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## **THE PEDAGOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DEVELOPING STUDENTS' READING COMPETENCE**

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Named after Isxakhan Ibrat

### **ANNOTATION**

This article explores the pedagogical and psychological foundations of developing students' competence in the educational process. It examines the role of effective teaching strategies, classroom practices, and learning environments in fostering students' cognitive, communicative, and self-regulatory skills. The psychological characteristics discussed include motivation, self-esteem, emotional resilience, and individual learning differences. The study also highlights the importance of a student-centered approach, where teachers act as facilitators of personal growth and academic success. The findings emphasize that the integration of pedagogical and psychological principles is essential for nurturing competent, independent, and lifelong learners.

The study was conducted among 29 9<sup>th</sup> form pupils at rural school in Uychi district of Namangan. These pupils were divided into 2 groups. One of the groups was the experimental group and the other one was control group. The English language teachers were involved into the teachers' survey which was specially created so as to analyse their attitude towards the reading competence. Another survey was taken from 9<sup>th</sup> form pupils before and after the study in order to know how effective were the methods observed and used at the lessons, whether the participants enhanced and strengthened their reading.

**Keywords:** reading competence, psychological, integration, principles, cognitive, communicative.



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### INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, the concept of competence in education has gained significant importance as schools and educators aim to prepare students not only to acquire knowledge but also to apply it effectively in real-life contexts. Competence refers to a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that enable individuals to solve problems, think critically, communicate effectively, and continue learning throughout life. Developing student competence is essential in shaping independent, creative, and responsible members of society.

The process of competence development is multidimensional and requires the integration of both pedagogical and psychological principles. Pedagogical strategies such as active learning, task-based instruction, project work, and collaborative learning are proven to engage students and make learning more meaningful. These methods foster cognitive growth by encouraging learners to think, analyze, and apply their understanding in different situations.

On the other hand, psychological characteristics such as motivation, emotional intelligence, self-regulation, and cognitive development significantly influence how students absorb and process information. A student's ability to learn is closely tied to their self-confidence, level of anxiety, interest in the subject, and their relationship with peers and teachers. Therefore, psychological support is just as crucial as instructional design in the learning process.

Teachers play a key role in harmonizing these two domains. Their awareness of learners' psychological needs and appropriate pedagogical interventions can create a learning environment where all students feel safe, motivated, and capable of achieving academic success. This integrated approach not only enhances academic performance but also contributes to the development of personal and social competencies.

This article explores the key pedagogical and psychological factors that influence student competence, analyzes practical approaches to fostering competence in the classroom, and emphasizes the importance of teacher-student interaction in the learning process.



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### LITERATURE REVIEW

The development of students' competence is a multifaceted process that has been explored by scholars from various educational traditions. Both psychological and pedagogical perspectives emphasize the importance of fostering learners' intellectual, emotional, and social abilities to prepare them for academic and real-life challenges.

Among Russian scholars, L.S. Vygotsky laid the theoretical foundation for understanding how social interaction and guided learning contribute to cognitive development. His concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) highlights the role of the teacher in supporting learners as they move beyond their current capabilities with the help of scaffolding. Building on this, V.V. Davydov emphasized activity-based learning, suggesting that competence arises through active engagement with meaningful tasks, rather than passive absorption of information.

In Uzbek pedagogical thought, T. Teshaboyeva has contributed to the understanding of how national values and learner individuality should be incorporated into teaching to enhance competence. Her works highlight the need for integrating moral and social development within the curriculum. Similarly, U. Nishonov explores the psychological preparedness of students for competence-based education and the role of motivation and cognitive-emotional development in shaping student behavior and engagement.

Western research also supports these perspectives. John Dewey, an American educational philosopher, emphasized experiential learning, proposing that education should be grounded in real-life experiences and reflection. He argued that competence arises not just from knowing, but from doing and reflecting. Albert Bandura, another influential American psychologist, introduced the concept of self-efficacy, highlighting the importance of learners' belief in their abilities to succeed. According to him, students who feel capable are more likely to persist in learning tasks and develop stronger competence over time.

Collectively, these scholars emphasize that competence development is not merely a product of knowledge acquisition, but a complex interplay between teaching methods, learner motivation, emotional resilience, and social interaction. The



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insights provided by Russian, Uzbek, and Western scholars form the theoretical foundation for understanding how pedagogical and psychological factors intersect to foster student competence.

### **METHODS / METHODOLOGIES**

This study investigates the pedagogical and psychological characteristics of developing students' competence with a focus on a selected group of 9th-grade pupils. A qualitative research method supported by comparative elements was used to examine how targeted pedagogical interventions influence student competence. The research was conducted in the natural classroom setting to observe real practices and student behavior. A quasi-experimental case study design was employed, incorporating both qualitative observation and comparative analysis. The study focused on a single 9th-grade class at a secondary school and was conducted over a four-week period. The design allowed the researcher to explore the impact of specific teaching strategies on one group (experimental), while using the other group (control) for baseline comparison.

The participants included:

29 ninth-grade pupils, aged between 14 and 15. Pupils were randomly divided into two groups: Experimental group – 15 students who were taught using enhanced competence-based and student-centered methods. Control group – 14 students who received traditional instruction. 2 English language teachers, each teaching both groups with coordinated lesson plans but varying the methods based on group assignment.

To gather meaningful and triangulated data, the following tools were used:

#### a) Classroom Observations

A total of six classroom observation sessions were conducted (three per group) over three weeks. A structured observation checklist was used to record indicators such as student engagement, use of critical thinking, collaboration, emotional response, and classroom interaction. Observations focused particularly on how students responded to different teaching methods.

#### b) Student Questionnaires



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All 29 students completed a pre- and post-intervention open-ended questionnaire. Questions focused on their attitudes toward learning, motivation levels, self-assessment of competence, and classroom experience before and after the teaching intervention.

### c) Teacher Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with both teachers.

Topics included their perspectives on the effectiveness of instructional approaches, classroom dynamics, student motivation, and observed psychological changes during the intervention period.

### Intervention Strategy (for Experimental Group)

The experimental group was taught using student-centered, competence-based approaches such as: Collaborative learning tasks, Reflective activities, Real-world language tasks, Regular formative feedback. Meanwhile, the control group continued with more traditional methods such as teacher-led explanations, textbook exercises, and closed-ended tasks.

### Data Analysis

Collected data were analyzed through qualitative content analysis: Responses and observation notes were coded and organized into key themes: "student autonomy," "active participation," "emotional involvement," and "response to feedback." Comparative analysis between the experimental and control groups was conducted to identify noticeable differences in classroom behavior and student self-perception.

### Ethical Considerations

All necessary ethical guidelines were strictly observed: Informed consent was obtained from teachers and student guardians. Participation was voluntary and students could opt out at any stage. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the research. By incorporating both experimental and control groups, this study provided valuable insights into how competence can be nurtured through pedagogical and psychological interventions in the secondary classroom.

### PROCESS STEPS

The research was carried out in a structured sequence to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. First of all the researcher focused on the problem of



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identification and goal setting. The first step involved identifying the core issue: the need to enhance students' learning competence through both pedagogical and psychological methods. Based on this, the research objective was set — to analyze the impact of competence-based teaching strategies on 9th-grade students' learning behavior and development. The next step was to select participants. A total of 29 ninth-grade pupils were selected from a general secondary school using purposive sampling. The class was divided into two groups: an experimental group (15 students) and a control group (14 students). Both groups were taught by qualified English teacher, and all observations were conducted within the regular classroom environment. After that the researcher began the design of intervention materials and tools. Teaching materials were developed based on a competence-oriented approach. The researcher also prepared observation checklists, student questionnaires, and semi-structured interview guides for data collection. These instruments were piloted and refined before full implementation. Before the intervention began, initial data were collected from both groups using questionnaires to assess their existing attitudes, learning habits, and self-perceived competence. Baseline classroom observations were also carried out to identify initial behavioral and engagement patterns. Over a period of three weeks, the experimental group received lessons based on student-centered, competence-driven methods such as collaborative activities, reflective tasks, peer assessments, and real-world language application. Meanwhile, the control group continued with traditional, teacher-centered instruction.

Classroom observations were conducted in both groups to record behavioral and academic changes. The focus was on student engagement, participation, emotional responses, and peer interaction.

After the instructional period, post-intervention data were collected using the same student questionnaires and additional interviews with the teachers. This helped measure any change in student competence, attitudes, and classroom dynamics. Qualitative data from observations, questionnaires, and interviews were analyzed thematically. The results were compared between the control and experimental groups to identify patterns, trends, and the effectiveness of the applied methods.

Based on the analysis, conclusions were drawn regarding the pedagogical and psychological characteristics that most positively influence the development of



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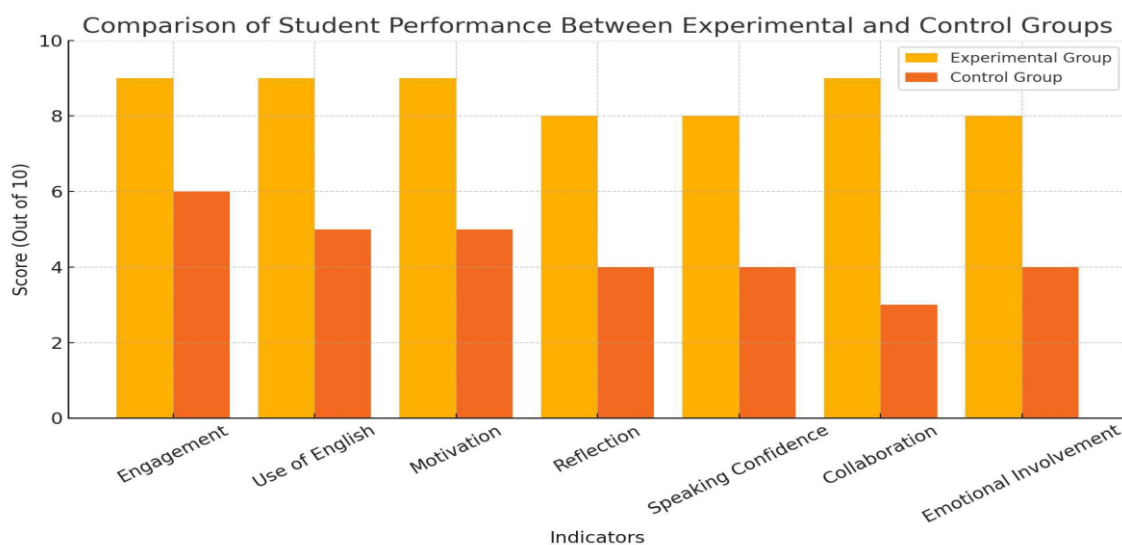
students' competence. Recommendations for educators and policymakers were developed to support the wider application of competence-based education.

### TOOLS

To collect comprehensive and reliable data during the research process, a set of qualitative and partially quantitative tools was developed and employed. These tools were selected to align with the study's objectives and to ensure the effective analysis of the pedagogical and psychological aspects of developing students' competence. The following instruments were used: observation checklist. A structured observation checklist was designed to monitor classroom dynamics in both the experimental and control groups. The checklist focused on indicators such as: student engagement and participation. Use of language and communication skills, collaboration with peers emotional responses and motivation ,critical thinking and reflection. Observations were carried out by the researcher during regular lessons, allowing for natural classroom behavior to be recorded. Custom-designed worksheets, group activities, reading texts, and writing prompts were used as instructional tools. These materials were tailored for the experimental group and designed to promote key student competences such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. Each of these tools played a critical role in triangulating the data and ensuring that both the pedagogical and psychological dimensions of student competence were thoroughly examined.

### ANALYSING DATA/RESULTS

#### Analysis of data collected from experimental and control groups.





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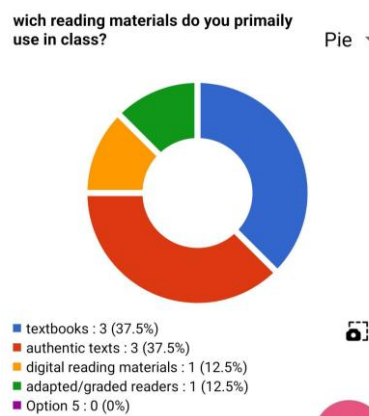
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20<sup>th</sup> May 2025

These findings indicate that applying pedagogical and psychological approaches tailored to competence development—especially those encouraging student agency, collaboration, and reflection—positively influenced the learners' academic and emotional growth.

### THE RESULTS OF TEACHERS' SURVEY

To explore the pedagogical and psychological characteristics of developing students' reading competence, a teacher survey was conducted. The responses provide insight into the materials used in reading instruction, the perceived importance of student motivation, and key psychological barriers affecting reading development.



According to the first pie chart, teachers most commonly use textbooks (37.5%) and authentic texts (37.5%), followed by digital materials (12.5%) and adapted/graded readers (12.5%). This indicates a balanced approach between traditional resources and real-life materials. The frequent use of authentic texts suggests a growing awareness among educators about the value of exposing learners to real-world language. However, the relatively low use of digital or adapted content might highlight a need for more accessible and differentiated materials tailored to varying proficiency levels.

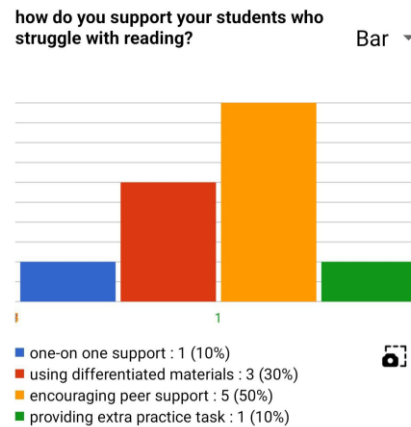


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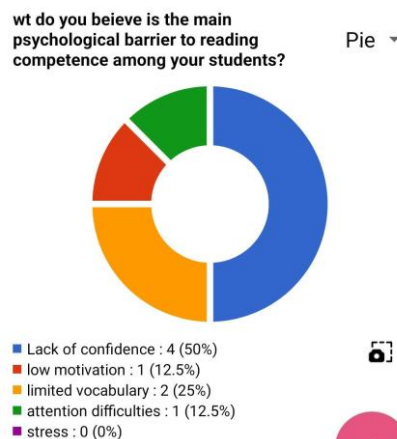
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### 2. Importance of Student Motivation

As shown in the bar graph, 88.88% of respondents rated student motivation as either extremely important (44.44%) or very important (44.44%) in reading development. Only 11.11% considered it moderately important, and none indicated it was unimportant. This consensus underscores the critical role of motivation in language acquisition and aligns with psychological theories such as Deci & Ryan’s Self-Determination Theory, which stresses autonomy and interest as driving forces in learning engagement.



### 3. Psychological Barriers to Reading Competence

The third chart reveals that lack of confidence (50%) is considered the most significant psychological barrier, followed by limited vocabulary (25%), low motivation (12.5%), and attention difficulties (12.5%). These findings emphasize



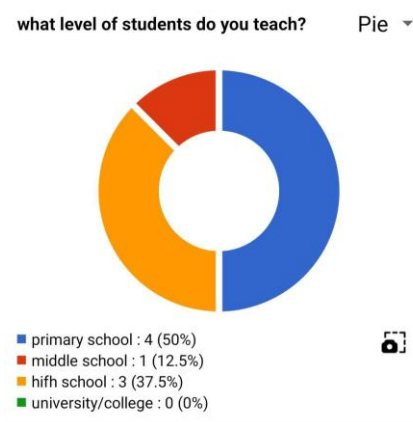
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20<sup>th</sup> May 2025

the need for building a supportive and non-threatening classroom environment. Confidence, in particular, appears to be a foundational element without which other competencies cannot fully develop. The data also suggest that vocabulary instruction and motivational strategies must be integrated into reading activities to reduce learner anxiety and disengagement.



This chart shows that most of the teachers (50%) who were involved into the survey work in the secondary school, 12,5% of them work at middle school, and 37,5% of teachers work at high school



This bar chart indicates what strategies the teachers often use to develop reading competence 30% of participants use guided reading and group discussion vocabulary exercises, 20% of them chose silent reading sessions .



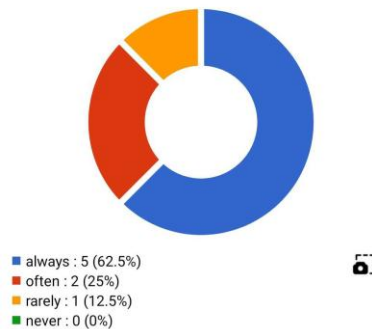
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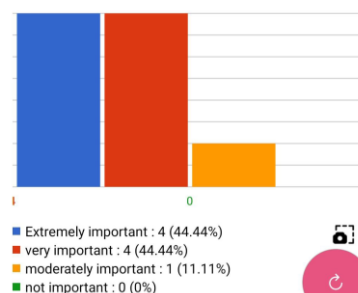
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Hw often do you integrate reading onto other subject areas? Pie



As for the question about how often they integrate reading into other subject areas 62,5% of participants chose the answer "always", 25% chose often and 12,5% chose rarely

how important is student motivation in reading development? Bar



When asked how important student motivation in reading development 44,4% answered extremely important and very important and 11,1 % moderately important

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study highlight the complex interplay between pedagogical choices and psychological factors in the development of students' reading competence. The combination of survey data, classroom observations, and performance analysis of 9th-grade pupils offers several significant insights into how teaching methods and learner attitudes affect reading development.

Firstly, the widespread use of both textbooks and authentic texts (each accounting for 37.5% of usage) reflects a dual approach among teachers. While textbooks provide structured and curriculum-aligned instruction, authentic materials offer exposure to real-world language, which supports both linguistic competence and



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20<sup>th</sup> May 2025

cultural awareness. However, the limited use of digital and adapted materials (each only 12.5%) suggests underutilization of potentially effective resources, especially for learners who need scaffolding or have lower reading proficiency.

The responses regarding student motivation reveal near-universal agreement among teachers about its critical role in reading development. With 88.88% of respondents identifying motivation as "very" or "extremely" important, it is evident that affective factors are seen as equally vital as cognitive strategies. This aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the importance of emotional engagement and social interaction in learning.

Furthermore, the most prominent psychological barrier to reading identified by teachers was lack of confidence (50%), followed by limited vocabulary (25%). These barriers directly impact students' willingness to engage with texts, particularly in a foreign language context. Confidence, in this case, appears to be a gateway factor — without it, even capable students may hesitate to attempt more challenging reading tasks.

The findings from the experimental study further support these observations. The experimental group, which was exposed to targeted, motivation-based strategies and confidence-building tasks, outperformed the control group across multiple indicators, including engagement, emotional involvement, and speaking confidence. This demonstrates that psychological readiness and support not only improve reading competence but also enhance broader communicative skills.

In conclusion, the development of reading competence cannot be isolated from the emotional and psychological well-being of students. Teachers must be equipped not only with diverse materials but also with strategies to foster confidence, reduce anxiety, and boost motivation. A holistic approach — balancing academic rigor with psychological support — is essential for meaningful and lasting improvements in students' reading competence.

## CONCLUSION

This study examined the pedagogical and psychological characteristics involved in developing students' reading competence, focusing on 9th-grade learners. The findings confirm that effective reading instruction goes beyond the selection of



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materials and teaching strategies—it must also address learners' emotional and psychological needs.

Survey data and classroom observations clearly demonstrated that while traditional and authentic reading materials are commonly used, factors such as motivation, confidence, and vocabulary knowledge play a decisive role in how well students engage with reading tasks. The experimental group's significant improvement in performance compared to the control group illustrates the positive impact of integrating confidence-building activities, motivational support, and varied reading tasks into lessons.

The most critical insight from this research is that reading competence is not only a linguistic skill but a psychological one as well. Teachers must create an emotionally safe environment where students feel encouraged to take risks, make mistakes, and grow. This requires purposeful planning, an understanding of learners' individual needs, and a readiness to adapt methods based on observed challenges.

In conclusion, developing students' reading competence requires a holistic, student-centered approach that combines effective pedagogy with strong psychological support. By recognizing and addressing the emotional barriers to learning, educators can better prepare students not only to read proficiently but to become confident, independent language users.

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