



Diversified Components of Communicative Competence

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Abstract

Nowadays the most accepted instructional framework in second or foreign language program is Communicative Language Teaching, whose main goal is to increase learners' communication competence. This theoretical term means being able to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriate in the target language and culture. However, the implementation of communicative methodology is not an easy task since it requires an understanding of the integrated nature of the theoretical concept of communicative competence (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain). Therefore, it is the main goal of this paper to help language teachers better understand such a theoretical concept of improving their classroom practice.

Key words: Communicative Competence, Speech, Linguistic, Discourse Strategy

Introduction

The last five decades have witnessed vast changes in our understanding of how languages are learnt. Empirical results from the linguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology and sociolinguistics have better established the complete nature of language learning : It has become evidence that linguistic, psychological and sociocultural factors play a key role in this process .This concept of language learning explains the emergency of Communicative Approaches to L2 teaching over the last decades, whose pedagogical goal is to develop learners' communication competences , i. e. the ability to use the linguistics system in an effective and appropriate way. However, the implementation of a communicative methodology is not an easy task. In fact, it represents a challenge to language practitioners since it requires an understanding of the complete and integral nature of theoretical concept communicative competence (Celce- Murcia and Olshtain 2005). The main goal of this paper is therefore to help language teachers better understand such theoretical concept for improving their classroom practice .



1. Linguistic Competence

Linguistic competence the core of communication act, i,e receiving and giving messages ,meanings or functions . It is impossible to imagine a person being communicatively competent without being linguistically competent. This competence encompasses the following elements:

- (a)phonology pronunciation including segmental phonemes and suprasegmental features .
- (b)orthographic rules-spelling of words ;
- (c) grammar (in its broad sense);
- (d)lexis- words/vocabulary of the language .

2. Pragmatic Competence

This provides the link between linguistics competence and actual language use in specific situations .It contains the following:

Language functions

- (a) expressive utterances: These involve the speaker's attitude ,opinion, feeling, interjection, etc .
- (b) directive utterances : They focus on addressee, for example , when someone is being asked or told to do something .
- (c) referential function: This focuses on that setting , or that part of the context which is being talked about or referred to .
- (d) phatic function: This focuses on contact between participants . It serves to establish, maintain or discontinue communication. Examples: hello, how are you, bye, see you, etc. .
- (e) metalinguistic: When the focus on the code , the function of the utterance is metalinguistic. This function is also refer s to explanations and comments about speech acts , e, g ; I repeat, I must emphasize, what does this word meaning ? I don't understand, etc. .
- (f) poetic function ; This covers all uses of language in which message form is of primary importance , for example children's rhymes, alliteration in advertising , aesthetic effects in poetry .

Speech Acts

These are divided into three major types of acts: attitudinal , informative , and ritual .

- (a)Attitudinal acts: These refer to:



(i) past events- apologize, justify , excuse, reject, disagree, complain, forgive, congratulate, etc .

(ii)future events, e.g. intend, offer, promise, request , suggest , permit, etc .

(b)Informative acts: These state factual information, express opinions, express emotional attitudes, explain, report, recommend, regret, etc .

(c)Ritual acts: These are classified on the basis of how they related to the opening and closing of a communicative event – greeting and taking leave

Discourse strategy

This refers to a structured text that constitutes sequences of speech acts rather than a jumble of unrelated utterances. This strategy involves the following aspects:

(a)Coherence: This is a way in which structure is created in texts as in the sequential characteristic of speech acts. Discourse is established in texts when a speech act conditions another speech act or when it is conditioned by previous speech acts, as in adjacency pairs like the question / answer pair of initiating/ responding acts. It is also established through ties between the content or propositions expressed by different acts.

(b)Cohesion: This is the creation of ties between sentences , by lexical and grammatical means , e.g. anaphoric references , elliptical constructions, conjunctions , adverbials and adverbial phrases such as : and, but, however, on the other hand , etc .

(c)Gambits: These are words and expressions that help regulate conversation, eg. well, now, oh yes, but, awfully nice, aha, mm, yeah, er, etc .

(d)Turn –taking: In conversations and dialogues this refers to the change from one speaker to another. Turn –taking is made possible by a verbal or non-verbal bid, e.g. so what’s what we are going to do , that was all I wanted to know , that’s fine, I ‘m afraid I have to dash now etc, or by completing an initiating act , or by gazing or looking at the listener .

(e)Repair work : This means that either the speaker or listener “repairs” something the speaker has said and which appears to be a problem , Examples: He wants to study philosophy – not philosophy (self- initiated-repair) He wants to study psychology . The listener initiates a repair : psychology you mean !

(other-initiated, interactional repair). This techniques of ‘repair work’ is used to clarify the communication of an idea that was formulated incorrectly.

3. Strategic Competence

This is the speaker’s ability to solve communication problems by means of strategies. The term covers problem solving devices that learners resort to in order to solve what they



experience as problems in speech production and reception .It involves two aspects , namely : strategies in production and strategies in reception .

strategies in production : When the EFL , learner can't find the word or expression needed , the choices opened to him are :

- (a) to give up completely , or
- (b) to reduce his communicative intention , or
- (c) to make use of his mother tongue , or
- (d) to paraphrase , using other English words , or
- (e) to construct a new interlanguage word , or
- (f) to appeal for help from participants , or
- (g) to use gestures and facial expressions as in direct contact with the addressee.

Strategies in reception: When an EFL learner is unable to comprehend or infer meaning , he may resort to an interactional strategy . That's he would request the interlocutor to self-repair , simply by saying ' I don't understand' I don't know , or what do you mean? 'etc .

4. Socio-cultural Competence

Elements of communicative competence can't be separated from social competence .The EFL , learners' communicative competence will remain inadequate unless they know the appropriate context for their use . Ignorance of cultural features would either create misunderstanding or lead to incapacity to use the language .The social use of the language involves among other things , cultural allusions or conventions such as the way of thinking , customs, mores , art forms, idioms, beliefs, etc .Pragmatic as well as speech act knowledge is a clear instance of communicative competence interacting with social competence .

5. Fluency Competence

This refers to the ability to express oneself quickly and easily . In other words it is the capacity to be able to put what one want to say into words with ease . However, fluency is not synonymous wiyh fast speech or correctness. One can be fluent and incorrect, fluent and correct but unable to talk fast, or not fluent and correct .There are three different types of fluency:

Semantic Fluency: linking together propositions and speech acts . That is coherence.

Lexical-Syntactic Fluency : linking together syntactic constituents and words .



Articulatory Fluency: linking together speech segments .

To round off this discussion, reference may be made to the notion of metacommunicative awareness as a teaching objective within EFL . instruction. This concept means that metalinguistic knowledge (I,e knowledge about grammar , phonology and lexis) should have a sense of cultural relativism so that pupils will become proficient in communication .

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