ENGLISH PROFICIENCY IN UZBEKISTAN: CEFR-BASED STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract. *This thesis examines recent trends in English language proficiency in Uzbekistan using data from the EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) and other CEFR-linked sources. The main aim of the research is to determine whether effective integrative teaching methods are helpful or not to increase English proficiency levels in the country. We also compare general population data with international exam outcomes. Findings indicate a declining trend in general English proficiency among adults, while international test achievements, such as IELTS results show improvement among youth.*

Key words: *Proficiency levels, English, youth, English proficiency index, CEFR, results, trends, rankings, very low.*

Annotatsiya. *Ushbu tezisda EF – English Proficiency Index va CEFR bilan bog'liq boshqa manbalardan foydalangan holda O'zbekistonda ingliz tilini bilishning rivojlanish bosqichlari ko'rib chiqiladi. Tadqiqotning asosiy maqsadi O'zbekistonda samarali integrativ o'qitish metodlarining ingliz tilini o'rganish darajasiga ta'siri va vaqt o'tishi bilan bu natijalar yaxshilanayotgani yoki pasayotganini aniqlash hamda xalqaro imtihon natijalarini statistik tahlil qilishdir. Tahlil natijasiga ko'ra O'zbekistonda ingliz tilini bilish darajasi kattalar orasida pasaymoqda, ammo yoshlar orasida ko'paymoqda.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *Bilish darajalari, ingliz tili, yoshlar, Ingliz tilini bilish darajasi indeksi, CEFR, natijalar, tendensiyalar, reyting, past natija.*

Аннотация. *В данной статье рассматриваются последние тенденции изучения английского языка в Узбекистане с использованием данных EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) и других источников, связанных с CEFR. Основная цель - определить, улучшается или снижается уровень владения английским языком со временем, и сравнить данные общей популяции с результатами международных экзаменов. Результаты показывают тенденцию к снижению общего уровня владения английским языком среди взрослых, в то время как результаты международных тестов, таких как IELTS, показывают улучшение среди молодежи.*

Ключевые слова: *Уровни владения английским языком, молодежь, индекс владения английским языком, CEFR, результаты, тенденции, очень низкий.*

Introduction. English proficiency has become an essential skill in Uzbekistan due to globalization and international cooperation [1]. Our country has participated in the EF English Proficiency Index since 2018, where English proficiency is aligned with CEFR levels (from A1 to C2) [2]. Understanding trends over time helps to inform language education policy and curriculum development. Therefore, we researched different open data sources from the internet and collected information about current trends. The sources are as follows:

- EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) rankings and scores from 2018 to 2025 [3].
- IELTS test results and CEFR equivalent levels among Uzbek youth (2020 – 2024).
- CEFR performance data for students from a British Council report [4].

- The EF EPI uses the EF SET test, aligned with CEFR bands, to estimate proficiency. The

index places countries on a scale from “very low” to “very high” proficiency [3].

Trends in General English Proficiency (EF EPI) [2].

Table 1. Uzbekistan’s EF EPI Rankings and Average Scores (2018–2025)

Year	EF EPI Rank	Number of countries	Average score	CEFR Level Band
2018	86	88	–	Very Low
2019	95	100	–	Very Low
2020	88	99	–	Very Low
2021	88	112	–	Very Low
2022	89	111	–	Very Low
2023	93	113	442	Very Low (B1)
2024	98	116	439	Very Low (B1)
2025	104	123	429	Very Low (B1)

According to the data above Uzbekistan’s ranking has declined steadily over eight years:

Uzbekistan’s EF EPI score fell from 442 in 2023 to 429 in 2025, indicating a decline in

overall adult English proficiency [4].

- Despite participation since 2018, Uzbekistan remains in the “very low” proficiency band

(roughly to pre-intermediate CEFR levels, including A2–B1) [3].

- The decline in ranking (from 86th to 104th place) suggests the country's relative progress

compared to other nations is worsening rather than improving over time [3].

While EF EPI data show declining general proficiency, international exam results among youth show growth, especially in IELTS.

Table 2. Uzbek Youth IELTS Performance (2020 vs 2024)

Measure	**CEFR Level**	**2020**	**2024**	**Growth**
Test-takers scoring ≥5.5	B2 and above	10,600	53,000	Fivefold rise
C1-level achievers (IELTS 7–8)	C1	1,807	13,424	7.4 x rise
C2-level achievers (8.5–9)	C2	14	332	23 x rise

Interpretation of Table 2:

- The number of young people achieving CEFR B2 and above has grown significantly from

2020 to 2024, indicating improving advanced proficiency among test takers [5].

- Growth at the highest CEFR levels (C1, C2) suggests that a segment of the population

(particularly youth aiming for higher education abroad) is increasing in advanced English ability.

A British Council-linked report on students' CEFR results shows a different aspect of proficiency:

Discussion. Based on the data from different sources we can claim:

- General adult proficiency (EF EPI) shows a declining trend over eight years, suggesting

that, at the population level, English skills are not improving fast enough compared to other countries [3].

- Youth performance on IELTS shows a significant rise in higher CEFR bands, indicating

that motivated learners aiming for international benchmarks are improving [5].

- Student CEFR levels indicate that many still remain at basic proficiency, especially in

communication skills [4].

Conclusion. Based on available data we can conclude that:

- General English proficiency in Uzbekistan, as measured by EF EPI, has declined in recent

years, with average scores and rankings falling [3].

- However, higher-level English proficiency among youth (as shown in IELTS results) is

increasing, indicating growth among learners preparing for international benchmarks [5].

- Many students still remain at lower CEFR levels, particularly in speaking and writing [4].

Overall, while advanced proficiency may be improving among motivated learners, the broader population's English proficiency appears to be declining or stagnant.

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