparing groups and identifying possible causes of variation. Multiple regression was also used to identify which independent variable is the strongest predictor of English language proficiency. This helped determine the most influential factor when all variables are considered together. The use of a causal comparative design was appropriate because it would be unethical and impractical to assign teachers to experimental conditions. Their competencies already exist in real educational settings, making natural group comparison the most logical method. By combining descriptive, correlational, and comparative causal approaches, the study provides a clear and systematic understanding of the factors related to the English language proficiency of foreign English Teachers in Vietnam.

Sampling Design

The study used a probability sampling approach to ensure that every member of the target population had an equal chance of being selected. Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure that important subgroups of foreign English teachers were adequately represented. These subgroups included teachers from different major English training centers and institutions across Vietnam. By dividing the population into these strata and selecting participants randomly from each group, the sample became more accurate and reflective of the actual population. A total of 140 foreign English teachers were included in the study. The selection of this sample followed a proportionate sampling method, which means that the number of participants taken from each training center depended on the size of their teacher population. Larger centers contributed more participants, while smaller centers contributed fewer. This ensured a balanced and fair distribution of respondents.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in the socialist republic of Vietnam, focusing on 11 provinces/cities where training centers have multiple branches and were accessible to the researcher. These locations included cities like Hanoi, Saigon, and Da Nang, which were popular destinations for English language learners. The cities offered a unique blend of cultural experiences, language learning opportunities, and modern amenities. Hanoi, for example, provided cultural immersion and traditional customs, while Saigon offered a dynamic and fast-paced environment. Da Nang combined language studies with outdoor activities and cultural

experiences, making it an ideal location for students who wanted to learn English in a relaxed atmosphere. In addition to these cities, the study also focused on several provinces that offered great opportunities for English language learners. Dong Nai and Bin Duong had modern cities and language schools, making them ideal locations for students who wanted to learn English in a modern setting. Hai Phong had a mix of culture and commerce, providing students with opportunities to practice English in a real-world setting. Can Tho offered a unique blend of Vietnamese culture and international trade, making it an attractive destination for students who wanted to learn English in a business context. Nha Trang and Vung Tau were popular beach destinations with language courses, providing students with the opportunity to learn English while enjoying the beautiful Vietnamese beaches. Halong Bay offered a scenic setting for learning English, with its stunning natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. Hue offered a rich cultural heritage and historical landmarks, making it an ideal location for students who wanted to learn English while exploring Vietnam's history and culture. Vietnam is a country located in Southeast Asia, boasting a rich and diverse geography that spans from the lush mountains of the north to the bustling cities of the south. The country was home to over 60 million people, boasting a vibrant culture deeply rooted in its history and traditions. Vietnam's geography is characterized by a long coastline, featuring many beautiful beaches and islands along the South China Sea. The figure below shows the location of the study, highlighting the 11 cities and provinces where data were collected.

Research Participants

The participants were primarily drawn from the four largest English training centers in Vietnam in terms of branches, students, and teaching staff, namely: Ocean Edu International Education System, Apollo English Vietnam, Vietnam USA Society (VUS) English Centres, and Inquire and Learn, Achieve (ILA) Training Centers. Ocean Edu International Education System is a leading organization in English education in Vietnam, with over 16 years of development, employing more than 2,000 staff, including 450 non-Vietnamese English teachers, known for their enthusiasm, professionalism, and access to modern teaching facilities. For this study, 29 participants were selected from Ocean Edu. Apollo English Vietnam, founded in 1995, operates 70 centers nationwide and employs 230 foreign English teachers. To represent this organization in the study, 15 participants were included. The Vietnam USA Society (VUS) English Centres, established in 1994, is the most extensive educational system in southern Vietnam, with over 80 branches, most of which are located in Ho Chi Minh City. VUS employs 800 foreign English teachers, making it one of the largest employers of English teachers in the country. Accordingly, 50 participants were selected from VUS for this study. ILA Training Centers, also founded in 1995, currently operates 61 training centers across 15 cities and provinces, teaching over 30,000 students annually. ILA employs approximately 700 foreign English teachers in various roles, including teaching, academic management, and administration. In the study, 46 participants were drawn from ILA. The participants of this study, therefore, represent the major training centers across different regions of Vietnam, contributing significantly to the English language education sector. Table 2 below presents the stratification of respondents according to their training centers. These participants were obtained from various major regions in the country. The research will primarily involve non-Vietnamese teachers currently employed in the four largest language centers across Vietnam's provinces. The study did not include NNTs in remote or rural locations due to logistical constraints.

Research Instrument

The research instrument played a crucial role in gathering the data necessary to understand the relationships among research competence, expertise, professional development, and language proficiency. Two instruments were used in the study: a standardized self-assessment questionnaire and a language proficiency test. These instruments were designed to measure the relationships between professional development, research competence, pedagogical competence, and English language proficiency among foreign English teachers in Vietnam. To ensure validity and reliability, the questionnaire was reviewed by a panel of experts and pilot-tested with thirty foreign English teachers from Bien Hoa City, specifically from Lac Hong Bilingual School and SNA International School. These teachers were not part of the actual data collection. Feedback from the pilot test helped refine the instrument before it was used in the study. The first section of the questionnaire measured professional development. It examined the extent to which teachers had access to training opportunities, mentoring, collaboration, and a culture of continuous learning. Respondents rated their experiences using a Likert scale, and their answers provided insights into how well their institutions supported their professional growth. The second section focused on research competence. It assessed teachers' ability to formulate research questions, design studies, collect and analyze data, think critically, and communicate research findings. Participants rated their level of agreement with statements describing these skills. The results helped identify strengths and areas for improvement in research practice, allowing the study to examine whether research competence is related to language proficiency. The third

section addressed pedagogical competence and evaluated key aspects of teaching practice, including instructional design, classroom management, teaching strategies, and assessment. Respondents rated their practices using the same Likert scale format. Their answers offered a clearer view of their teaching skills and how these skills may relate to their language proficiency levels. The final part of the instrument was a thirty-item language proficiency test adopted from the Annual Language Proficiency Test for Students and Teachers of Lac Hong University in Vietnam. The test measured vocabulary knowledge, grammar competence, and reading comprehension. Scores were then interpreted using a proficiency scale to determine each participant's level of English ability.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher followed these steps to ensure that proper data collection procedures were implemented. Initially, prior to seeking permission from the respective authors of the instruments, the researcher proceeded as follows: Firstly, the researcher requested permission to adopt the English Language Proficiency Test for teachers from the academic team of Lac Hong Bilingual School. Then, another letter was sent to the school principal of the same school for the conduct of pilot testing. Secondly, after conducting the pilot testing, the researcher sent letters to the training centers covered by the study to conduct data gathering. The researcher presented the authorized letter to various participants by attaching it to the Google form, which also contained the instrument and the consent form. Thirdly, the researcher personally distributed the questionnaires using Google Forms. Fourthly, clear instructions were provided to minimize the risk of lost responses and to assure respondents of the confidentiality of their answers. Fifthly, the researcher collected the completed questionnaire forms, followed by data scoring and analysis in accordance with the study's objectives. The researcher anticipated achieving a 95% response rate. The study's data were summarized, translated, and analyzed using specific statistical tools. The mean was utilized to assess the central tendency of the variables. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation was applied to verify the relationships between independent and dependent variables. At the same time, stepwise multiple linear regression was employed to identify the variable that most accurately predicted teachers' performance. Additionally, a structural equation model (SEM) was employed to establish the best-fitting causal model. SEM encompasses various mathematical models, computer algorithms, and statistical methods designed to fit networks of constructs to data. This includes techniques such as confirmatory factor analysis, confirmatory composite analysis, path analysis, partial least squares path modeling, and latent growth modeling. To assess the goodness of fit of the hypothesized model, several indices were computed: Chi-square/degree of freedom (χ^2/df), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). These indices collectively evaluated how well the proposed model aligned with the observed data, providing insights into the model's validity and reliability.

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1: What level of professional development does teachers have in terms of training opportunities, mentoring and coaching, networking and collaboration and continuous learning culture?

Table 1. The level of professional development of the teachers.

Indicators	Mean	Qualitative Description	Interpretation
Continuous learning culture	3.82	Agree	Competent
Training opportunities	3.81	Agree	Competent
Networking and collaboration	3.79	Agree	Competent
Mentoring and coaching	3.78	Agree	Competent
Mean	3.80	Agree	Competent

The overall mean of 3.80, interpreted as frequent and reflecting high support, indicates that teachers consistently experience frequent access to learning opportunities, guidance, collaboration, and ongoing professional growth. This suggests that teachers perceive a well-rounded and supportive environment that enables them to enhance their skills, engage with colleagues, and pursue ongoing professional development.

The mean scores for the four dimensions of professional development range from 3.78 to 3.82, showing consistently high levels across all areas. The highest mean, 3.82, was recorded for continuous

learning culture, indicating that teachers most frequently experience encouragement to engage in ongoing learning, apply new knowledge, and participate in reflective practices. The lowest mean, 3.78, was observed for mentoring and coaching, suggesting that although support is still high, teachers experience slightly fewer opportunities for structured guidance compared to the other dimensions.

These trends align with findings from related studies. In Vietnam, Lap, Tuan, Nga, and Tai (2025) reported that EFL teachers valued collaborative support and pedagogical mentoring, which contributed to their engagement in professional learning. In the Philippines, Alia, Magday, and Palompon (2025) found that structured mentoring programs helped teachers receive guidance and feedback that supported their professional growth. At a broader level, Allen et al. (2023) showed through a meta-analysis that well-designed professional development initiatives strengthen teachers' self-efficacy and instructional practices.

Research Question 2: What level of research competence does teachers possess in terms of research question formulation, research design, data collection and analysis, critical thinking and problem solving and research communication?

Table 2. The level of the teachers' research competence

Research design	4.00	Agree	Competent
Critical thinking and problem solving	3.99	Agree	Competent
Research question formulation	3.98	Agree	Competent
Research communication	3.97	Agree	Competent
Data collection and analysis	3.96	Agree	Competent
Mean	3.98	Agree	Competent

The mean scores for the five constructs of research competence range from 3.96 to 4.00, indicating a narrow distribution across the assessed domains. The highest mean was reported for Research Design (4.00), indicating that teachers rated themselves most strongly in areas such as selecting suitable methodologies, structuring studies, and ensuring valid and ethical research procedures. This construct shows the strongest ratings in methodological planning and alignment of design with research objectives.

The lowest mean was observed in Data Collection and Analysis (3.96). Although still rated within the upper range of the scale, this construct exhibits comparatively lower scores in terms of data accuracy, systematic recording, and analytical interpretation. Slightly lower ratings in this domain suggest that some teachers may experience more difficulty in managing data-driven and analytical components of the research process.

Supportive findings appear in previous studies that report similar patterns. In the Philippines, Insorio (2024) found that teachers performed better in the initial stages of research, such as framing questions and designing studies, while showing lower confidence in data analysis and interpretation. In Vietnam, Nguyen and Hung (2023) reported moderate competence in research communication and data-related tasks among university EFL teachers, particularly when dealing with complex information or technical reporting. A broader perspective is provided by Allen et al. (2023), whose meta-analysis revealed that targeted professional development resulted in improvements in research skills, particularly in data analysis and communication. Additional research from the Philippines supports this trend: Tagadiad, Granaderos, and Paglinawan (2024) found that structured mentoring enhanced teachers' methodological and analytical skills, while Luna and Ballado (2025) and Abella et al. (2023) reported that teachers commonly expressed stronger confidence in research planning than in advanced data analysis or communication. These studies collectively show similar patterns in how teachers rate different aspects of their research competence.

Research Question 3: What level of pedagogical competence does teachers practice in terms of instructional design, classroom management, teaching strategies and assessment and evaluation?

Table 3. Summary of the average mean scores of the teachers' pedagogical competence

Indicators	Mean	Qualitative Description	Interpretation
Teaching strategies	4.09	Agree	Competent
Instructional design	4.05	Agree	Competent
Classroom management	4.05	Agree	Competent
Assessment and evaluation	4.02	Agree	Competent
Mean	4.05	Agree	Competent

The table shows consistently high levels of pedagogical competence across the four areas, with an overall mean of 4.05, indicating that teachers generally perform well in all dimensions. Teaching Strategies received the highest mean score (4.09). This suggests that teachers feel most confident in choosing and applying instructional methods that support student engagement, promote critical thinking, and address diverse learning needs.

Assessment and Evaluation recorded the lowest mean score (4.02). Although still within the competent range, this score points to areas where teachers may need more support, especially in promoting student self-assessment, using differentiated assessment strategies, and applying a wider range of assessment tools. Instructional Design and Classroom Management both obtained mean scores of 4.05, showing stable competence in organizing lessons, fostering positive learning environments, and supporting student participation.

Supportive research echoes these findings. The study by Sari, Hasanah, and Sartika (2024) showed that English teachers actively participate in professional development such as workshops and lesson studies to strengthen classroom practices, assessment methods, and instructional techniques—patterns that mirror the current results. Similarly, Hung Phu Bui (2023) found that Vietnamese EFL teachers were knowledgeable about assessment types but relied more on summative methods, indicating a gap between knowledge and consistent classroom practice, which aligns with the lower scores in assessment and evaluation. Additional support comes from Ying Liu (2023), who reported that Chinese EFL teachers possessed foundational assessment literacy but showed inconsistent application of formative assessment, similar to the patterns seen in this study. Likewise, Imsa-arda and Tangkiengsiririsa (2023) found that Thai EFL lecturers had stronger skills in designing objectives but weaker skills in giving feedback, reflecting the same need for targeted support in assessment practices.

Research Question 4: What level of English Proficiency of the teachers in terms of Vocabulary, Grammar and Reading?

Table 4. Summary of English Proficiency of the teachers in terms of Vocabulary, Grammar and Reading

Score	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percentage
13.33	2	1.4	1.4
23.33	2	3.6	2.9
26.67	5	.7	6.4
30.00	1	4.3	7.1
33.33	6	4.3	11.4
36.67	6	4.3	15.7
40.00	6	5.7	20.0
43.33	8	5.0	25.7
46.67	7	10.7	30.7
50.00	15	5.7	41.4
53.33	8	9.3	47.1
56.67	13	15.0	56.4
60.00	21	4.3	71.4
63.33	6	9.3	75.7

66.67	13	12.1	85.0
70.00	17	2.1	97.1
73.33	3	.7	99.3
76.67	1	100.0	100.0
Total	140	1.4	100.0

Table 4 presents a summary of the overall English proficiency of teachers, encompassing the three core components of Vocabulary, Grammar, and Reading Comprehension. The table provides the distribution of scores, along with frequency, percentage, and cumulative percentage, and classifies proficiency levels into descriptive ratings ranging from Very Low to Very High. This summary allows for a comprehensive understanding of teachers' general English competence, reflecting their readiness to effectively communicate and teach in English.

The data show that teachers' English proficiency ranges from 13.33 to 76.67, with most teachers situated in the moderate to high ranges. The highest frequencies occur at 60.00 (15%) and 66.67 (12.1%), indicating that many teachers fall within the Moderate to High proficiency categories. These clusters suggest that a large portion of the group demonstrates sufficient English ability for classroom communication and instruction.

At the lowest end, only a few teachers scored between 13.33 and 30.00, showing that Very Low and Low proficiency levels are relatively uncommon. The uppermost scores, including those above 70.00, also represent a small number of teachers, indicating that only a limited group reaches Very High proficiency. This distribution reflects a pattern where most teachers perform above the lower ranges but only a few occupy the highest range of proficiency. These trends align with findings from earlier studies in the region. Wulyani, Elgort, and Coxhead (2019) reported that Indonesian EFL teachers showed measurable proficiency in vocabulary, reading, and writing, though with some variability across individuals. Chung (2018) similarly noted that Hong Kong in-service teachers demonstrated solid vocabulary knowledge, reflecting a strong base in at least one key proficiency area. These studies support the current patterns by showing that teachers in various Asian contexts generally exhibit competent levels of English, while also indicating that a small number of teachers may benefit from further language development.

Research Question 5: Is there a significant relationship between Teachers' Language Proficiency, Professional Development, Research and Pedagogical Competence?

Table 5. Relationship between Teachers' Language Proficiency, Professional Development, Research and Pedagogical Competence

Variables	r-value	p-value
Professional Development	.078	.361
Training Opportunities	.083	.331
Mentoring and Coaching	.060	.478
Networking and Collaboration	.052	.539
Continuous Learning Culture	.103	.228
Research Competence	.192*	.023
Research question formulation;	.195*	.021
Research design	.192*	.023
Data collection and analysis	.160	.059
Critical thinking and problem solving	.199*	.018
Research communication	.165	.051
Pedagogical Competence	.230**	.006
Instructional design;	.173*	.041
Classroom management;	.256**	.002
Teaching strategies	.246**	.003
Assessment and evaluation	.204*	.015

As shown in the table, the correlation coefficients (r-values) between teachers' language proficiency and the variables range from .052 to .256, indicating weak to moderate positive correlations. However, only selected variables demonstrate statistically significant relationships. Specifically, the results reveal that teachers' language proficiency has a stronger and more consistent relationship with research competence and pedagogical competence, compared to professional development, where no significant correlation was found.

Notably, the highest significant correlation was recorded in classroom management ($r = .256$, $p < .01$), followed by teaching strategies ($r = .246$, $p < .01$), indicating that teachers with higher language proficiency tend to exhibit better pedagogical practices.

Professional Development

In terms of professional development, the results show no significant relationships with teachers' language proficiency. The variables professional development ($r = .078$, $p = .361$), training opportunities ($r = .083$, $p = .331$), mentoring and coaching ($r = .060$, $p = .478$), networking and collaboration ($r = .052$, $p = .539$), and continuous learning culture ($r = .103$, $p = .228$) all produced non-significant correlations. This suggests that teachers' participation in professional development activities or opportunities does not necessarily depend on their Mean scores of language proficiency. It may also imply that such activities are influenced more by institutional policies or administrative initiatives rather than individual language skills. The analysis revealed that teachers' language proficiency has no significant correlation with professional development variables, including training opportunities, mentoring and coaching, networking and collaboration, and a culture of continuous learning. All these yielded p-values above .05, indicating that teachers' engagement in professional development activities is not directly influenced by their Mean scores of language proficiency. This finding suggests that professional development is more likely shaped by institutional programs, administrative support, or policy mandates rather than by teachers' individual language skills. However, the low but positive correlations (r-values ranging from 0.052 to 0.103) suggest that teachers with better language proficiency may still participate more actively in learning communities or development programs, although not to a statistically significant extent. This aligns with the argument of Desimone and Garet (2015) that the effectiveness of professional development depends more on organizational structures, duration, and content relevance than on language or communication ability. In other words, while language proficiency may enhance teachers' engagement and reflection during training, it is not a decisive factor in determining participation or access to professional development opportunities.

Research Competence

Meanwhile, a significant relationship is evident between teachers' language proficiency and research competence, with an overall r-value of .192* ($p = .023$). This indicates that teachers who are more proficient in language tend to perform better in research-related tasks. Specifically, significant correlations were found in the sub-variables: research question formulation ($r = 0.195^*$, $p = 0.021$), research design ($r = 0.192^*$, $p = 0.023$), and critical thinking and problem-solving ($r = 0.199^*$, $p = 0.018$). These results highlight that teachers' ability to communicate effectively through language supports their capability to formulate research questions, design research, and apply analytical and problem-solving skills. On the other hand, data collection and analysis ($r = 0.160$, $p = 0.059$) and research communication ($r = 0.165$, $p = 0.051$) did not show significant correlations, although their p-values are close to the significance threshold. This suggests a tendency that higher language proficiency may aid these research skills, but not strongly enough to establish statistical significance.

A notable finding in the table is the significant positive correlation between teachers' language proficiency and research competence ($r = 0.192^*$, $p = 0.023$). This implies that as teachers' language proficiency increases, their ability to conduct and understand research activities also improves. The strongest sub-variable correlations were observed in research question formulation ($r = 0.195^*$, $p = 0.021$), research design ($r = 0.192^*$, $p = 0.023$), and critical thinking and problem-solving ($r = 0.199^*$, $p = 0.018$). These findings demonstrate that teachers with strong language skills can better conceptualize research problems, articulate objectives, and design effective methodologies.

Although the relationships for data collection and analysis ($r = 0.160$, $p = 0.059$) and research communication ($r = 0.165$, $p = 0.051$) were not statistically significant, the values are close to the threshold, suggesting a trend that might become significant with a larger sample size. This pattern indicates that teachers with better language proficiency tend to communicate findings more clearly and engage more confidently in research writing and dissemination. The result supports Ferguson's (2013) argument that language is central to academic inquiry, as it facilitates critical reading, data interpretation, and the articulation of arguments in research reports. Similarly, the result aligns with Saito's (2019) findings, who found that linguistic competence enhances teachers' reflective inquiry and their ability to transform classroom experiences into research-based practices.

Pedagogical Competence

Pedagogical competence showed the strongest overall correlation with teachers' language proficiency, with an r-value of .230** ($p = .006$), which is significant at the 0.01 level. All of its sub-variables

exhibited significant relationships: instructional design ($r = .173^*$, $p = .041$), classroom management ($r = .256^{**}$, $p = .002$), teaching strategies ($r = .246^{**}$, $p = .003$), and assessment and evaluation ($r = .204^*$, $p = .015$). These findings indicate that teachers with higher levels of language proficiency are better able to design instructional materials, manage classrooms effectively, employ a variety of teaching strategies, and conduct accurate assessment and evaluation. This aligns with the idea that language proficiency enhances teachers' ability to communicate clearly, give instructions, explain concepts, and provide feedback, key elements of effective pedagogy.

The strongest and most consistent correlations in the table are found under pedagogical competence, with an overall r -value of 0.230^{**} ($p = 0.006$), which is significant at the 0.01 level. All sub-variables instructional design ($r = .173^*$, $p = .041$), classroom management ($r = .256^{**}$, $p = .002$), teaching strategies ($r = .246^{**}$, $p = .003$), and assessment and evaluation ($r = .204^*$, $p = .015$) showed significant positive relationships. These results suggest that teachers with higher levels of language proficiency are more effective in designing instruction, managing classroom dynamics, implementing diverse teaching strategies, and conducting valid assessments.

This finding reinforces the argument that language proficiency is foundational to effective teaching. Language serves as the primary medium of instruction, interaction, and feedback. Teachers who are proficient in language can communicate concepts more clearly, explain procedures accurately, and scaffold learning effectively. According to Richards (2017), teachers' language proficiency enables them to deliver lessons more coherently, maintain classroom order, and adjust instructional strategies to meet the needs of their students. Likewise, Cubucku (2010) emphasized that language and communication skills underpin professional values and pedagogical applications necessary for achieving high teaching performance.

Overall findings and support studies

The results indicate that language proficiency has a significant influence on teachers' research and pedagogical competence, although it does not affect their participation in professional development. This suggests that language skills enhance the intellectual and communicative aspects of teaching, such as critical thinking, lesson design, classroom management, and academic discourse, rather than administrative or institutional engagement. Teachers with higher proficiency are thus better equipped to deliver effective lessons and engage in research-informed practice. These findings have significant implications for teacher education and professional growth programs, underscoring the importance of integrating language development as a core component, particularly in contexts where English or another language is the medium of instruction. Strengthening linguistic competence can directly improve classroom instruction, reflective teaching, and scholarly engagement. The results align with previous studies. Rabo (2018) highlighted that higher teacher competence correlates with improved instructional quality. Wang (2019) found that English proficiency among student teachers enhanced teaching knowledge and lesson delivery. Zhang et al. (2021) reported that language skills were closely linked to teaching competence and research-informed pedagogy in Chinese universities. Similarly, Syifa Aisyah (2022) observed that English mastery improved lesson delivery and student engagement in Indonesia, and Sejdiu et al. (2025) found that language proficiency affected research and teaching capacities but not administrative tasks. Collectively, these studies reinforce the view that language proficiency functions as a professional tool that strengthens pedagogical effectiveness, research literacy, and reflective practice. The findings underscore that language proficiency is more than a communication skill. It is essential for developing reflective, research-oriented, and pedagogically competent teachers capable of delivering meaningful learning experiences.

Research Question 6: Which of the variables, singly or in combination, best predict English language proficiency of the teachers?

Table 6. Predictor variables of teachers' performance

Model	Coefficients			t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	41.993	5.062		8.297	.000
Classroom Management	6.395	1.660	.446	3.852	.000
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	3.830	1.664	.267	2.302	.023
R=.763	R2=.0582		F=137.444	Sig. =0.000	

The regression model indicates a strong relationship between the predictor variables and teachers' performance, with an R-value of 0.763 and R^2 of 0.582, suggesting that approximately 58.2% of the variance in teachers' performance is explained by the combined effects of classroom management and critical thinking/problem-solving skills. The model is statistically significant, as indicated by $F = 137.444$, $p < 0.001$, confirming that the predictors reliably contribute to explaining differences in teacher performance.

Among the two predictor variables, Classroom Management (CLAMA_PE) has the strongest influence, with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.446 ($t = 3.852$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that effective classroom management has a significant predictive value for higher teacher performance. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (CRITH_RC) also contributes positively, though to a lesser extent, with a Beta coefficient of 0.267 ($t = 2.302$, $p = 0.023$). Both variables are statistically significant, indicating that teachers who excel in classroom management and apply critical thinking strategies are likely to perform better overall.

The results in Table 27 show that among the variables included in the model, Classroom Management (CLAMA_PE) under pedagogical competence and Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (CRITH_RC) under research competence emerged as the only significant predictors of teacher performance. Classroom management exhibits the strongest relationship with performance, while critical thinking and problem-solving also make meaningful contributions. The pattern suggests that teachers who demonstrate stronger classroom management skills and higher levels of analytical and problem-solving abilities tend to score higher in overall performance.

These results align with previous research. Several studies have noted that pedagogical competence, particularly classroom management, has a strong association with teacher performance. For example, Nurhasni et al. (2019) found that pedagogical competence has a significant influence on professional performance among vocational school teachers. Hermansyah (2025) also reported that pedagogical competence was linked to improved outcomes in English language classrooms, while Afdal and Sukenti (2024) highlighted its importance in implementing authentic assessment practices.

Similarly, the finding that research-related skills contribute to teacher performance is supported by earlier studies. Khalid (2017) reported that mathematics teachers' problem-solving and performance assessment skills had a significant effect on their teaching effectiveness. Muhammad Raflee and Halim (2021) found that critical thinking skills enhanced teachers' ability to perform higher-order problem-solving tasks. These studies collectively support the pattern observed in the present results, in which both classroom management and critical thinking/problem-solving appear as meaningful predictors of performance.

Research Question 7: Which structural model best fits the English language proficiency of teachers?

Table 7. Summary of the standard criterion indices of teacher performance in each model

Model	CMIN/DF	P-VALUE	NFI	TLI	CFI	GFI	RMSEA
1	1.487	0.001	0.952	0.980	0.984	0.885	0.059
2	1.507	0.011	0.961	0.982	0.986	0.919	0.060
3	1.309	0.089	0.969	0.990	0.992	0.931	0.047
4	1.416	0.027	0.965	0.986	0.989	0.920	0.055
5	0.985	0.498	0.981	1.000	1.000	0.954	0.000

The consolidated table (Table 43) presents the standardized criterion indices for five structural models, offering a comprehensive overview of how each model fits the data. Each model is evaluated based on key indices: CMIN/DF, P-VALUE, NFI, TLI, CFI, GFI, and RMSEA. These indices assess the overall model fit, with the ideal values being a CMIN/DF less than 2, a P-VALUE greater than 0.05, and NFI, TLI, CFI, and GFI all greater than 0.95. Additionally, RMSEA should be below 0.05 to indicate an excellent fit.

Model 5 stands out as the best fit model with an impressive CMIN/DF of 0.985, well below the threshold of 2. Its P-VALUE of 0.498 is well above 0.05, suggesting that the model fits the data well and does not suffer from significant misfit. The NFI, TLI, and CFI values are all 1.000, indicating perfect fit, which is exceptional for any model. Furthermore, RMSEA is 0.000, a perfect score, showing that Model 5 approximates the data excellently. The GFI of 0.954 is also above the acceptable threshold of 0.90, solidifying the model's overall fit.

Model 3, while also strong, has slightly higher CMIN/DF (1.309) and a P-VALUE of 0.089, which is still acceptable but below the threshold of 0.05. The fit indices for NFI, TLI, and CFI are all very high at

0.969, 0.990, and 0.992 respectively, and RMSEA of 0.047 is just slightly above the ideal value of 0.05, still indicating a good fit. However, compared to Model 5, it does not perform as well in terms of P-VALUE and RMSEA, making it less ideal.

Model 4 also performs admirably with CMIN/DF at 1.416 and P-VALUE of 0.027, indicating a good fit but slightly less optimal than Model 5. NFI and TLI values are both above 0.95, and CFI is 0.989, which shows a strong fit. However, its RMSEA of 0.055 is a little higher than Model 5, suggesting it is not as close a fit to the data as Model 5.

Model 1 and Model 2 have slightly lower GFI values (0.885 and 0.919, respectively), which are below the recommended threshold of 0.95. Additionally, the RMSEA for both models is above 0.05, with Model 1 at 0.059 and Model 2 at 0.060, indicating a less optimal fit compared to Model 5. Model 1 has the highest CMIN/DF value (1.487) and a P-VALUE of 0.001, which is below the threshold, indicating a potential misfit. Model 2 has a P-VALUE of 0.011, which is also not ideal.

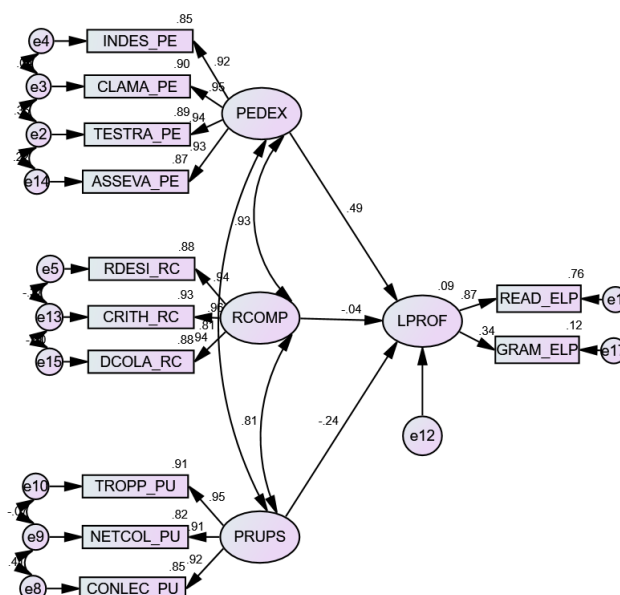


Figure 1. Language proficiency (LPROF) is influenced by Pedagogical Competence (PEDEX), Research Competence (RCOMP), and Professional Development (PRUPS) as the best fit model.

Legend:

- PRUPS – Professional Development
- TROPP_PU – Training Opportunities
- MENCO_PU – Mentoring and Coaching
- NETCOL_PU – Networking and Collaboration
- CONLEC_PU – Continuous Learning Culture
- RCOMP – Research Competence
- REQUE_RC – Research Question Formulation
- RDESI_RC – Research Design
- DCOLA_RC – Data Collection and Analysis
- CRITH_RC – Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- RECOMM_RC – Research Communication
- PEDEX – Pedagogical Competence
- INDES_PE – Instructional Design
- CLAMA_PE – Classroom Management
- TESTRA_PE – Teaching Strategies
- ASSEVA_PE – Assessment and Evaluation
- LPROF – Language Proficiency
- VOCA_ELP – Vocabulary Knowledge
- GRAM_ELP – Grammar Competence
- READ_ELP – Reading Comprehension

In summary, Model 5 is the best fit model overall due to its perfect CMIN/DF, NFI, TLI, and CFI values, as well as its RMSEA of 0.000. This demonstrates the model's superior fit to the data compared to the

others, particularly in terms of P-VALUE, RMSEA, and perfect alignment with the recommended fit criteria. While the other models show acceptable fit, Model 5 excels in all critical areas, making it the most reliable and robust model for explaining teacher performance and language proficiency.

The findings of this study are well supported by similar research that emphasizes the critical role of Pedagogical Competence (PEDEX), Research Competence (RCOMP), and Professional Development (PRUPS) in enhancing Language Proficiency (LPROF). For instance, the study by Canonoy and Napil (2025) on Filipino teachers found that pedagogical competence significantly influences teaching performance and self-efficacy, which ultimately enhances language proficiency. This aligns with our results, where Pedagogical Competence (PEDEX) shows a strong positive impact on LPROF ($\beta = 0.49$), highlighting that effective teaching practices directly contribute to improving language skills. Additionally, the study by Hizam et al. (2021) in Malaysia showed that educators' digital competencies significantly influence their performance, similar to our finding that Professional Development (PRUPS) positively impacts Pedagogical Competence ($\beta = 0.79$), which in turn enhances language proficiency. This reinforces the idea that continuous professional development activities strengthen teaching competencies, which ultimately improve language proficiency. Moreover, the research by Akin-Sabuncu and Calik (2023) on teachers' attitudes toward curriculum change supports the notion that Professional Development (PRUPS) and Pedagogical Competence (PEDEX) are interconnected and essential for improving teaching outcomes. In their study, professional development mediated the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their teaching effectiveness, similar to how PRUPS in our model influences LPROF through its impact on PEDEX. These studies collectively validate the pathways identified in our model, where Pedagogical Competence is the most influential factor in improving language proficiency, while Research Competence and Professional Development play secondary but important roles. This consistency across different studies supports the claim that enhancing teachers' pedagogical skills through professional development initiatives is key to improving language proficiency.

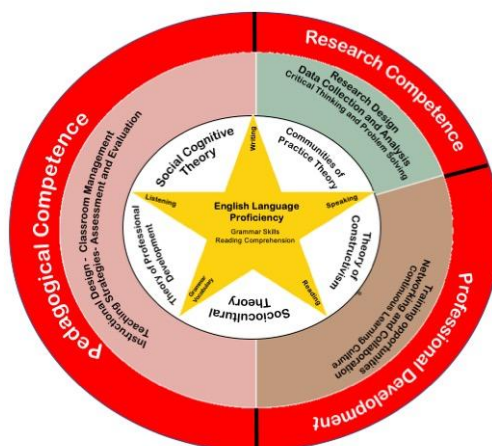


Figure 2. The Language Proficiency for Teachers (LPT) Model

The proposed Language Proficiency for Teachers (LPT) Model was developed from the empirical findings of the study and provides an integrated representation of the factors associated with teachers' English language proficiency. The model places English Language Proficiency at the center because it represents the primary outcome examined in the study. The surrounding domains—Pedagogical Competence, Research Competence, and Professional Development—represent the major dimensions examined in relation to teachers' language proficiency. Thus, the model is not intended merely as a conceptual illustration but as a synthesis of the relationships identified through the empirical analysis. The central position of English Language Proficiency reflects its importance in teachers' professional practice. The five-point star represents the major components of language proficiency assessed in the study, namely listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar and vocabulary. The star may also be interpreted as a visual representation of the role of language proficiency in teachers' instructional and professional responsibilities. However, the symbolism is secondary to the empirical basis of the model. The model should therefore be understood primarily in terms of the statistical relationships established in the study rather than the colors and shapes used in its presentation.

The findings provide empirical support for Pedagogical Competence as an important factor associated with teachers' English language proficiency. The pedagogical domain encompasses instructional design, classroom management, teaching strategies, and assessment. These competencies require teachers to

use English in authentic and sustained professional situations, including explaining concepts, giving instructions, asking questions, providing feedback, and interacting with learners. Consequently, teachers who demonstrate stronger pedagogical competence may also have greater opportunities to use English meaningfully in their professional practice. This finding is consistent with the view of language teachers as both users and practitioners of language, for whom language proficiency and pedagogical practice are closely connected.

The second domain, Research Competence, was also incorporated into the model based on its observed relationship with teachers' language proficiency. Research competence includes research question formulation, research design, critical thinking and problem solving, data collection and analysis, and research communication. These competencies require teachers to engage with academic texts, formulate ideas systematically, interpret evidence, and communicate research findings. Such activities provide opportunities for teachers to use English in more formal, analytical, and academic contexts. The relationship identified in the study therefore suggests that research competence may be relevant to teachers' professional language use, although the strength and statistical significance of this relationship should be interpreted according to the SEM results rather than assumed to represent a direct causal effect.

In contrast, Professional Development demonstrated a comparatively weak relationship with English Language Proficiency. This finding is important because it does not fully correspond with the expectation that participation in training, mentoring and coaching, networking and collaboration, and continuous learning would necessarily be strongly associated with teachers' language proficiency. Rather than treating this result as a weakness of the study, it provides an important empirical insight. Professional development activities may improve teachers' pedagogical knowledge, instructional strategies, or professional confidence without necessarily producing measurable changes in English language proficiency. The content, frequency, duration, and language demands of professional development activities may also vary considerably. For example, teachers may participate in professional development focused primarily on pedagogy, classroom management, assessment, or administrative requirements rather than activities specifically designed to develop English language proficiency.

The weak relationship may also suggest that professional development and language proficiency operate through different mechanisms. Training opportunities may provide exposure to new knowledge, while language proficiency may require sustained and repeated opportunities for meaningful language use, specialized language instruction, feedback, and practice. Therefore, the present finding should not be interpreted to mean that professional development has no value. Instead, it suggests that general professional development alone may not be sufficient to explain differences in teachers' English language proficiency. Professional development programs specifically incorporating language-focused activities may potentially have a stronger association with language proficiency, although such an expectation would require further empirical investigation.

This finding also demonstrates the importance of avoiding causal interpretations. Because the study uses correlational and structural equation modeling approaches rather than an experimental design, the observed relationships should be described as associations or relationships among the variables. Statements that Professional Development, Pedagogical Competence, or Research Competence "influences," "causes," or "improves" English Language Proficiency should therefore be used only if supported by the specific statistical model and research design. The findings instead indicate the extent to which the constructs are statistically related within the proposed model.

Theoretical Foundation of the Model

The LPT Model is consistent with several established perspectives on teacher learning and professional development. Sociocultural Theory emphasizes that learning develops through interaction, collaboration, and guided participation. This perspective provides a theoretical basis for considering professional interaction, mentoring, and collaboration as contexts in which teachers may develop their professional and language-related competencies. Social Cognitive Theory highlights the interaction among individual capabilities, behavior, and environmental factors, providing support for examining teachers' competence and professional contexts together. Communities of Practice Theory further emphasizes learning through participation in shared professional activities, which is relevant to collaboration, mentoring, peer interaction, and reflective professional practice.

However, these theories should be presented as theoretical foundations rather than evidence that the proposed relationships are causal. The empirical evidence for the LPT Model comes from the statistical findings of the present study, whereas the theories provide explanations for why relationships among the constructs may reasonably be expected.

SEM Results and Model Selection

The structural equation modeling results should be reported in sufficient statistical detail to establish the adequacy of the proposed model. In particular, the discussion should present the relevant model-fit indices for Model 5, such as the Chi-square/df ratio, Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), together with their obtained values and accepted criteria. These indices provide evidence regarding how well the proposed model reproduces the observed relationships among the variables.

The selection of Model 5 should also be explicitly justified. Rather than simply stating that Model 5 was selected because it was the best model, the discussion should explain how the model compared with the preceding models in terms of theoretical coherence, statistical fit, parsimony, and the significance or strength of the hypothesized paths. If Model 5 demonstrated improved fit while retaining theoretically meaningful relationships and avoiding unnecessary parameters, this should be clearly stated as the basis for its selection. For example, the discussion may be presented in the following form:

Model 5 was selected as the final structural model because it demonstrated the most satisfactory combination of model fit, parsimony, and theoretical consistency among the models tested. The model-fit indices indicated [insert obtained χ^2/df], [insert CFI], [insert TLI], [insert RMSEA], and [insert SRMR], which were evaluated against the recommended criteria. Compared with the preceding models, Model 5 provided [better/comparable] fit while retaining theoretically meaningful relationships among Pedagogical Competence, Research Competence, Professional Development, and English Language Proficiency. The selection of Model 5 was therefore based not solely on statistical fit but also on its consistency with the theoretical framework and the empirical findings of the study.

The bracketed values should be replaced with the actual SEM results. It is important not to insert standard cutoff values as though they were the study's results.

Empirical Basis of the LPT Model

The three major domains in the LPT Model emerged from the variables examined in the study. Pedagogical Competence represents teachers' capacity to plan instruction, manage classrooms, implement teaching strategies, and assess learning. Research Competence represents teachers' capacity to formulate research questions, design and conduct research, analyze information, and communicate findings. Professional Development represents opportunities and practices related to training, mentoring and coaching, networking and collaboration, and continuous professional learning. These domains were incorporated into the model because they represent distinct dimensions of teachers' professional capacity that were empirically examined in relation to English Language Proficiency.

The model therefore proposes that teachers' language proficiency should be understood within a broader professional context. Nevertheless, the empirical findings indicate that these domains are not equally related to language proficiency. The stronger relationship involving Pedagogical Competence suggests a closer association between teachers' instructional practice and their use of English, while Research Competence demonstrates a comparatively more indirect or specialized relationship. The weaker relationship involving Professional Development indicates that participation in general professional development activities does not necessarily correspond strongly with teachers' language proficiency.

This pattern is particularly important because it prevents the LPT Model from presenting professional development as an automatic pathway to improved language proficiency. Instead, the model reflects the actual pattern of relationships found in the data. It recognizes that professional development may support teachers' overall professional growth while its relationship with language proficiency may depend on the nature and language focus of the professional development activities.

Implications of the LPT Model

The LPT Model consequently provides a framework for understanding English language proficiency as part of teachers' broader professional competence. The findings suggest that initiatives designed to strengthen teachers' English proficiency may benefit from integrating language development with pedagogical practice and research-related activities rather than relying exclusively on general professional development programs. For instance, professional learning activities could incorporate English-medium lesson planning, classroom communication, academic writing, research presentation, collaborative discussion, and reflective practice.

At the same time, the model should be regarded as an empirically derived framework within the context of the present study, rather than as a definitive causal model of teacher language proficiency. Its relationships should be validated through further research involving larger samples, different educational contexts, longitudinal designs, or intervention studies. Future studies may also examine whether language-

focused professional development produces stronger relationships with English Language Proficiency than general professional development.

Overall, the LPT Model synthesizes the study's theoretical assumptions and empirical findings by positioning English Language Proficiency as the central construct and connecting it with Pedagogical Competence, Research Competence, and Professional Development. Its most significant contribution is not simply the visual representation of these constructs but the identification of different strengths of association among them, including the unexpected weak relationship between Professional Development and Language Proficiency. This finding provides an important basis for refining professional development initiatives and for further investigating the conditions under which teachers' professional learning translates into measurable language proficiency.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to established ethical standards in educational research to protect the rights, privacy, and welfare of all participants. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the appropriate school authorities. Informed consent was secured from all participants after clearly explaining the purpose of the study, procedures involved, voluntary nature of participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained by using codes instead of participants' names and ensuring that no identifying information was disclosed in the analysis or report. All data were collected, handled, and stored securely and were used solely for research purposes in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). Participation involved minimal risk, and the research procedures were designed to avoid physical, psychological, or emotional harm. Throughout the study, the researchers upheld the principles of respect, fairness, objectivity, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and academic integrity.

Conclusion

Based on the summary of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: Firstly, Professional Development plays a crucial role in supporting teachers' overall growth, but its impact on Language Proficiency is indirect. While teachers engage in frequent professional development activities, these do not directly enhance their language proficiency. The study suggests that for professional development to improve Language Proficiency more effectively, it must be focused on areas that directly enhance language skills. Secondly, Research Competence contributes to Language Proficiency, but its effect is secondary to Pedagogical Competence. Although teachers are skilled in research tasks such as critical thinking and problem-solving, the study concludes that these research skills support language proficiency in a more indirect and less pronounced way compared to teaching practices. Thirdly, the study found that Pedagogical Competence is the most significant predictor of Language Proficiency. Teachers who excel in classroom management and effective teaching strategies tend to demonstrate higher language proficiency. This highlights the essential role that well-developed teaching practices play in enhancing language skills, confirming that improving Pedagogical Competence should be a key focus in professional development programs aimed at boosting Language Proficiency. Additionally, the study established that Pedagogical Competence has the strongest and most direct relationship with Language Proficiency, followed by Research Competence. Professional Development, although valuable, had a weaker, indirect correlation with Language Proficiency. This suggests that for professional development initiatives to be effective in improving Language Proficiency, they must primarily target Pedagogical Competence and teaching-related skills. Finally, the Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis confirmed that Pedagogical Competence is central to improving Language Proficiency, with Research Competence and Professional Development playing supporting roles. This conclusion reinforces the need for targeted professional development programs that focus on strengthening Pedagogical Competence to improve Language Proficiency among teachers most effectively.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were drawn for the relevant stakeholders. School administrators and principals may prioritize the improvement of Pedagogical Competence in their professional development plans. More attention might be given to classroom management, teaching strategies, and instructional design, as these areas could strengthen teachers' language proficiency and overall effectiveness. Administrators should also provide teachers with regular chances for reflection, mentoring, and collaboration to support continuous growth. Educational policymakers in Vietnam may strengthen national teacher development frameworks by giving more focus to Pedagogical Competence. Curriculum standards for teacher training programs may be revised to support the

development of better skills, such as classroom management, teaching strategies, and assessment. While Research Competence remains important, policymakers should ensure that professional development also supports language-related skills such as reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary, which are essential for teachers' proficiency. Teacher training institutions and universities may design programs that highlight Pedagogical Competence as a key component of teacher preparation. These programs should include courses on teaching strategies, classroom management, and assessment. Universities may also offer workshops and ongoing training for in-service teachers, enabling them to improve their language proficiency continually. Research training should support pedagogical goals rather than take focus away from them. Foreign English teachers may benefit from participating in professional development activities that aim to strengthen Their Pedagogical Competence, particularly in areas such as classroom management and culturally responsive teaching strategies. They should also consider blending local teaching approaches with their own methods to support students' language development better. Professional development coordinators may create programs that focus on practical skills teachers need in real classrooms. These programs should offer mentoring, feedback, and learning activities that could directly improve language proficiency, especially in grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Coordinators should ensure that training remains relevant and useful for teachers at various stages of their careers. Future researchers might explore what factors connect Professional Development to Language Proficiency. Studies could examine how different types of professional learning influence Pedagogical Competence and how these changes might affect teachers' proficiency over time. Comparative studies across regions or countries might also provide broader insights. Future research should look into the long-term effects of targeted development programs and how school culture and leadership support could strengthen their impact.

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