

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Abstract: Communicative competence plays a pivotal role in the effective teaching and learning of the English language. It encompasses linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies, enabling learners to use the language appropriately in diverse contexts. This competence fosters meaningful interactions, enhances language proficiency, and facilitates cultural understanding. The integration of communicative approaches in language instruction empowers students to develop fluency, accuracy, and confidence in real-life communication. This paper explores the significance of communicative competence in English language teaching, emphasizing its impact on learner engagement, motivation, and overall language acquisition.

Key Words: Communicative competence, language proficiency, linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence.

INTRODUCTION:

In the field of English language teaching, communicative competence is a fundamental concept that significantly influences language acquisition and pedagogical effectiveness. It extends beyond mere grammatical accuracy, encompassing the ability to use language appropriately in various social and cultural contexts. Developed by Dell Hymes, the concept of communicative competence includes linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies, all of which contribute to a learner's ability to engage in meaningful communication[1]

The shift from traditional, grammar-focused instruction to communicative language teaching (CLT) has emphasized the necessity of interactive and student-centered learning. By fostering communicative competence, educators enable learners to develop fluency, accuracy, and pragmatic awareness, which are essential for real-world communication. Moreover, this competence enhances students' confidence, motivation, and engagement, leading to more effective language acquisition.

This paper explores the importance of communicative competence in English language teaching, highlighting its role in improving linguistic proficiency, promoting cross-

cultural understanding, and preparing learners for authentic communication. It also examines pedagogical strategies that enhance communicative competence and their implications for language education.

Literary analyses

The concept of communicative competence is a cornerstone of effective English language teaching, as it integrates multiple linguistic and cognitive skills essential for meaningful interaction. The shift from traditional grammar-based instruction to communicative language teaching (CLT) underscores the necessity of fostering a holistic language learning environment. This paradigm recognizes that mere grammatical knowledge is insufficient for successful communication, emphasizing the importance of sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies.

From a pedagogical perspective, communicative competence enhances learners' ability to navigate real-life communication scenarios by equipping them with the skills needed to interpret and produce contextually appropriate language. The integration of authentic materials, interactive activities, and task-based learning fosters engagement, motivation, and retention. Furthermore, communicative competence plays a crucial role in intercultural communication, enabling learners to interact effectively with speakers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Literary Analysis of Communicative Competence in English Language Teaching

1. **Linguistic Competence in Literary Language** Literary works demonstrate linguistic competence through varied vocabulary, sentence structures, and grammatical patterns. Classic novels such as *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen or *1984* by George Orwell present diverse syntactic constructions that expose learners to complex linguistic forms, enhancing their grammatical proficiency.

2. **Sociolinguistic Competence and Cultural Contexts** Literature provides insight into different social and cultural norms, thereby fostering sociolinguistic competence. For example, in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, the use of Igbo proverbs and cultural references illustrates how language reflects identity, values, and traditions, allowing learners to understand the pragmatic aspects of communication.

3. **Discourse Competence and Narrative Structure** Literary texts contribute to discourse competence by demonstrating coherence and cohesion in storytelling. Shakespeare's plays, such as *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*, exemplify how dialogue and monologues structure discourse, helping learners understand how ideas are logically connected in conversation and writing.

4. **Strategic Competence and Figurative Language** Literature often challenges readers with metaphors, symbolism, and indirect speech acts, requiring strategic

competence to interpret meaning effectively. For instance, in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, the symbolic use of the green light requires readers to infer deeper meanings, mirroring the way language learners must develop strategies to comprehend implied messages in communication[2]

Communicative competence is considered a **relative rather than an absolute** concept, as it relies on the **collaboration** of all individuals involved in the interaction. This interdependence suggests that communicative competence exists in varying **degrees** rather than as a fixed state.

Hymes (1972:114) explains that **communicative competence has been introduced, examined, and redefined by various scholars over time**. The core idea behind the concept is that language proficiency extends beyond **grammatical accuracy**; effective communication also requires an understanding of how language is used within a speech community to achieve specific communicative goals[3]

Additionally, Hymes categorizes communicative competence into **two primary dimensions**, each consisting of four key components:

1. **Linguistic Aspects:**

- Phonological and orthographic knowledge
- Grammatical proficiency
- Lexical knowledge (vocabulary)
- Textual (discourse) competence

2. **Pragmatic Aspects:**

- Functional use of language
- Awareness of linguistic variations
- Interactional abilities
- Understanding of cultural norms and context[4]

This classification emphasizes that both **linguistic knowledge and pragmatic skills** are essential for achieving effective communication in any language.

CONCLUSION

Communicative competence is measured by determining if, and to what degree, the goals of interaction are achieved. Communicative competence is dependent on the context in which the interaction takes place. Communication is successful with one group in one situation that may not be perceived as competent with a different group in another situation. Brown, D (2000: 250) states the domain of communicative competence includes learning what are the available means (available strategies), how they have been employed in various situations in the past, and being able to determine which ones have the highest probability of success in a given situation[5]

In conclusion, communicative competence is a critical factor in language education, influencing learners' ability to use English effectively in academic, professional, and social contexts. The emphasis on interaction, contextual appropriateness, and cultural awareness underscores its significance in contemporary language pedagogy. Therefore, English language instruction should prioritize communicative competence to ensure that learners acquire not only linguistic accuracy but also the ability to communicate effectively in diverse settings.

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