

# CONCEPTUALIZING PEDAGOGICAL ENGLISH PROFICIENCY: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF DIMENSIONS, THRESHOLDS, AND TEACHER COMPETENCIES

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**Abstract:** As English-medium instruction (EMI) and global educational standards evolve, the distinction between general language proficiency and pedagogical English proficiency (PEP) has become increasingly critical. Teachers are required not only to master the language but also to navigate the complex linguistic demands of instruction, student interaction, and content delivery. This systematic literature review (SLR) aims to synthesize current research on PEP by examining its conceptual dimensions, the evidence for threshold models, the reliability of assessment instruments, and the role of technology-enhanced models. Following PRISMA guidelines, a systematic search was conducted in the Scopus database using specific Boolean operators and inclusion criteria. From an initial pool of 422 records, 50 high-quality peer-reviewed articles were selected for final analysis. The data were analyzed using thematic synthesis to address four key research questions. The review identifies that PEP is a multidimensional construct encompassing accuracy, fluency, complexity, appropriation, and capacity. Findings support a “threshold model” where a specific level of general proficiency is necessary to utilize pedagogical knowledge effectively. Evaluation of existing instruments reveals a focus on psychometric reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.70 to 0.91. Furthermore, recent literature highlights a significant shift toward technology-integrated models, including web-based platforms and AI-driven interactions (e.g., ChatGPT), which enhance self-efficacy and linguistic clarity. PEP is not a static trait but a dynamic competence influenced by sociocultural awareness and technological integration. This study highlights the importance of specialized professional development that bridges the gap between general linguistic abilities and classroom-specific communicative needs.

**Keywords:** intrinsic motivation, engagement, lifelong learning, self-determination theory, classroom pedagogy

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The paradigm shift in global higher education toward English-Medium Instruction (EMI) has become an inevitable phenomenon over the past two decades. This trend is driven by universities' internationalization ambitions to enhance global competitiveness, student mobility, and institutional rankings. Macaro, (2018) defines EMI as the use of English to teach academic subjects in countries where English is not the primary language. This massive growth is documented by Dearden, (2014), who shows that EMI has become the de facto policy in many universities in Asia and Europe. However, as Sun, (2023) points out, the assumption that general language proficiency, as evidenced by standardized test scores, is sufficient to guarantee effective teaching is a methodological error. This gap has triggered the urgent need to

redefine teacher competency through the construct of Pedagogical English Proficiency (PEP).

To understand the essence of PEP, we must refer to the theoretical framework of Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) popularized by Andrews (2007). TLA goes beyond everyday communication skills; it encompasses metalinguistic awareness of how language functions as an instructional medium. Burns & Richards (2012) and Freeman (2016) emphasize that teachers must not only master content but also be able to engage in "pedagogical processing" of language. This is reinforced by Gronchi & Hopkyns (2025) findings, which state that teachers' professional identities in EMI classrooms are strongly influenced by their perceptions of their own language's adequacy in facilitating meaningful classroom discussions.

Based on a synthesis of 18 key literatures, PEP emerged as a dynamic, multidimensional construct. This dimension extends beyond accuracy and fluency to include discursive scaffolding capacity. Chen and Durrant (2024) in their study demonstrated that PEP dimensions should include the ability to adjust lexical complexity to suit students' cognitive levels. Furthermore, (Domke & Cerrato, 2024) identified that integrating pedagogical content knowledge and language is key to successful teaching in linguistically diverse environments.

The validation of the Threshold Model is another central issue. Research by Wang (2021) and Safarova (2025) provides empirical evidence that there is a threshold beyond which low language proficiency drastically hinders pedagogical skills. Safarova (2025) specifically highlights that in science classes, instructors are often able to mitigate language limitations through visual tools, but this differs in the humanities. Similarly, Alkharusi (2011) reports a statistically significant correlation score,  $r(257) = .32, p < .001$ , indicating that increasing instructor language proficiency is positively correlated with the depth of interactive classroom interactions.

While the importance of PEP has been recognized, significant challenges remain in how it is measured. Reviews of existing instruments, such as those developed by Tang et al. (2024) and Alkharusi (2011) show promising levels of reliability (Cronbach's Alpha up to 0.911). However, Van Kampen et al., (2018) criticized the fact that existing instruments are still dominated by self-report. This is supported by Micari et al. (2007), who suggested the need for performance-based instruments to reduce the subjective bias of teachers in assessing their own abilities.

Affective dimensions such as self-efficacy are also key components of PEP. A study by Huang (2024) found that self-efficacy in language tasks had a reliability above 0.79 as a predictor of teaching performance. In the digital age, the role of technology is becoming a new catalyst. A study by Booth Olson et al. (2023) demonstrated how cognitive strategies in argumentative writing can be enhanced through explicit instruction. Furthermore, Tammets and Ley (2023) and Jose et al., (2025) explored the use of AI (ChatGPT) as a dialogic assistant that improves teachers' "command literacy," although (Jose et al., 2025) also warned of the risk of cognitive offloading, which could threaten academic integrity.

Through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of 18 selected articles, this study seeks to answer:

**RQ1:** How is PEP conceptualized and dimensionalized in the current literature?

**RQ2:** What empirical evidence supports the threshold model linking general proficiency to pedagogical knowledge?

**RQ3:** What are the psychometric characteristics and limitations of current PEP assessment instruments?

**RQ4:** How do technology-based model features (such as AI) transform PEP practices?

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Research Design

This study is a systematic literature review (SLR) that aims to synthesize conceptualizations, threshold models, assessment instruments, and the role of technology in Pedagogical English Proficiency (PEP). The research procedure follows the PRISMA-P Group et al. (2015) to ensure transparency, replicability, and objectivity in the selection and analysis of literature.

### 2.2. Search Strategy and Data Sources

A literature search was conducted electronically in the Scopus database, the primary database of globally reputable journals, on January 3, 2025. The search strategy used the keyword "pedagogical English proficiency," a combination of Boolean operators (AND, OR), and wildcards to capture variations of relevant terms. The search string used was as follows: TITLE-ABS-KEY ("english proficiency" AND "pedagogy") AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOC") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ARTS")) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTAGE, "final")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (OA, "all"))

The search was limited to documents published within the last 10 years (2016-2026) to ensure the relevance of the findings to current developments in educational technology.

To maintain the integrity of the review, the inclusion criteria were strictly defined as follows:

**Table 1. Eligibility Criteria**

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Document Type	Original research journal articles that have gone through a peer review process.	Review articles, book chapters, conference proceedings, editorials, and books.
Time span	Indexed publications through January 2026.	Articles published after the search period.
Language	Articles published in English.	Articles in languages other than English.
Study Focus	Addressing conceptualization, threshold models, instruments assessment, or technology in Pedagogical English Proficiency (PEP).	The article only discusses General English proficiency without pedagogical or teaching context.
Access Status	Articles available in Open Access.	Articles with limited or paid access.

Figure 1. Study Selection (PRISMA FLOW)

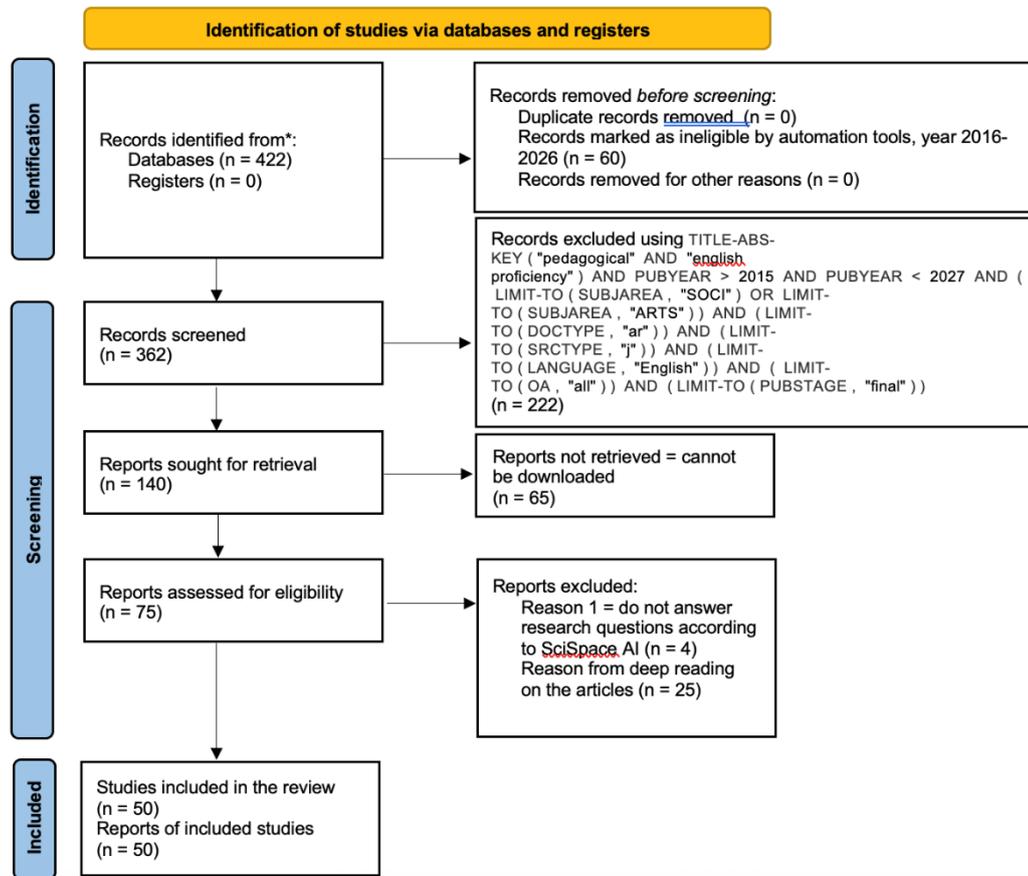


Table 2. Reviewed Articles Distribution

Journal Names	Numbers of Articles	Studies	Types of Study
Amanote Research	1	Nurutdinova et al., (2017)	Empirical
Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)	2	Liu & Diana Deris, (2023); Zhang & Jocuns, (2022);	Empirical
Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education	1	Behera et al., (2024)	Empirical
Australian Journal of Applied Linguistics	1	Zoghlami, (2023)	Empirical
Cogent Education	1	Chu & Qiu, (2025)	Empirical
Discover Education	1	Oria Alonso & Pérez Fernández, (2025)	Empirical
Education Sciences	1	Matsumura & Hinoki, (2024)	Empirical
Frontiers in Education	4	Sinwongsuwat, (2025); Sun, (2023); Guerra Ayala et al., (2024); Kim et al., (2024)	Empirical
Frontiers in Language Sciences	1	Wu, (2025)	Empirical & Non-empirical
Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics	2	Santoso et al., (2024); Setyarini et al., (2020)	Empirical

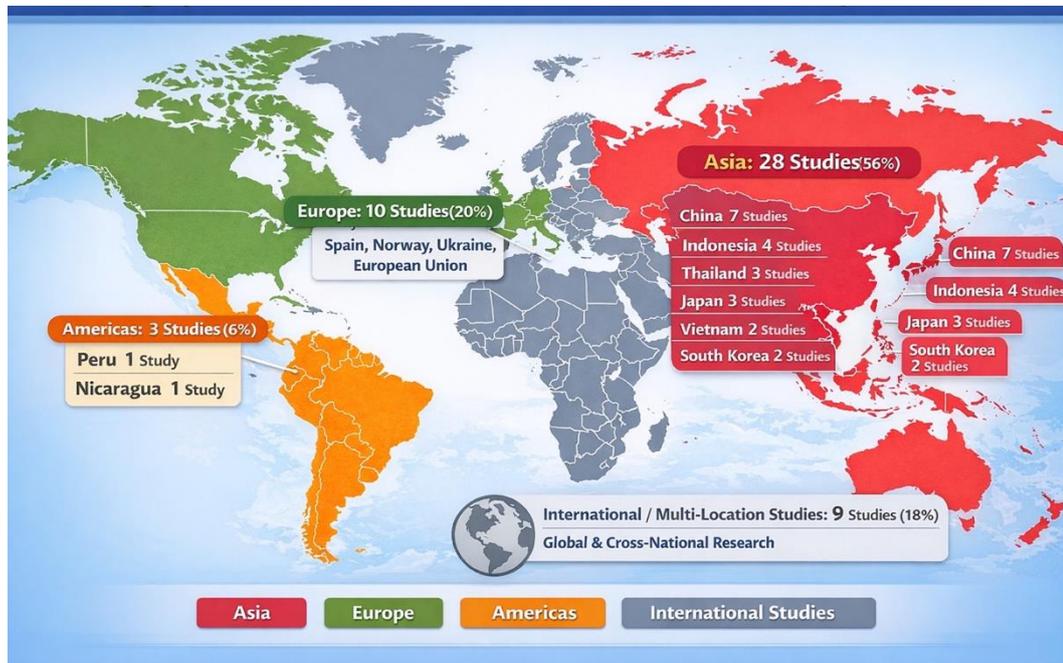
Integration of Education	1	Almazova & Andersen, (2025)	Empirical
International Journal of Higher Education	1	Yuzkiv et al., (2020)	Empirical
International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research	4	Loi & Hong, (2025); Hien & Suppasetsee, (2024); Bilotserkovets et al., (2021); Lee et al., (2021)	Empirical
IRAL	1	Tanaka, (2022)	Empirical
JELF	1	Chan, (2025)	Empirical
Journal of Engineering Education Transformations	2	Raje & Tamilselvi, (2025); Kadam & More, (2025)	Empirical
Journal of Intercultural Communication	1	Z. Liu et al., (2025)	Empirical
Language Awareness	1	Ma et al., (2025)	Empirical
Language Testing in Asia	2	Tashmuradova et al., (2023); Kimura et al., (2017)	Empirical
Language, Culture and Curriculum	1	Villabona & Cenoz, (2022)	Empirical
LLT Journal A Journal on Language and Language Teaching	2	Yulita, (2021); Kaid & Labeled, (2025)	Empirical
MDPI	1	Zhang et al., (2021)	Empirical
Multilingua,	1	Beiter, (2021)	Empirical
Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam	1	Supriyanto et al., (2025)	Empirical
Open Education Studies	1	Khamkhien, (2025)	Empirical
Porta Linguarum	1	Lahuerta, (2023)	Empirical
Revista de Estudos da Linguagem	1	Prado, (2024)	Empirical
Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching	1	Yuksel et al., (2023); Pujadas & Muñoz, (2024)	Empirical
TEFLIN Journal	2	Irham & Wahyudi, (2024)	Empirical
The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning,	1	Saiful, (2020)	Empirical
The Journal of Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes	1	Shaheen et al., (2019)	Empirical
The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies	1	Ganapathy et al., (2022)	Non-empirical
Universal Journal of Educational Research	3	Dávila, (2020); Dávila & Jarquín, (2020); Ghazali et al., (2020)	Empirical
World Journal of English Language	3	Rahmanova & Ekşi, (2023); Syafitri et al., (2024); Imsri & Sangpoom, (2022)	Empirical

### 2.3. Data Extraction and Synthesis

Data from 50 selected articles were extracted into a systematic table that includes: Study, Research Objective, Context and Participants, Design, Findings, and Relation to PEP. Data synthesis was conducted using Thematic Analysis. This process

involved open coding of key findings, identifying emerging themes (such as cognitive versus affective dimensions), and categorizing evidence based on PEP functional categories (concept, threshold, assessment, and technology). This approach enabled researchers to generate a comprehensive narrative regarding the evolution of PEP in the era of digital disruption.

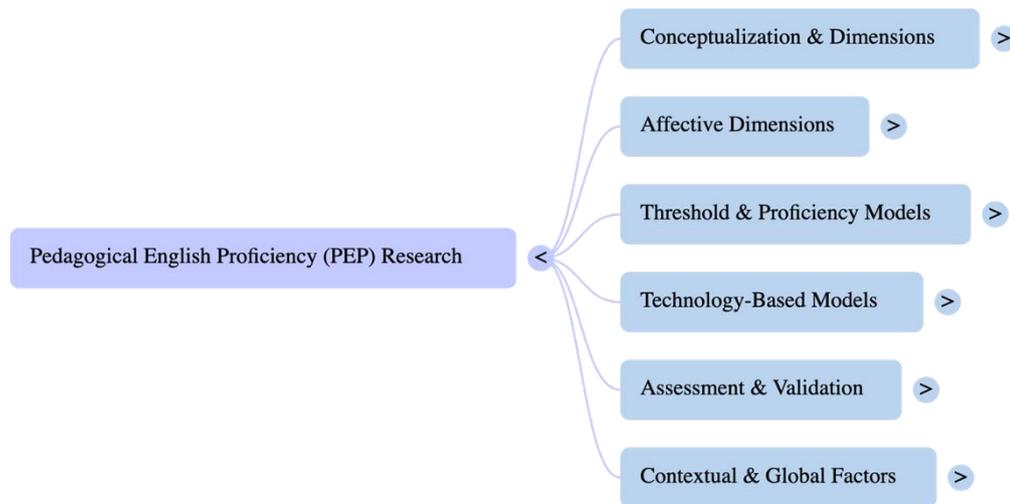
**Figure 2. Geographical Distribution of the Research**



Based on an analysis of 50 reviewed studies, it was found that research in the field of English language teaching and learning is spread globally, with significant variations in socio-cultural and educational contexts. Asia dominates as the region with the highest frequency of research, with 28 of the 50 studies (56%) located in this region. Countries such as China (7 studies), Thailand (3 studies), Indonesia (4 studies), Japan (3 studies), Vietnam (2 studies), and South Korea (2 studies) were the main loci. This reflects the high level of attention to challenges and innovations in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in this region.

Europe was represented by 10 studies (20%), located in Spain (3 studies), Norway (1 study), Ukraine (1 study), and a cross-country study of the European Union (1 study). The Americas were covered in 3 studies (6%), namely Peru (1 study) and Nicaragua (1 study). Meanwhile, the remaining 9 studies (18%) were multi-location, international, and not specifically tied to a single country, such as a global survey on EMI teacher competency or research involving participants from various nationalities. Overall, these quantitative findings reinforce the understanding that research in this field is closely related to the local context, while also being interconnected through universal themes. The dominance of Asian countries in this sample also indicates the current direction and dynamics in the global academic development of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and applied linguistics.

**Figure 3. Framework for Pedagogical English Proficiency Research**



The framework for Pedagogical English Proficiency (PEP) Research situates PEP within the global context of EMI/EFL and educational internationalization. It conceptualizes PEP as a multidimensional construct structured around four core dimensions: Cognitive-Pedagogical (language awareness and content knowledge), Instructional Communication (classroom interaction and explanation), Affective-Social (self-efficacy and emotional regulation), and Technology-Digital (digital literacy and AI integration). These dimensions converge into practical applications in multilingual classrooms, performance assessment, and teacher professional development. The framework thus serves as an analytical model for understanding PEP as a dynamic competence at the intersection of language, pedagogy, technology, and context.

### 3. RESULTS

The findings from the systematic review of 50 articles are synthesized and presented thematically according to the research questions (RQs).

#### 3.1. Conceptualization and Dimensionalization of PEP

Pedagogical English Proficiency (PEP) is conceptualized as a multifaceted construct that extends beyond general language proficiency. The analysis reveals five interrelated dimensions:

##### 3.1.1. Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) and Metalinguistic Competence

This foundational dimension involves the ability to understand, analyze, and explain language systems for instructional purposes. Studies such as Kimura et al. (2017) and Ma et al. (2025) underscore TLA as a bridge between language proficiency and pedagogical content knowledge. This includes specific skills like raising learners' metaphor awareness (Ma et al., 2025) and morphological awareness (Tashmuradova et al., 2023).

### 3.1.2. Instructional and Interactional Communication Competence

This dimension encompasses the capacity to use English effectively to manage the classroom, explain concepts clearly, scaffold discussion, and facilitate meaningful interaction. Research highlights oral proficiency as critical for future teachers (Guerra Ayala et al., 2024), and the use of models like Conversation Analysis-informed Teaching (CA-T) to enhance conversational competence (Sinwongsuwat, 2025).

### 3.1.3. Content-Pedagogy Integration in Specific Disciplines

Effective teaching in EMI/ESP contexts requires the seamless integration of subject-matter expertise with appropriate pedagogical strategies. Studies show that teachers must master both the academic content (e.g., economics, engineering) and the language to teach it effectively (Zhang et al., 2021; Syafitri et al., 2024). Challenges in balancing content and language are particularly evident in CLIL settings (Villabona & Cenoz, 2022).

### 3.1.4. Strategic Translanguaging Pedagogy

The ability to internationally and strategically employ students' full linguistic repertoire (including L1) to mediate learning is identified as a key competence. Research moves beyond natural translanguaging to advocate for planned translanguaging as a pedagogical skill to support comprehension in multilingual EMI classrooms (Zhang & Jocuns, 2022; Beiler, 2021).

### 3.1.5. Affective and Self-Regulatory Dimensions

Teachers' self-efficacy, confidence, and ability to manage both their own and students' language-related anxieties significantly impact teaching effectiveness. Professional development can enhance teacher self-efficacy (Matsumura & Hinoki, 2024), while learner factors like anxiety (Ghazali et al., 2020), enjoyment (Guerra Ayala et al., 2024), and self-regulation (Yuksel et al., 2023; Imsri & Sangpoom, 2022) are closely tied to language acquisition outcomes.

## 3.2. Empirical Evidence Supporting the Threshold Model

A substantial body of evidence supports the existence of a contextual threshold of general English proficiency, below which the application of pedagogical knowledge becomes significantly constrained.

### 3.2.1. For Learners

Students with lower general proficiency struggle with content comprehension in EMI courses (Lee et al., 2021), and rely more heavily on compensatory strategies like translation (Yulita, 2021), and require linguistic supports such as captions for audiovisual comprehension. Pujadas and Muñoz (2024) empirically identified C2 as the proficiency level where the benefit of captions diminishes, indicating a threshold for unassisted comprehension.

### 3.2.2. For Instructors

Teachers with limited English proficiency report significant challenges in delivering content via EMI, often resorting to increased use of their L1, translanguaging, and visual scaffolding (Khamkhien, 2025; Rahmanova & Ekşi, 2023). The correlation between instructor language proficiency and the depth of classroom interaction further supports the threshold concept (Alkharusi, 2011).

### 3.2.3. Contextual Variability

The threshold is not absolute but varies by discipline and instructional context. For instance, technical fields may allow for greater mitigation through visual aids, while discursive humanities subjects impose higher linguistic demands. Furthermore, factors like self-regulation can interact with language proficiency to predict academic success in EMI (Yuksel et al., 2023).

## 3.3. Psychometric Characteristics and Limitations of PEP Assessment Instruments

Assessment of PEP remains dominated by self-report methodologies, which, while reliable, present significant validity concerns.

### 3.3.1. Reliability

The reviewed instruments generally demonstrate strong internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha values commonly range from 0.70 to 0.96. Notable examples include an enjoyment scale ( $\alpha = .875$ ,  $\omega = .895$ ) (Guerra Ayala et al., 2024), a teacher competence questionnaire ( $\alpha = .909$ ) (Saiful, 2020), and a self-regulation scale ( $\alpha = .96$ ) (Yuksel et al., 2023).

### 3.3.2. Major Limitations

**Over-reliance on Self-Report:** This method is susceptible to social desirability bias and may not reflect actual classroom performance (Matsumura & Hinoki, 2024; Loi & Hong, 2025).

**Scarcity of Performance-Based Assessment:** Few instruments evaluate teaching competence through direct observation or analysis of teaching artifacts in authentic contexts.

**Context-Specific Development:** Many tools are developed and validated within specific cultural or educational settings (e.g., Japan (Kimura et al., 2017), Indonesia (Saiful, 2020), Peru (Guerra Ayala et al., 2024), limiting their generalizability.

**Limited Validation Evidence:** While reliability is often reported, detailed evidence of construct, criterion, or predictive validity is less common.

## 3.4. Key Features of Technology-Enhanced Models for PEP

Technology emerges as a transformative agent in the development, practice, and assessment of PEP, primarily functioning in two capabilities:

### 3.4.1. Medium for Teacher Professional Development (TPD)

Digital platforms, including mobile devices and social media, provide accessible, flexible avenues for continuous learning and community building. Studies report positive teacher beliefs towards smartphone-enabled TPD (Saiful, 2020) and demonstrate how social media integration can enhance both media literacy and English proficiency (Bilotserkovets et al., 2021).

### 3.4.2. Pedagogical and Assessment Tool

**Ai-Powered Interaction:** Tools like ChatGPT are explored as dialogic partners to refine teachers' instructional language and "command literacy," through concerns about over-reliance and academic integrity are noted.

**Technology-Enhanced Learning Designs:** Interventions integrating authentic digital content and tools show significant effectiveness in improving specific language skills, such as Business English (Z. Liu et al., 2025). Frameworks like TPACK guide the design of ESP materials (Syafitri et al., 2024), and Personal Learning Environments (PLEs) promote autonomous speaking practice (Hien & Suppasetsee, 2024).

**Innovative Pedagogical Models:** Technology facilitates new teaching approaches, such as integrating language with technical content via collaborative digital activities (Raje & Tamilselvi, 2025) and using online platforms for peer assessment in presentation tasks (Kadam & More, 2025).

## 4. DISCUSSION

This systematic review elucidates that Pedagogical English Proficiency (PEP) is not merely an advanced subset of general English skills, but a distinct, hybrid competency situated at the dynamic intersection of language pedagogy, content knowledge, and technological integration. The findings compel a reconceptualization of teacher readiness for English-medium and multilingual classrooms, moving from a paradigm of linguistic sufficiency to one of integrated professional competence. The following discussion synthesizes the evidence to address the core research questions and their broader implications.

### 4.1. PEP as a Hybrid, Context-Embedded Construct: Beyond a Simple Skills Set

The multidimensional model of PEP that emerges from this synthesis challenges the reductionist view of teacher language competence. It affirms that effective pedagogical use of English requires a synergistic blend of cognitive, pedagogical, and affective domains. The cognitive domain encompasses Teacher Language Awareness (TLA), the analytical understanding of language as a system, essential for tasks like raising learners' metaphor awareness (Ma et al., 2025) and explaining grammatical structures. The pedagogical domain involves the strategic enactment of that knowledge through instructional communication, scaffolding, and content-language integration, a balance that proves challenging even in dedicated CLIL settings (Villabona & Cenoz, 2022). Crucially, the affective domain, encompassing self-efficacy, anxiety management, and the fostering of a positive classroom climate, acts as the engine that mobilizes the other two. This triad explains why a teacher with high general proficiency may still struggle in the classroom if they

lack pedagogical strategies of confidence (Matsumura & Hinoki, 2024), while another with slightly lower proficiency but strong pedagogical skills and self-efficacy may be effective. The prominence of planned translanguaging as a dimension (Zhang & Jocuns, 2022; Beiler, 2021) further underscores that PEP is not about rigidly policing language boundaries, but about strategically deploying all available linguistic resources to maximize comprehension and participation. This positions the PEP-proficient teacher as a pragmatic language manager and culturally responsive pedagogue, rather than a mere model of native-like English.

#### **4.2. The Threshold Model Revisited: A Zone of Proximal Development, not a Fixed Line**

The evidence strongly supports the existence of a threshold, but reframes it as a context-dependent “Zone of Proximal Pedagogical Development.” It is not a single, universal score on a standardized test, but a fluid zone where sufficient general proficiency enables the effective activation of pedagogical knowledge. The findings from EMI classrooms reveal that the floor of this zone is determined by the specific communicative demands of the discipline and the available instructional supports (Oría Alonso & Pérez Fernández, 2025; Lee et al., 2021). Empirically, research on captioned viewing identifies C2 as a proficiency level where linguistic supports become unnecessary, marking a clear threshold for autonomous comprehension (Pujadas & Muñoz, 2024). Conversely, factors like strong self-regulation in students (Yuksel et al., 2023) or collaborative support for teachers (Matsumura & Hinoki, 2024) can raise the ceiling of what is achievable within a given proficiency level. This dynamic model resolves the apparent contradiction in the literature, while a foundational level of English is indisputably necessary (Alkharusi, 2011), its sufficiency cannot be judged in isolation from the pedagogical context, the teacher’s non-linguistic skills, and the ecosystem of classroom support.

#### **4.3. The Assessment Paradox: Reliability without Ecological Validity**

The review uncovers a significant assessment gap. While researchers have developed reliable self-report tools to measure perceptions of competence, anxiety, or beliefs (e.g., Guerra Ayala et al., 2024; Saiful, 2020), there is a stark scarcity of instruments that validity capture the performance of PEP in action. High Cronbach’s Alpha values provide statistical comfort but mask a critical flaw: they measure what teachers think they can do, not what they can do, not what they actually do in the complex, unpredictable environment of a classroom. This over-reliance on self-assessment risk perpetuates a “proficiency illusion” and fails to provide meaningful diagnostic data for targeted professional development. A promising exception is the work on developing classroom language benchmark assessments for teachers, which focuses on observable performance (Kimura et al., 2017). The future of PEP assessment lies in expanding such performance-based, authentic evaluation methods, potentially augmented by technology for scrabble analysis of instructional language, moving beyond the limitations of the questionnaire-dominated landscape (Loi & Hong, 2025). strategies.

#### **4.4. Technology as a Double-Edged Sword: Catalyst and Crutch**

The integration of technology into PEP practices presents a transformative yet paradoxical force. On one hand, it facts as powerful catalyst for development and

democratization. Mobile and online platforms break down geographical and temporal barriers to high-quality professional development, as seen in Indonesian teachers' strong positive beliefs towards smartphone-enabled TPD (Saiful, 2020). AI conversational agents offer a low-stakes environment for teachers to practice and refine their instructional language and "command literacy" (Jose et al., 2025). On the other hand, technology introduces the risk of becoming a cognitive crutch. Overdependence on translation apps or AI for generating lesson content can inhibit the development of the very metalinguistic and spontaneous interactional competencies that define PEP. The key insight from the literature is that technology should be designed and used not to replace core pedagogical competencies, but to augment, practice, and assess them. Effective integration is shown in models that use technology to create an authentic, discipline-specific learning environment (e.g., Z. Liu et al., 2025; Raje & Tamilselvi, 2025), thereby strengthening the content-pedagogy-language nexus at the heart of PEP.

#### **4.5. Synthesis and Forward Path: Toward an Integrated Ecology of PEP Development**

Pulling these threads together, this review advocates for an integrated ecology of PEP development. In this model, PEP is the core competency that enables a teacher to successfully navigate the interconnected spheres of their professional ecosystem. The primary implication is that teacher preparation and professional development for EMI/EFL contexts must be fundamentally restructured. Isolated language courses are insufficient. Instead, integrated, experiential training is required, where language improvement, pedagogical strategy, content application, and critical technology use are learned and practiced simultaneously, as demonstrated in an effective pre-service program (Dávila, 2020). This calls for unprecedented collaboration between language specialists, content-area faculty, and instructional designers to create learning experience that mirrors the integrated demands of the 21st-century multilingual classroom.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

This systematic review establishes Pedagogical English Proficiency (PEP) as a critical and distinct professional competence, encompassing the integrated dimensions of language awareness, instructional communication, content-pedagogy fusion, strategic multilingual practice, and effective self-regulation. It moves beyond the notion of general language proficiency as a sufficient qualification for effective teaching in English-medium contexts.

The findings support a nuanced, context-sensitive threshold model, wherein a foundational level of general English proficiency is necessary to activate pedagogical knowledge, but its sufficiency is determined by disciplinary demands and a supportive classroom ecosystem. Furthermore, a significant assessment-practice gap persists, with the field relying heavily on self-report tools that lack the ecological validity to measure actual classroom performance. Concurrently, technology emerges as a dual-force catalyst, offering transformative pathways for development while posing risks of superficial dependency if not integrated critically.

Ultimately, preparing educators for contemporary multilingual classrooms requires a paradigm shift. Isolated language training is inadequate. The evidence converges on the imperative for integrated, experiential professional development

that simultaneously cultivates language, pedagogy, content knowledge, and digital literacies, thereby equipping teachers with the holistic competency that PEP embodies.

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