

AN INSIGHTFUL STUDY ON COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

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ABSTRACT

Communicative competence is a term in linguistics which refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately.

The term was coined by Dell Hymes in 1966, reacting against the perceived inadequacy of Noam Chomsky's (1965) distinction between competence and performance. To address Chomsky's abstract notion of competence, Hymes undertook ethnographic exploration of communicative competence that included "communicative form and function in integral relation to each other". The approach pioneered by Hymes is now known as the ethnography of communication.

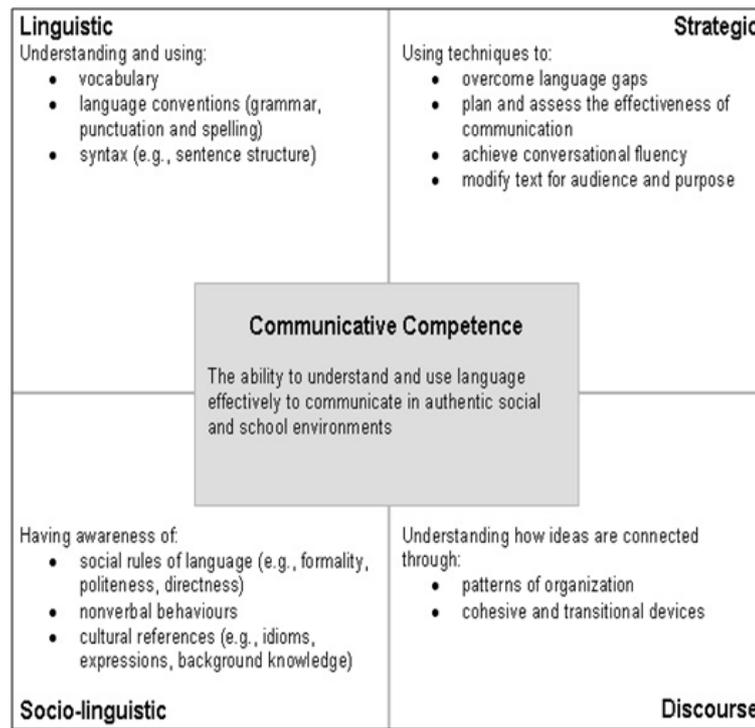
Debate has occurred regarding linguistic competence and communicative competence in the second and foreign language teaching literature, and scholars have found communicative competence as a superior model of language following Hymes' opposition to Chomsky's linguistic competence. This opposition has been adopted by those who seek new directions toward a communicative era by taking for granted the basic motives and the appropriateness of this opposition behind the development of communicative competence.

KEYWORDS: Communicative Competence, Linguistic Users, Knowledge of Syntax, Appropriateness, Correctness

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Communicative language ideas envelop increasing language expertise through interactions rooted in consequential contexts. This approach to teaching provides bonafide prospects for knowledge that go beyond reverberation and memorization of grammatical patterns in remoteness. A fundamental notion of the communicative approach to language training is communicative competence: the learner's knack to comprehend and employ language aptly to communicate in reliable societal and academic set up.

The table below illustrates how each Communicative Area Contributes to Communicative Competence



What do we perceive at when we “learn” language? What does it mean to be “dexterous” in linguistics? See Figure 1.1 for three diverse conduct of categorizing the components of language adeptness. As a tutor, you might be most recognizable with the “language arts” view. And even if you are not a "language arts" teacher, language is the key to most learning know-how.

Language Arts View				
Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	(Signing)
Traditional Linguistic View				
Phonology	Morphology	Syntax	Semantics	(Pragmatics)*
Communicative Competence View**				
Grammatical competence	Pragmatic competence	Discourse competence	Strategic competence	
*relatively recent additions				
**also known as sociolinguistic competence				

Figure 1.1: Components of Language Competence

Communication Competence – A Few Articulations

Originally, Spitzberg (1988) defined communication competence as "the potential to link up well with others" (p.68). He explains, "the term 'well' refers to correctness, intelligibility, unambiguousness, consistency, proficiency, effectiveness and aptness" (p. 68). A much more complete operationalization is provided by Friedrich (1994) when he suggests that communiqué proficiency is best understood as "a situational talent to set pragmatic and apposite purposes and to capitalize on their attainments by using understanding of self, other, context, and communication theory to breed adaptive communication performances."

Communicative competence is measured by determining if, and to what scale, the goals of interface are realized. As affirmed previously, the purpose of communication is to take full advantage of the accomplishment of "shared meaning." Parks (1985) emphasizes three mutually supporting themes: control, responsibility, and foresight; and argues that to be competent, we must "not only 'know' and 'know how,' we must also 'do' and 'know that we did'" (p. 174). He defines communicative competence as "the degree to which individuals distinguish they have contented their goals in a specified societal state devoid of jeopardizing their talent or opportunity to trail their other instinctively more important goals" (p. 175). This amalgamation of cognitive and behavioral perspectives is unswerving with Wiemann and Backlund's (1980) squabble that communication competence is:

The ability of an interactant to opt in the midst of obtainable communicative behaviors in order that he may effectively realize his individual interpersonal goals through an encounter while maintaining the face and line of his fellow interactants within the constraints of the situation. (p. 188)

A useful framework for understanding communication competence was designed by Spitzberg & Cupach (1984) and is known as the component model of competence because it is comprised of three specific dimensions: motivation (an individual's approach or avoidance orientation in various social situations), knowledge (plans of action; knowledge of how to act; procedural knowledge), and skill (behaviors actually performed).

The constituent sculpt asserts that communication competence is reciprocally defined by the interdependency of the cognitive component (concerned with knowledge and understanding), the behavioral component (concerned with behavioral skills), and the touching component (concerned with attitudes and feelings about the knowledge and behaviors) by interactants in an interpersonal meet within a specific context. Rubin (1985) explains that communication competence is "an impression formed about the appropriateness of another's communicative behavior" and that "one goal of the communication scholar is to understand how impressions about communication competence are formed, and to determine how knowledge, skill and motivation lead to perceptions of competence within various contexts" (p. 173).

When applying the component model to organizational communication contexts, Shockley-Zalabak (1988) divides motivation into two separate (though related) elements: sympathy (the capability to demonstrate apprehension and admiration for others) and obligation (the wish to shun preceding blunders and discover improved ways of communicating through the procedure of self-monitoring). This revised model consisting of four dimensions (knowledge, skill, sensitivity, and commitment) is used by Rothwell (1998) to study communication competence in small group interaction.

Note that communicative competence is reliant on the milieu in which the interaction takes place (Cody and McLaughlin, 1985; Applegate and Leichy, 1984; Rubin, 1985). Communication which is victorious with one group in one situation, may not be apparent as dexterous with a varied set in another situation. McCroskey (1982) attempts to elucidate the significance of competence when he writes, "The domain of communicative competence includes learning what are the obtainable means (available strategies), how they have been engaged in various situations in the past, and being able to determine which ones have the maximum prospect of achievement in a given circumstances (p. 5).

Canary and Cody (2000) provide six criteria for appraising aptitude which consist of, but are not inadequate to, perceived appropriateness and effectiveness. The criteria include adaptability, conversational involvement, conversational management, empathy, effectiveness, and appropriateness. They are explained in more detail below:

SIX CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

Adaptableness (flexibility)

- The talent to modify behaviors and goals to meet the wants of contact
- Comprised of six factors
 - Social know-how - participation in various social interactions
 - Social serenity - refers to keeping quiet in the course of exact discernment
 - Social authentication - refers to acknowledgment of partner's goals
 - Appropriate revelation - being susceptible to amount and type of information
 - Articulation - ability to express ideas through language
 - Wit & Wisdom - knack to draw on wittiness in adapting to social situations; ease tensions

Conversational Participation

- Behavioral and cognitive action
- Cognitive connection verified through interaction behaviors
- Assessed according to three factors
 - Receptiveness - knowing what to articulate, recognize roles, and interact
 - Wisdom - be aware of how others recognize you
 - Concentration - listen, don't be pre-occupied

Conversational Management

- How communicators adjust their exchanges
- Adjustment and control of public situations
- Who controls the communication ebb and flow and how effortlessly the communication proceeds
- How topics progress and differ

Empathy & Sympathy

- The potential to display insightful and share expressive reactions to the circumstances
- Need not lead to "helping" the other individual
- Cognitive acceptance
- Analogous emotions

Efficacy

- Achieving the objectives of the conversation

- Realizing individual goals
- An indispensable criteria for determining competence

Aptness

- Upholding the prospects for a given state of affairs
- Obligatory criteria for determining proficiency

If a language pupil is asked what they echo on the intention of a language lessons is, they would conceivably proceed in reaction that it is to educate the sentence configuration and lexicon of that language. Nevertheless, if they are asked what their rationale is as language learners, they would most prone to react that it is to be able to communicate in that language.

I do not opine that in certainty the aspiration of a language itinerary is to coach exclusively language rules and lexis — well; at least it shouldn't be just that anymore. Luckily, the focal point of second language coaching has moved from just teaching syntax and words, to providing the skills for successful communication. In linguistics jargon, a language course should not only have “linguistic competence” as its objective, but “communicative competence” in general.

But what do these terms mean? Communicative competence is an expression coined by Dell Hymes in 1966 in reaction to Noam Chomsky's (1965) notion of “linguistic competence”. Communicative competence is the observant well-designed information and power of the principles of language usage.

EPILOGUE

As Hymes Observes

“...a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events, and to evaluate their accomplishment by others”.

In other words, a language user needs to exercise the language not only in the approved manner (based on linguistic competence), but also aptly (based on communicative competence). Of course, this approach does not shrivel the connotation of acquaintance the grammatical rules of a language. In fact, it is one of the four components of communicative competence: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence.

These 4 elements of communicative competence should be prized in schooling a foreign lingo —and they on the whole are by modern-day teaching techniques used in second language teaching. Commonly most of the above are the unsurpassed learned if the language learner absorbs into the traditions of a nation state that speaks the target language. Wouldn't it be great if the language teaching methodologies assisted language learners accomplish communicative competence to a great degree even if the learner has never wrapped up into the target background?

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