Essay Outline

“Developmental psychologists often worry about the distinction between competence and performance. Discuss why this distinction is important and illustrate your answer with examples from the course.”

Thesis

Whenever we want to measure an ability to perform a cognitive skill, it can be very difficult to create successful tasks that measure a targets competence on the subject as the testing involves more complicated performance than necessary. This Creates a difference between observable performance and competence.

Paragraph 1

* competence, by definition, cannot be directly observed
* competence-performance gap can be thought of as a measure of how good our task are
* no way to tell if failure due to bad task or lack of competence
* create new task that indirectly asses why the old ones fail
  + new task succeeded, it trumps old unsuccessful task

Paragraph 2

* does successful performance necessarily imply competence

Paragraph 3

* is the distinction even necessary?
* Competence doesn’t have any practical significance because everything we do in the world requires performance
* We care about improving performance rather than assessing competence

References (sorry don’t understand the format)

Ref 1: Psychology in action: competence vs performance

Ref 2: Sophian, C. (1997). Beyond competence: The significance of performance for cognitive development. Cognitive Development, 12: 281-303.

Ref 3: Sophian, C. (2008). Rethinking the starting point for mathematics learning. In: Saracho, O.N., and Spodek.

Ref 4: B., eds. Contemporary perspectives on mathematics in early childhood education, 21-44.