

EXPLORING THE CORRELATION OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE AND SPEAKING PROFICIENCY, AND HOW LEARNERS PERCEIVED THEM

Nur Fariha

Master's Degree in English Language Education, Universitas Muhamadiyah Gresik, Gresik, Indonesia
Email: nurfariha94english@gmail.com

Khoirul Anwar

Master's Degree in English Language Education, Universitas Muhamadiyah Gresik, Gresik, Indonesia
Email: khoirulanwar@umg.ac.id

Nirwanto Maruf

Master's Degree in English Language Education, Universitas Muhamadiyah Gresik, Gresik, Indonesia
Email: nirwanto.maruf@umg.ac.id

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the correlation between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency in language learners while examining their perceptions of these aspects. Conducted using a mixed-methods approach, the research gathered data from 65 participants across multiple universities in Lamongan Regency, East Java, Indonesia. Quantitative analysis involved Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores, structured surveys, and questionnaires assessing sociolinguistic competence. Qualitative insights were obtained from in-depth interviews, illuminating participants' experiences, beliefs, and challenges in diverse social settings related to language use. Quantitative findings indicate a strong correlation between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency. The Pearson correlation coefficient for "Sociolinguistic Competence" was 1.000, confirming a perfect positive correlation, while the correlation between "Sociolinguistic Competence" and "Speaking Proficiency" was .688, signifying a robust positive correlation. Similarly, "Speaking Proficiency" exhibited a .688 correlation with sociolinguistic competence. Qualitative insights emphasized themes such as sociolinguistic norms, language preferences, and challenges in communicative contexts. Participants stressed the importance of adhering to sociolinguistic norms, showcased preferences for specific language styles in diverse contexts, and highlighted challenges in multilingual environments. The study solidifies the significant correlation between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency among participants, emphasizing the pivotal role of sociolinguistic competence in enhancing speaking proficiency. These outcomes stress the reciprocal influence between these dimensions in language learning, emphasizing the need for tailored language learning strategies incorporating sociocultural dimensions. Future research may delve into implementing sociolinguistic approaches in language education to enhance learners' communicative skills and sociolinguistic awareness.

Keywords: *language learners; sociolinguistics competence; speaking proficiency.*

INTRODUCTION

Language acquisition extends far beyond grammar and vocabulary; it delves into the intricacies of sociolinguistic competence, essential for effective communication (Geeslin, 2021; Kanwit & Geeslin, 2020a, 2020b). Imagine two individuals, both fluent speakers of a language, yet one adeptly navigating social nuances while the other struggles. This discrepancy underscores the significance of

sociolinguistic competence and its link to speaking proficiency among language learners.

The field of sociolinguistics has long recognized language as a multifaceted tool shaped by social contexts (GÖY, 2019; Kanwit & Solon, 2022; Gnevshcheva, 2022; Rampton, 2021; Wang et al., 2023). While studies have dissected linguistic structures, the correlation between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency remains a focal point, shaping the landscape of language acquisition (Ahmed & Pawar, 2018; Bagmanova

et al., 2020; Gulomova, 2021; Martinez & De Vera, 2019; Sabri Thabit Saleh Ahmed & Sunil V. Pawar, 2018). Explorations into this nexus have uncovered fundamental yet evolving patterns in language learning, urging further investigation into its depths.

Within this context, this research probes the intricate relationship between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency among language learners. The specific problem lies in delineating the extent to which sociolinguistic competence influences speaking proficiency and vice versa among individuals engaged in language acquisition.

Recent empirical evidence indicates that sociolinguistic competence significantly impacts an individual's speaking proficiency. Studies suggest that an individual's ability to comprehend and appropriately utilize linguistic markers of social relations, politeness conventions, register differences, dialects, and accents greatly influences their spoken communication prowess (Hasanah et al., 2019b, 2019a; Minggirovna, 2019). Conversely, one's proficiency in verbal communication may also mould their sociolinguistic competence, illustrating a dynamic relationship between the two facets of language acquisition (Blommaert, 2012; Geeslin & Long, 2020; Gumartifa, 2022; Arifin et al., 2022).

Studies have shown that individuals with high sociolinguistic competence tend to exhibit superior speaking proficiency, navigating diverse social contexts with linguistic dexterity (Chaouche, 2017; Hedia, 2022a, 2022b; Liu, 2021). On the other hand, individuals struggling with spoken communication often exhibit deficits in sociolinguistic knowledge, impeding their ability to effectively convey intended meanings (Beebe, 1980; Chaya, 2022; Rohmeyer et al., 2017).

Navigating through this uncharted terrain, the primary objective of this study is to unravel the interconnectedness of sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency. By employing a mixed-methods approach integrating quantitative assessments and qualitative insights, this research aims to not only identify correlations but also elucidate the underlying dynamics shaping language learners' abilities in social language use and verbal communication.

Through this endeavour, the study endeavours to contribute a nuanced understanding that transcends conventional language learning paradigms, offering insights into the integral relationship between sociolinguistic competence

and speaking proficiency among language learners.

Sociolinguistic competence encompasses a comprehensive set of skills essential for effective communication within diverse social contexts. It refers to an individual's ability to comprehend and appropriately use linguistic markers, adapting language to suit various social situations, and navigate interactions within a particular speech community (Stuart-Smith, 2018; Minggirovna, 2019; Wang et al., 2023; Swann & Deumert, 2018).

The multifaceted nature of sociolinguistic competence involves several components: First, Understanding Social Contexts: Individuals with high sociolinguistic competence possess a keen awareness of social settings (Gordon & Tannen, 2023); Deborah Schiffrin, 2006; Gordon, 2010), comprehending the appropriate linguistic choices and behaviours expected in various contexts, such as formal versus informal situations or interactions among different social groups. Second, Politeness and Register: Proficiency in sociolinguistic competence also involves the ability to gauge and utilize appropriate politeness strategies and linguistic registers according to the formality and social hierarchy of the communication setting (Levinson, 1987; Brown & Levinson, 2011). The last, Dialects and Accents: Competence in sociolinguistics encompasses the ability to comprehend and use dialectal variations and accents within a language, demonstrating flexibility in language usage across diverse linguistic communities (Bernard Spolsky, 2006; Toomaneejinda & Saengboon, 2022).

The exploration of sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency among language learners within existing literature exposes critical limitations. Predominantly, research endeavours have been confined to specific language learner groups primarily situated in controlled environments within English-speaking countries. This restricted focus has inadequately represented the broader spectrum of language learners, excluding diverse linguistic and cultural contexts (Martinez & De Vera, 2019; Booven, 2018). Moreover, the literature predominantly concentrates on establishing statistical correlations between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency, often overlooking contextual intricacies and socio-cultural factors influencing language acquisition (Agnihotri & Khanna, 1994; Kyuchukov et al., 2018; Mohammed, 2019)

An alternative discourse within the literature acknowledges the potential complexity inherent in the correlation between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency among language learners. This recognition emphasizes the necessity for comprehensive research designs that transcend the limitations of quantitative approaches. Studies such as stress the need for nuanced investigations that amalgamate both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. These methodologies delve deeper into contextual nuances, learning strategies, and socio-cultural influences, offering a more holistic understanding of the relationship between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency among language learners (Bagirova, 2023; Train, 2003; Чернобровкина & Chernobrovkina, 2016).

Further exploration into factors influencing the correlation between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency sheds light on the multifaceted nature of this relationship. Varied factors, including the socio-cultural background of learners, the context of language acquisition, and the adaptability of learners to diverse linguistic environments, significantly impact the manifestation of sociolinguistic competence in speaking proficiency (Chválová & Petrášová, 2020; Nayimova, 2021; Savchenko, 2021; Tursunovich, 2022). Additionally, the exclusive emphasis on quantitative measurements fails to encompass the richness of qualitative insights into language learners' experiences, limiting the comprehensive understanding of sociolinguistic competence acquisition (Maruf & Helingo, 2022; Чернобровкина & Chernobrovkina, 2016; Astifo, 2022).

In conclusion, the existing literature on sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency among language learners is replete with limitations, largely stemming from the narrow scope of research methodologies and confined contexts. This lacuna necessitates a paradigm shift in research design, advocating for more inclusive approaches that amalgamate quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Bridging this gap demands an exploration of sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency beyond statistical correlations, considering contextual nuances, socio-cultural influences, and qualitative insights. Hence, this study endeavors to probe the intricate relationship between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency in language learners, aiming to offer a more holistic comprehension through a mixed-methods approach.

METHOD

This research employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to achieve a comprehensive exploration of sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency in language learners (Schoonenboom & Johnson 2017; Cresswell et al. 2003). By combining these methodological approaches, diverse data sources and perspectives were gathered and analyzed, presenting a multifaceted understanding of the research topic (Dagnino et al., 2020; Baran, 2019). This inclusive approach facilitated data triangulation and the incorporation of varied viewpoints, enhancing the depth and robustness of the study's insights into the correlation between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency among language learners (Armitage, 2007; Baran, 2019).

The study participants included 65 participants (45 males and 20 females) were recruited from various universities across Lamongan regency, Indonesia. The chosen sample aims to represent a diverse cross-section of language learners across different age brackets, linguistic backgrounds, and proficiency levels. Considerable attention was paid to gender balance, socio-economic diversity, and cultural variations within the selected cohort to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive representation.

Criteria for participant inclusion were primarily based on language proficiency levels in the target language. Prospective participants underwent assessments to ensure a certain level of competence in the designated language. Additionally, participants were chosen to encompass a broad spectrum of sociolinguistic backgrounds and experiences, ensuring diverse perspectives and enriching the depth of the study's analysis. These inclusion criteria aimed to facilitate a comprehensive examination of the correlation between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency among language learners.

The study employed a comprehensive array of instruments to evaluate participants' language proficiency and sociolinguistic competence. Specifically, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was exclusively utilized as the standardized language proficiency assessment to objectively evaluate participants' speaking proficiency. TOEFL was meticulously chosen for its established credibility in measuring speaking skills, aiming to provide a rigorous and uniform assessment framework, ensuring a comprehensive

evaluation of language proficiency levels among the participants. Additionally, structured surveys or questionnaires were designed to focus on sociolinguistic competence, allowing inquiries about language use in diverse social contexts, perceptions about dialects, and reactions to specific sociolinguistic scenarios.

In addition to the TOEFL test, and questionnaires for quantitative data, qualitative data were gathered using semi-structured interviews. These interviews employed open-ended questions to delve into participants' experiences, beliefs, and attitudes toward language use across diverse social settings. By exploring sociolinguistic norms, preferences, and challenges encountered during communicative contexts, the interviews provided comprehensive insights into participants' sociolinguistic experiences.

The research employed a diverse range of instruments to comprehensively evaluate participants' language proficiency and sociolinguistic competence. Specifically, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) served as the standardized assessment tool exclusively used to objectively evaluate participants' speaking proficiency. Chosen for its established credibility in measuring speaking skills, the TOEFL test aimed to offer a rigorous and standardized assessment framework, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of language proficiency levels among the participants. This standardized assessment provided a reliable foundation for gauging participants' speaking proficiency within the research cohort.

In parallel, structured surveys and questionnaires were meticulously designed to delve into participants' sociolinguistic competence. These instruments focused on various aspects, such as inquiries about language use in diverse social contexts, perceptions about dialects, and reactions to specific sociolinguistic scenarios. Through these surveys and questionnaires, the research sought to capture and quantify participants' perceptions and experiences related to sociolinguistic norms, language preferences, and responses to diverse communicative situations. This quantitative data collection process facilitated a comprehensive understanding of participants' sociolinguistic attitudes and behaviors across varied linguistic contexts.

In addition to the quantitative approach, the research also incorporated qualitative instruments, namely semi-structured interviews, to gather in-

depth insights into participants' sociolinguistic experiences. These interviews employed open-ended questions to explore participants' beliefs, experiences, and attitudes regarding language use across diverse social settings. By delving into sociolinguistic norms, preferences, and challenges encountered during communicative contexts, the qualitative interviews provided nuanced and comprehensive insights into participants' sociolinguistic experiences. This qualitative data collection process complemented the quantitative methods by offering rich, detailed narratives about participants' sociolinguistic encounters and perceptions, enriching the overall understanding of sociolinguistic competence among the research cohort.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study were derived based on the research aims that were posed at the beginning of the study. These findings provide insight into the identify correlations between sociolinguistics competence with speaking proficiency of the participants, and exploring sociolinguistic norms, preferences, and challenges encountered during communicative contexts.

Table 1. Statistical measures on the TOEFL scores

| Statistical Measures | Values |
|----------------------|--------|
| Mean | 424.31 |
| Median | 427 |
| Standard deviation | 36.63 |

The statistical measures presented in Table 1 offer a summary of the language proficiency levels assessed through TOEFL scores among the participants. The mean score, representing the average TOEFL score among the group, was calculated at 424.31. This value provides an indication of the typical performance in speaking proficiency within the cohort.

The median score, which stands at 427, reflects the middle value of the TOEFL scores when arranged in ascending order. This statistic is particularly significant as it indicates that half of the participants achieved scores below 427 and the other half scored above this value.

Moreover, the standard deviation, calculated at 36.63, provides insight into the dispersion or variability of the TOEFL scores around the mean. A higher standard deviation indicates that the scores are more spread out from the mean, suggesting a wider range of proficiency levels within the group.

Overall, these statistical measures collectively depict the central tendency, distribution, and

variability of language proficiency levels among the participants, offering a comprehensive overview of their speaking proficiency as assessed by the TOEFL examination.

Table 2. *Questionnaire results*

| Aspects of Inquiry | Results |
|---|---------|
| Language use in Diverse Social Context | |
| Formal language in academic settings. | 78% |
| Informal language among peers. | 62% |
| Mixture of language in multicultural settings. | 43% |
| Perceptions about dialects | |
| Preference for native dialect in informal settings. | 55% |
| Regard for standardized Dialect in formal situations. | 27% |
| Reactions to specific sociolinguistics scenarios | |
| Adapting language use based on formality. | 68% |
| Discomfort with unfamiliar Dialect. | 72% |
| Sociolinguistic norms and preferences | |
| Valuing code-switching in multilingual interactions. | 81% |
| Importance of respecting diverse linguistic Background. | 86% |

Table 2 presents the results obtained from the structured surveys or questionnaires that focused on diverse aspects of participants' sociolinguistic competence. The table encompasses participants' responses related to various aspects of language use, perceptions about dialects, and reactions to specific sociolinguistic scenarios.

Under the aspect of "Language Use in Diverse Social Contexts," participants were queried about their language preferences in different settings. Around 78% indicated a preference for formal language in academic settings, while 62% expressed a tendency towards using informal language among peers. Additionally, a majority reported using a mixture of languages in multicultural settings.

Regarding "Perceptions about Dialects," participants' preferences for specific dialects in various contexts were explored. A significant percentage showed a preference for their native dialect in informal settings, while also acknowledging the regard for standardized dialects in formal situations.

The section on "Reactions to Specific Sociolinguistic Scenarios" highlighted participants' responses to situations involving language formality and dialect familiarity. Many respondents expressed comfort in adapting their

language use based on formality, while a considerable percentage indicated discomfort with unfamiliar dialects.

Lastly, the aspects related to "Sociolinguistic Norms and Preferences" revealed participants' attitudes toward multilingual interactions and diverse linguistic backgrounds. A substantial number of participants valued code-switching in multilingual interactions and emphasized the importance of respecting diverse linguistic backgrounds.

These questionnaire results provide valuable insights into participants' perceptions, preferences, and behaviours concerning language use across various social contexts, offering a comprehensive understanding of their sociolinguistic attitudes and practices.

Table 3. *Summary table of participants' speaking proficiency level.*

| Speaking Proficiency Level | Percentage |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Advance | 32% |
| Intermediate | 45% |
| Basic | 18% |
| Below Basic | 5% |

The table 3 displays the distribution of respondents based on their assessed speaking proficiency levels and the corresponding percentages within each category. The category "Advanced" indicates that 32% of the participants exhibited a high level of speaking proficiency. The "Intermediate" category comprises 45% of the respondents, signifying a moderate level of speaking proficiency among this group. Participants categorized as "Basic" constitute 18% of the total, representing individuals with a foundational level of speaking proficiency. Lastly, the "Below Basic" category includes 5% of the participants, indicating a lower level of speaking proficiency among this smaller subset of respondents.

This table provides an overview of the distribution of respondents across various speaking proficiency levels, offering insights into the diversity of speaking skills among the surveyed participants.

Table 4. *Correlations between sociolinguistics competence and speaking proficiency*

| | | Socio Comp. | Speakin g |
|----------|---------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Socio C | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .688** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .001 |
| | N | 65 | 65 |
| Speaking | Pearson | .688** | 1 |

| Correlation | |
|-----------------|------|
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 |
| N | 65 |

The results in Table 4 show that for the variable "Sociolinguistic Competence," the Pearson correlation coefficient was found to be 1.000, indicating a perfect positive correlation with itself, as expected. The correlation between "Sociolinguistic Competence" and "Speaking Proficiency" yielded a Pearson correlation coefficient of .688, demonstrating a strong positive correlation between these variables. This suggests that as sociolinguistic competence increases, there tends to be a corresponding increase in speaking proficiency among the participants. Similarly, for "Speaking Proficiency," the Pearson correlation coefficient was .688, demonstrating the same strong positive correlation with sociolinguistic competence.

Both correlations were statistically significant at the .001 level, indicating that these results are unlikely to have occurred by chance. This implies a robust relationship between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency among the participants in this study.

Qualitative results

Themes identified in participants' experiences

The qualitative exploration into participants' experiences illuminated several key themes, shedding light on their perspectives and challenges within diverse communicative contexts.

The first theme is Sociolinguistic Norms. It refers to the unwritten rules or conventions governing language use within different social contexts. These norms dictate how individuals communicate, express themselves, and adapt their language based on the formality of the situation, the cultural diversity of the participants, or the setting.

Participants in the study emphasized the importance of these norms in shaping their communication. They highlighted the need to conform to established linguistic standards in formal settings to convey clarity, and adherence to conventional language structures. Conversely, in more relaxed or informal social circles, participants noted a more fluid and flexible approach to language, often blending dialects or languages naturally depending on the social group's composition or familiarity. The following excerpts are representation of participants' narratives that illustrate the theme:

Excerpt 1(participant #2):

"Navigating different social environments demands adjusting my speech. At work, maintaining a professional tone with standardized language is key. But with my close-knit community, it's much more relaxed; we mix languages based on comfort."

Excerpt 2 (participant #6):

"I've noticed that in social gatherings, especially among friends from diverse backgrounds, we tend to mix languages casually. It feels natural to switch between languages depending on who I'm speaking with."

Excerpt 3 (participant #21):

"I've noticed the formality in educational settings, especially during lectures or presentations. I tend to use a more structured and standardized form of language. However, during informal gatherings, I embrace my native dialect, it feels more personal and genuine."

The second theme is language preferences. It refers to the choices individuals make regarding the language or dialect they use in various social contexts. It involves selecting a particular language style based on comfort, identity, or appropriateness to the situation. This exploration aims to uncover participants' inclinations toward specific languages or dialects in formal versus informal settings, shedding light on the factors influencing their linguistic choices and expressions of identity. The following excerpts are representation of participants' narratives that illustrate this theme:

Excerpt 4 (participant #15):

"My native dialect is deeply rooted in my identity. I feel a sense of comfort and authenticity when conversing in my mother tongue, especially in familial or casual gatherings. But when I'm in formal settings, I switch to a more standardized language to fit in."

Excerpt 5 (participant #17):

"The choice of language depends on the situation. When I'm in a formal context, I prefer using the language I've been taught in school or learned through textbooks. But informally, I tend to switch to a blend of languages - it feels more natural and relaxed."

Excerpt 6 (participant #23):

"For me, it's not just about language; it's also about culture and identity. Using my native dialect with my community fosters a sense of belonging and comfort. However, in academic

environments, I consciously opt for a more standard dialect to ensure clarity."

The third theme is Challenges in Communicative Contexts. Participants shared experiences related to challenges faced in multilingual settings, addressing difficulties arising from diverse linguistic backgrounds and variations in communication styles. They highlighted the complexities encountered when navigating conversations among individuals speaking different languages, expressing concerns about misunderstandings due to varying interpretations of expressions or phrases. Additionally, they emphasized the necessity of adapting speech to accommodate diverse audiences, especially in contexts where comprehension levels among listeners vary. These insights reflected the intricacies of communicating effectively within environments characterized by linguistic diversity. The following excerpts are representation of participants' narratives that illustrate this theme:

Excerpt 7 (participant #20):

"The biggest challenge in multilingual settings is ensuring everyone understands. Sometimes, what might seem clear to me in my language might be misconstrued by someone speaking another language. It's like finding common ground amidst a linguistic maze."

Excerpt 8 (participant #9):

"In multilingual settings, adapting my speech becomes paramount. Sometimes, it's challenging to strike a balance between clarity and expression, especially when catering to diverse language levels. Ensuring effective communication can be quite a task."

Excerpt 9 (participant #11):

"Navigating conversations in multilingual environments demands constant vigilance. There's always the risk of misinterpretation, especially when idioms or cultural references don't translate well. It's a constant effort to ensure everyone is on the same page."

The qualitative exploration into participants' experiences vividly illuminated various facets of language use, unveiling the intricacies embedded within sociolinguistic norms, language preferences, and challenges encountered in multilingual contexts. Participants conveyed a profound understanding of the subtle yet influential nuances shaping their linguistic interactions across diverse social settings. These

insights, encapsulated in their narratives, highlighted the adaptability in language use, the interplay between formal and informal language choices, and the complexities inherent in multilingual environments. The depth and richness of their experiences underscore the multifaceted nature of language, emphasizing its profound connection to identity, culture, and effective communication across diverse linguistic landscapes.

The findings of this study shed light on the intricate relationship between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency among language learners. The research integrated a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative instruments, to comprehensively explore these interconnected aspects.

The quantitative analysis revealed a significant correlation between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency, as evidenced by the Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.688$, $p < 0.001$). These findings align with prior research emphasizing the strong association between sociolinguistic understanding and verbal communication abilities. Participants' TOEFL scores provided valuable insights into their speaking proficiency, showcasing a mean score of 424.31 and a standard deviation of 36.63. This illustrates the overall performance and variability in language proficiency within the research cohort.

The findings of this study significantly echo and bolster the established body of academic literature underscoring the profound importance of sociolinguistic competence in both language acquisition and proficient communication across diverse social environments. This resonance notably aligns with the seminal works of Booven, (2018) and Thaler, (2019) whose research prominently emphasized the indispensable role of sociolinguistic awareness in facilitating language learning and fostering effective communicative skills. Furthermore, these outcomes fortify the assertions previously elucidated by Minggirovna, (2019), whose comprehensive exploration highlighted the intricate correlation between language proficiency and sociocultural comprehension.

Additionally, the present findings are in congruence with prior research emphasizing the critical significance of sociolinguistic competence in language acquisition and successful communication (Agnihotri & Khanna, 1994; Kyuchukov et al., 2018). The established correlations between sociolinguistic competence

and speaking proficiency underscore the intrinsic relationship between language proficiency and the understanding of sociocultural nuances (Booven, 2018; Rahman et al., 2022). This alignment significantly underscores the consistent importance of sociolinguistic competence in molding and shaping communicative capabilities among language learners

Moreover, the qualitative insights gleaned from this research resonate with earlier scholarly works that have explored sociolinguistic norms, language preferences, and challenges encountered in communicative contexts (Toomaneejinda & Saengboon, 2022). The narratives collected in this study echo existing literature, emphasizing the role of societal and cultural factors in shaping language use across various social settings. The nuanced depiction of language choices, adapting speech based on context, and challenges in multilingual environments resonates with the broader discourse on sociolinguistics.

However, it is essential to note both consistencies and divergences between this study's findings and prior literature. While the correlations established between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency align with existing knowledge, the qualitative nuances in participants' experiences offer richer insights into how sociolinguistic norms and preferences manifest in real-life communicative situations. These qualitative dimensions might diverge from traditional linguistic research methodologies, offering more detailed narratives and personalized experiences that enhance our understanding of sociolinguistic interactions.

In essence, this study's findings corroborate established notions while also contributing nuanced perspectives that enrich the broader discourse on sociolinguistic competence and language proficiency. The integration of qualitative data with quantitative correlations offers a comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between language learning, sociolinguistic competence, and communicative effectiveness, providing a valuable contribution to the existing body of literature in this field.

CONCLUSION

The culmination of this research reveals critical insights into the interconnectedness of sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency among language learners. Through a mixed-methods approach encompassing both quantitative and qualitative analyses, this study illuminated the significance of sociolinguistic

factors in shaping communicative abilities. The quantitative analysis, marked by the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, showcased a substantial correlation between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency, as evidenced by the TOEFL scores. Moreover, qualitative narratives gleaned from semi-structured interviews unveiled multifaceted dimensions of sociolinguistic norms, language preferences, and challenges faced in diverse communicative contexts.

This study integrates various key points, underscoring the pivotal role of sociolinguistic competence in language acquisition and communicative success. It solidifies existing literature highlighting the intricate relationship between language proficiency and sociocultural understanding, emphasizing the necessity of navigating sociolinguistic complexities within diverse social settings.

The study's outcomes imply profound implications for language education and pedagogy, advocating for a more nuanced approach to teaching that integrates sociolinguistic elements into language programs. Understanding sociolinguistic norms and preferences is crucial for learners to attain communicative efficacy in diverse social milieus. However, several questions persist, warranting further investigation. Future research endeavours should delve deeper into the mechanisms linking sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency, exploring the role of culture, identity, and pedagogical approaches in language learning.

In conclusion, this study contributes a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics between sociolinguistic competence and speaking proficiency. It calls for a paradigm shift in language education, stressing the imperative role of sociolinguistic awareness in fostering effective communication. As we navigate the complexities of language learning, embracing sociolinguistic nuances becomes not just a necessity but a cornerstone in achieving communicative success and cultural integration.

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