

## THE COMPETENCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY OF FUTURE ECONOMISTS

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### Abstract

The role of English as the global lingua franca has made it a critical skill for economists worldwide. This paper investigates the importance of English language proficiency for future economists, examining how it affects academic performance, career prospects, and participation in international economic discourse. A mixed-method approach was used, including a survey and interviews with economics students, as well as a review of literature on language skills in economics education. The findings highlight the significance of English proficiency for accessing global knowledge, improving employability, and fostering cross-cultural communication. Recommendations for curriculum enhancement and targeted language training programs for economics students are discussed.

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## Introduction

### 1.1 Background and Context

In today's globalized world, the competence in English language proficiency is increasingly vital, particularly for professionals in fields like economics. English is not only the dominant language in academic publications and international trade but also serves as the primary medium for communication in multinational corporations, financial institutions, and policy-making bodies. For future economists, proficiency in English is an essential skill that influences their ability to access cutting-edge research, collaborate internationally, and effectively communicate within the global economic landscape.

### 1.2 Research Problem and Objective

While the importance of English language skills is generally acknowledged, the specific impact of English proficiency on the educational and professional outcomes of future economists remains under-explored. This study aims to investigate the level of English competence among economics students and explore the implications for their academic and career trajectories.

### 1.3 Research Questions

- What is the current level of English language proficiency among future economists?
- How does English proficiency impact the academic performance of economics students?

- What are the professional benefits of high English proficiency for future economists?
- How can higher education institutions support English language learning in economics programs?

#### 1.4 Structure of the Paper

The paper is organized as follows: the next section details the methodology used in this research. This is followed by the presentation of the results from surveys and interviews conducted with economics students. The discussion section analyzes the findings in the context of existing literature, and the final section offers conclusions and recommendations.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1 Research Design

A mixed-method approach was chosen for this study to gain both quantitative and qualitative insights into the English language proficiency of economics students. The quantitative component involved a survey designed to measure students' self-reported English proficiency, their academic experiences, and their views on the importance of English in their future careers. The qualitative component consisted of semi-structured interviews with selected students and faculty members to gather deeper insights into the challenges and strategies related to English language learning.

### 2.2 Participants

The survey was distributed to 30 economics students from ISFT. The selection of participants was based on diversity in terms of year of study, previous language education, and the medium of instruction. Additionally, 3 students were selected for in-depth interviews, along with 2 economics teachers who provide input on curriculum and language training.

### 2.3 Data Collection Instruments

**Survey:** The survey included 20 questions focused on students' English proficiency levels, study habits, exposure to English-language economic literature, and career aspirations. Proficiency was assessed using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore students' perceptions of English in their academic journey, challenges faced, and the role of their institutions in enhancing language proficiency.

### 2.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the survey was analyzed using descriptive statistics to evaluate the distribution of English proficiency levels and identify trends in academic performance. Qualitative data from the interviews were transcribed and coded using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes related to English language use in economics education.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 English Proficiency Levels

The survey revealed that the majority of economics students reported a moderate to high level of English proficiency. However, only 15% of students assessed themselves as having advanced English skills (CEFR C1-C2), while 45% were at an intermediate level (B1-B2). The remaining 40% rated their proficiency as beginner (A1-A2) or lower.

### 3.2 Academic Performance and English Proficiency

Students with higher levels of English proficiency (C1-C2) reported better academic performance in economics courses, particularly in research assignments, literature reviews, and participation in international conferences. They were also more likely to engage with English-language academic

journals, which were identified as essential sources for up-to-date economic theories and practices.

### 3.3 Professional Aspirations and English Competence

The interview data highlighted that students with higher English proficiency felt more confident in pursuing internships and jobs in international organizations or multinational corporations. The ability to communicate effectively in English was seen as a competitive advantage in the job market, particularly in roles requiring cross-cultural collaboration and international economic analysis.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1 English as a Global Language in Economics

The findings corroborate existing literature, which underscores the critical role of English as the primary language of academic and professional communication in economics. According to previous studies, such as Graddol (2006) and Crystal (2003), English proficiency is not just a tool for personal advancement but a necessity for participation in the global economic dialogue.

### 4.2 The Link Between English Proficiency and Academic Success

The correlation between higher English proficiency and better academic performance found in this study aligns with research by Lee and Kim (2016), who identified language proficiency as a key determinant of academic success in economics courses that require engagement with complex economic texts in English.

### 4.3 Professional Competence and Career Advancement

The professional benefits of English language proficiency are consistent with findings by Davidson (2015), who emphasized that English skills increase employability and job performance in the global economy. As international trade and finance continue to expand, economists with strong English skills are better positioned for leadership roles in global organizations.

### 4.4 Addressing the Challenges of English Language Learning in Economics Education

Despite the clear benefits of English proficiency, many economics students still face challenges in mastering the language. The study highlights several obstacles, including limited access to English-language resources, insufficient emphasis on English in economics curricula, and the pressure of mastering both complex economic concepts and a foreign language simultaneously. These challenges suggest the need for targeted language support in economics programs, such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses and language workshops focusing on economic vocabulary and discourse.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 5.1 Summary of Findings

This study confirms that English proficiency is a crucial skill for future economists, with a strong link between language competence and academic performance, as well as enhanced career prospects. While many students possess intermediate English skills, there is room for improvement, particularly in accessing academic resources and engaging in international economic discourse.

### 5.2 Recommendations

- Curriculum Design: Economics programs should integrate language development within the curriculum, offering courses that focus on English for Economics.
- Language Support Programs: Universities should provide additional language support services, including language labs, tutoring, and writing workshops specifically tailored to economics students.
- International Collaboration: Encourage exchange programs and collaborations with institutions in

English-speaking countries to provide students with real-world exposure to English in professional contexts.

- **Technology and Resources:** Universities should make greater use of online platforms, databases, and digital learning tools that allow students to practice English language skills relevant to economics.

### 5.3 Future Research Directions

Further research could explore the effectiveness of specific language intervention programs in improving the English proficiency of economics students and their impact on academic and professional outcomes.

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