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**Definitions of the Components**

**Components of Proficiency**

1. **Grammar**

Grammar is a description of the way in which linguistic units such as morphemes, words, and phrases are combined to produce meaningful sentences. This is the degree to which the speaker correctly uses the patterns of the language.

**2. Pronunciation**

Pronunciation refers to the way the sounds of a language are produced and how they are perceived by listeners.

**3. Vocabulary**

Vocabulary includes content and function words as well as idioms. The use and choice of vocabulary allows one to express thoughts and feelings on a variety of topics, and to distinguish between similar but different concepts.

**4. Comprehension**

Comprehension is the ability to derive meaning from spoken or written language. It ranges from decoding smaller elements of language (e.g. sounds or letters) to understanding the overall message.

**5. Fluency**

Fluency is the ability to (a) produce written and/or spoken language with ease; (b) communicate ideas effectively without causing a breakdown of communication.

**6. Tasks and Functions**

Tasks and functions are the *purposes* for which language is used. *Functions* are categories of behavior (e.g. requests, apologies, complaints, offers, instructions, compliments, orders, suggestions, invitations), while *tasks* are specific applications of functions (see examples below). Google ‘Functions of English’ and find some more!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Task** |
| Request | Ask the instructor to write a letter of recommendation for you. |
| Instruction | Tell your grandfather how to access <www.yahoo.ec>. |
| Complaint |  |
|  | Invite your classmate to your birthday party. |
|  |  |

Adapted from: Richards, J. C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. London: Longman Group Ltd.