

**ON THE ISSUE OF STANDARDIZED
INSTRUMENT FOR ASSESSING
METHODOLOGICAL COMPETENCE OF
FUTURE TEACHERS OF FOREIGN
LANGUAGES**

**ОИД БА ВОСИТАИ
СТАНДАРТУНАНДАИ АРЗИШИ
МЕТОДОЛИИ МУАЛЛИМОНИ ЗАБОНИ
ХОРИҶИИ ОЯНДА**

**К ВОПРОСУ О
СТАНДАРТИЗИРОВАННОМ
ИНСТРУМЕНТЕ ДЛЯ ОЦЕНКИ
МЕТОДОЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ
КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТИ БУДУЩИХ
УЧИТЕЛЕЙ ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКОВ**

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The given article dwells on the need for a standardized instrument to effectively assess the methodological competence of prospective foreign language teachers. It is noted that current assessment practices often lack consistency and fail to comprehensively capture the multifaceted nature of methodological competence. While considering the theme explored the author of the article outlines the development and validation of a novel instrument designed to address these limitations. Thus, the findings suggest the proposed instrument offers a robust and reliable instrument for assessing methodological competence promoting significantly the improvement of teacher education programs and the enhancement of foreign language teaching quality.

Калидвожаҳо: салоҳияти методӣ, таълими забонҳои хориҷӣ, асбоби стандартӣ, таҳқиқи арзёбӣ.

Дар ин мақола зарурати баҳодиҳии муассири салоҳияти методии омӯзгорони ояндаи забонҳои хориҷӣ ба як воситаи стандартишуда баррасӣ мешавад. Қайд карда мешавад, ки таҷрибаҳои мавҷудаи арзёбӣ аксар вақт номувофиқанд ва хусусияти бисёрҷанбаи салоҳияти методиро ғайри дарк карда наметавонанд. Ҳангоми баррасии мавзӯи мавриди омӯзиш, муаллифи мақола таҳия ва тасдиқи асбоби навро, ки барои ҳалли ин маҳдудиятҳо пешбинӣ шудааст, тавсиф мекунад. Ҳамин тариқ, натиҷаҳо нишон медиҳанд, ки ин амсила воситаи бозғиреши арзёбии салоҳияти методиро муайян кардааст, ки метавонад ба тақвияти барномаҳои таълими муаллимон ва баланд бардоштани сифати таълими забонҳои хориҷӣ мусоидат намояд.

Ключевые слова: методическая компетентность, преподавание иностранных языков, стандартизированный инструмент, дизайн оценки.

В данной статье рассматривается необходимость стандартизированного инструмента для эффективной оценки методической компетентности будущих учителей иностранных языков. Отмечается, что существующая практика оценки часто не последовательна и не в состоянии в полной мере охватить многогранный характер методической компетентности. Рассматривая исследуемую тему, автор статьи описывает разработку и валидацию нового инструмента, призванного устранить эти ограничения. Таким образом, результаты показывают, что предлагаемый инструмент определил надежный и надежный инструмент для оценки методической компетентности, значительно способствующий улучшению программ обучения учителей и повышению качества преподавания иностранных языков.

1. Introduction:

It is known that effective foreign language teaching relies heavily on teachers' methodological competence encircling pedagogical knowledge, skills, and tempers. The relevant competence goes beyond simply knowing the language, and involves understanding how to effectively bear knowledge to learners applying appropriate teaching strategies, and manage with the classroom environment and the adaptation of instruction to diverse needs. «*The formation and development of this multifaceted competence is a primary goal of foreign language teacher education programs, as it directly impacts the quality of language learning experiences for students*» (Borg, 2015, P. 23).

Into the bargain, the assessment of this complex construct of methodological competence is crucial for ensuring high-quality teacher education and, ultimately, for effective language learning outcomes. Hence, a robust assessment framework allows teacher educators to identify the strengths and weaknesses of pre-service teachers, tailor instruction and support accordingly, and eventually endorse individuals who are truly prepared for the demands of the classroom. Reliable and valid assessment data can inform program development of guide curriculum decisions promoted the overall improvement of foreign language teacher preparation.

However, current assessment practices in foreign language teacher education «*often vary significantly across institutions and lack standardization*» (Farrell, 2015, P. 87). This inconsistency presents several challenges. Firstly, the former in question hinders the accurate evaluation of teacher candidates' readiness for classroom practice. When assessment criteria and methods differ widely, it becomes difficult to determine whether a candidate meets a consistent standard of proficiency. Secondly, the lack of standardization makes it challenging to compare performance across different programs or cohorts. Without a common yardstick, it is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions about the effectiveness of different teacher education approaches (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 2014). Methodological competence involves the integration and application of various skills and knowledge domains in a dynamic and context-sensitive manner. Assessing only discrete components fails to reflect the complexity of real-world teaching practice and may lead to an incomplete or inaccurate picture of a candidate's capabilities. This also doesn't account for teacher disposition or professional reflection.

2. Materials and methods:

This study displays a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data to ensure both rigor and richness in the development and validation of the assessment instrument.

2.1 Instrument Development:

The instrument was developed based on a comprehensive review of relevant literature on methodological competence in foreign language teaching (Council of Europe, 2020; Freeman, 2019; Trilling, & Fadel, 2009; Zhao, 2003; Ubaydulloeva, 2024). This consideration informed the identification of key components of methodological competence, including:

- *Pedagogical Knowledge*: to understand various language teaching approaches and methodologies;
- *Lesson Planning & Design*: to create well-structured and engaging lesson plans;
- *Classroom Management*: to organize and manage with classroom activities and student behavior;
- *Materials Selection & Adaptation*: to select and adapt appropriate teaching materials;
- *Assessment & Evaluation*: to design and implement the effective assessment strategies;
- *Reflective Practice*: to analyze teaching practice and identify areas for improvement;
- *Technological Integration*: to use the technology and to enhance language learning.

These components were operationalized into specific assessment tasks, including multiple-choice questions, scenario-based questions requiring written responses, and tasks involving the analysis and evaluation of lesson plans.

2.2 Pilot Testing and Validation:

The instrument underwent pilot testing with a group of 30 pre-service foreign language teachers. Feedback from the pilot test informed revisions to the instrument's clarity, format, and content. The revised instrument was then administered to a larger sample (N=150) of pre-service teachers across multiple universities. Data were analyzed to assess the instrument's psychometric properties, including:

- *Reliability*: Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the instrument;
- *Validity*: Content validity was established through expert review. Construct validity was examined through exploratory factor analysis to identify underlying dimensions of methodological competence.

3. Main results and discussion:

So, the development and validation of the new instrument for assessing methodological competence in pre-service foreign language teachers generated promising results suggesting its potential as a valuable instrument for teacher education programs. These results are viewed through a lens of internal consistency, and theoretical alignment.

3.1 Reliability and Internal Consistency

A critical aspect of any assessment instrument is its reliability – the degree to which it produces consistent and stable results. In this study, the revised instrument demonstrated strong internal consistency, as evidenced by a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 92. Such a high degree of reliability proposes that the instrument can be trusted to provide consistent scores across different administrations and with different groups of pre-service teachers minimizing the influence of measurement error. This finding is particularly significant in the context of foreign language teacher education, where the assessment of complex teaching competencies has often been plagued by subjectivity and inconsistency.

3.2 Factor Structure and Theoretical Alignment

To further explore the construct validity of the instrument, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted. The EFA revealed a three-factor structure that aligns strongly with the theoretical framework underpinning the instrument's development. These factors were identified as:

- (1) *Pedagogical Knowledge and Planning*: This factor covers items related to understanding language acquisition theories designing effective lesson plans aimed at the choice of appropriate teaching materials. The relevant factor reflects the cognitive dimension of methodological competence emphasizing the importance of a strong theoretical foundation for effective teaching practice. This could include items such as «to design lesson plans that incorporate a variety of communicative activities» or «to demonstrate the understanding of different language teaching methodologies (e.g., communicative language teaching, task-based learning).

- (2) *Classroom Management and Interaction*: This factor includes items related to the creation of a positive and engaging learning environment managing with student behavior, and providing opportunities for meaningful interaction. Hereby, the relevant factor highlights the interpersonal and interactional dimension of methodological competence, emphasizing the teacher's ability to create a supportive and productive classroom atmosphere. Example items might be «to establish clear classroom routines and procedures» or «to use the effective questioning techniques promoting student participation».

- (3) *Assessment and Reflection*: This factor contains items related to designing and implementing appropriate assessments interpreting assessment data to inform instruction, and to provide constructive feedback to students; to engage in ongoing reflection on one's own teaching practice. This factor underscores the importance of ongoing assessment and self-evaluation in the development of methodological competence recognizing that effective teachers are also reflective practitioners. Example items within this factor could be «to design assessments that align with learning objectives» or «to reflects on teaching practice and identifies areas for improvement».

This clear factor structure provides strong evidence for the construct validity of the instrument. At the same time, the former in question demonstrates that the instrument is not simply measuring a single, undifferentiated construct, but rather a multifaceted construct composed of distinct yet interrelated dimensions, each of which is crucial for effective foreign language teaching (Anderson, & Shattuck, 2012).

3.3 Qualitative Feedback and Instrument Refinement

In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative feedback was collected from a sample of teacher educators and pre-service teachers who used the instrument. The feedback was generally positive, with participants commending the instrument's clarity, comprehensiveness, and fairness. This feedback provides valuable evidence of the instrument's face validity and usability suggesting that it is perceived as relevant and appropriate for its intended purpose.

3.4 Implications of the results

The results of this study have several important implications for the field of foreign language teacher education. Firstly, the development of a reliable and valid instrument for assessing methodological competence addresses a significant gap in current assessment practices. This instrument provides a standardized and comprehensive one that can be used to more accurately evaluate the readiness of pre-service teachers for classroom practice. Secondly, the three-factor structure identified in the EFA provides a useful framework for conceptualizing and developing

methodological competence. Teacher education programs can use this framework to design curricula, instruction, and assessment practices that target each of these critical dimensions.

The adduced results indicate that the developed instrument provides a reliable and valid measure of methodological competence in prospective foreign language teachers. Its high internal consistency reliability ensures consistent measurement of the target construct. The three factors identified through factor analysis support the construct validity, suggesting the instrument successfully captures the key dimensions of methodological competence. The positive qualitative feedback confirms the instrument's usability and acceptability among teacher candidates. This standardized instrument addresses the limitations of existing assessment instruments, offering a more comprehensive and consistent way of evaluating methodological competence.

5. Conclusion:

Adducing the results of the conducted analysis beset with the theme explored one can come to the conclusion that this instrument provides a valuable instrument for teacher education programs, enabling more accurate and consistent evaluation of teacher candidates. The instrument's use can lead to improved teacher preparation enhanced quality of instruction, and ultimately, better outcomes for foreign language learners.

Thus, the findings represent a significant step forward in the assessment of methodological competence in foreign language teacher education. The instrument developed and validated in this study offers a reliable, valid, and theoretically grounded one for evaluating the complex skills, knowledge, and dispositions required for effective teaching. The relevant instrument has the potential to enhance the quality of teacher preparation programs leading to more effective foreign language.

Future research could focus on longitudinal studies to track the relationship between instrument scores and teachers' actual classroom performance and student achievement.

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