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### PEDAGOGICAL CRITERIA FOR ENHANCING STUDENTS' LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

*Davrbek Matniyazov*

*Researcher, Tashkent University of Applied Sciences*

*E-mail: matniyozovd@gmail.com*

#### **Abstract**

This article examines pedagogical criteria for enhancing students' linguistic competence within the framework of modern language education. Linguistic competence is interpreted as an integrated system of grammatical, lexical, phonetic, stylistic, and pragmatic knowledge and skills. The study highlights methodological approaches to developing linguistic competence through theory-based instruction, pragmatic exercises, text analysis, and creative language activities. Particular attention is paid to the role of practical tasks, independent text creation, and reflective assessment in improving learners' speech culture. The article provides methodological recommendations aimed at developing coherent, logical, and communicatively effective oral and written speech.

**Keywords:** linguistic competence, language education, grammatical skills, pragmatic exercises, text creation, speech development.

#### **Introduction**

In contemporary education, the development of students' linguistic competence is regarded as a key objective of mother tongue and state language instruction. Linguistic competence enables learners to use language correctly, logically, and appropriately in various communicative situations. It encompasses not only knowledge of grammatical and lexical rules but also the ability to apply these rules effectively in oral and written communication.

Modern pedagogical approaches emphasize the practical value of linguistic knowledge. Language instruction should not be limited to memorizing rules; instead, it must focus on forming sustainable speech skills, creative thinking, and communicative independence. Therefore, identifying clear criteria for developing linguistic competence and implementing them systematically in the educational process remains a relevant scientific and methodological problem.

Linguistic competence is understood as a complex and integrative system of learners' knowledge, skills, and abilities that enables them to use language accurately, appropriately, and effectively in various communicative situations. It reflects not only the mastery of language rules but also the ability to apply these rules consciously in oral and written speech. In modern linguistics and pedagogy, linguistic competence is considered a core component of communicative competence and a fundamental indicator of learners' language development.

The structure of linguistic competence includes several interrelated components that function in close interaction:

Grammatical competence refers to the correct use of grammatical forms, sentence structures, and syntactic relations. It ensures the logical organization of speech, the accuracy of meaning, and the grammatical correctness of utterances. Mastery of grammar allows learners to construct sentences according to language norms and to express ideas clearly and consistently.

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Lexical competence involves the appropriate selection and use of vocabulary, phraseological units, and synonyms in accordance with communicative intent. A well-developed lexical competence enables learners to avoid repetition, express subtle shades of meaning, and enrich their speech with expressive and contextually suitable words.

Phonetic and orthographic competence includes observance of pronunciation, spelling, and punctuation norms. Correct pronunciation and intonation contribute to the intelligibility and expressiveness of oral speech, while accurate spelling and punctuation ensure clarity and correctness in written communication. This component is especially important for developing a high level of speech culture.

Stylistic and pragmatic competence refers to the ability to choose language means according to communicative purpose, genre, and context. It allows learners to adapt their speech to different situations, such as academic, official, or everyday communication, and to achieve communicative goals effectively.

The balanced and systematic development of all these components ensures learners' ability to produce coherent, meaningful, and stylistically appropriate speech, which is essential for successful communication and academic achievement.

Based on pedagogical research, linguistic theories, and educational standards, several key criteria can be identified for the effective development of linguistic competence. These criteria serve as benchmarks for assessing learners' progress and organizing the educational process.

Mastery of theoretical knowledge implies a deep understanding of grammatical rules, lexical meanings, and orthographic norms. Learners should not only memorize rules but also comprehend their functions and limitations in different communicative contexts.

Practical language skills involve the ability to analyze texts, construct grammatically correct sentences, and create coherent and logically structured texts. This criterion reflects the practical application of theoretical knowledge in real language use.

Speech effectiveness is manifested in the clarity, logical consistency, and stylistic appropriateness of oral and written expression. Effective speech demonstrates learners' ability to convey ideas accurately and persuasively.

Independence and creativity indicate learners' capacity to express personal opinions, generate original ideas, and create texts without relying on fixed templates or memorized patterns. This criterion highlights the creative aspect of linguistic competence.

Reflection and self-assessment involve the ability to analyze one's own speech activity, identify errors, and make corrections. Reflective skills contribute to continuous self-improvement and conscious language learning.

Together, these criteria serve as indicators of learners' linguistic growth and guide teachers in selecting appropriate methods, materials, and assessment tools.

The development of linguistic competence is a gradual and systematic process that unfolds through several interrelated stages.

The motivational stage aims to develop learners' awareness of the importance of language for communication, education, and personal development. At this stage, learners are encouraged to recognize the practical value of linguistic knowledge and to develop a positive attitude toward language learning.

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The theoretical learning stage involves the acquisition of grammatical, lexical, and orthographic knowledge. Learners study language rules, structures, and norms, forming a solid theoretical foundation for further practice.

The practical application stage focuses on implementing theoretical knowledge through exercises, text creation, and analysis. Learners apply grammatical and lexical rules in meaningful contexts, which strengthens their language skills.

The independent speech activity stage is characterized by learners' ability to independently produce oral and written texts. At this stage, learners demonstrate autonomy, confidence, and creativity in language use.

The reflective stage involves analyzing achievements, identifying mistakes, and performing self-correction. Reflection helps learners become aware of their strengths and weaknesses and promotes continuous improvement.

Each of these stages plays a crucial role in ensuring the continuity, consistency, and effectiveness of language education.

Linguistic exercises serve as the primary means of developing linguistic competence and act as a bridge between theory and practice. Properly designed exercises help learners internalize language rules and apply them in communicative situations.

Text analysis exercises involve examining ready-made texts to identify grammatical, lexical, and punctuation features, as well as errors. These exercises develop analytical thinking and linguistic awareness.

Text creation tasks require learners to write essays, narratives, reports, and official documents. Such tasks foster coherence, logical organization, and stylistic accuracy in written speech.

Editing exercises focus on improving texts in terms of logic, grammar, and punctuation. They help learners develop critical thinking and attention to linguistic detail.

Collaborative activities, including pair and group work, promote discussion, idea exchange, and cooperative learning. They also enhance communicative skills and social interaction.

Simulation tasks model real communicative and professional situations, allowing learners to practice language use in authentic contexts.

These exercises encourage active language use and significantly contribute to the integration of theoretical knowledge with practical skills.

### **Conclusion**

Linguistic competence is a multifaceted and dynamic ability that ensures effective language use in communication. Its development depends on the integration of theoretical knowledge, practical skills, independence, creativity, and reflection. Methodological approaches based on pragmatic exercises, text creation, and collaborative learning contribute to improving learners' speech culture and communicative competence. Therefore, the implementation of clearly defined pedagogical criteria enhances the effectiveness of language education, strengthens the connection between theory and practice, and supports learners' overall linguistic development.

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